

TRESPASSING BEYOND THE BORDERS: HARRIET WARD
AS WRITER AND COMMENTATOR ON THE EASTERN CAPE FRONTIER

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to provide an introduction to the work of writer and journalist Harriet Ward, resident in the Eastern Cape from 1842 to 1848.

She was a prolific correspondent to various periodicals published both in South Africa and in London. It would be true to say, to judge from the evidence, that she fulfilled a need felt by the British public for information on life and events in South Africa, and that she became the trusted guide of the middle-class reader. Her range covers reports from the frontiers of war, journalistic articles, memoirs, short stories, novels, autobiography, and editions of other writers' work. After the publication of her articles on the Seventh Frontier War (1846-7), she was recognised and respected as a commentator on the situation at the Eastern Cape, an unusual role for a woman at this time. She was also amongst the foremost Victorian women writers published from the early eighteen forties until the end of the eighteen-fifties.

Harriet Ward has left a vivid historical and sociological account of the Cape frontier, and her observations and judgements provide a hitherto virtually unknown perspective on an important part of South African history and letters. What makes her even more interesting, as this study seeks to show, is that she was far from conventional in her response to her new environment, both as a woman and as a representative of a colonialist power. The record she has left of her thoughts on the people, landscape and situations of the time has the capacity to surprise the post-colonial literary critic and historian. Her struggle to find a discursive mode in which to express her consciousness of the oppression, patriarchal and colonial, of the marginalised,

whether woman, indigene, Afrikaner, or creole, reveals a significantly transgressive or subversive response to the issues of the day. In re-discovering Harriet Ward, we are forced to reassess our assumptions regarding the period of colonial history to which she was a witness.

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PREFACE

Harriet Ward made a name for herself in the mid-nineteenth century as an authoritative writer on the Eastern Cape. What I hope to achieve in this study is the restoration of an important woman of letters to her rightful position as a salient figure in South African literature and history.

It would be true to say that only one of her many publications is known, and that only slightly, to post-colonial critics, and the tendency is to assume that she is a paradigm of a nineteenth-century colonial woman writer. Consequently, the comments made about her work are without exception derogatory. Jane Austen has been blamed, retrospectively, by "subaltern, minority, or disadvantaged voices", as Edward Said points out, for being "white, privileged, insensitive, complicit" (Said: 115). The same charges are levelled at Harriet Ward, who is branded by post-colonial critics and historians almost without exception as a "racist" and an unquestioning upholder of the colonial policies of the British Government. She has lately been called "stridently imperialistic", which is a characteristic critical judgement (Fourie: 87). A careful study of a range of her works will reveal that these charges are simplistic; in fact, she is strong in her condemnation of colonial prejudice towards many disadvantaged groups of people, including women, the Xhosa, the Khoi, the San and the Afrikaners; she fearlessly opposes the British government on behalf of the Irish, married officers, soldiers in the ranks and their wives, and those whose careers were jeopardised by the practice of patronage.

Because Ward's works are rare and difficult for even a specialist literary critic to find, the tendency amongst critics has therefore been to make judgements based on a limited knowledge of the author's oeuvre, and to decide that she must fulfil all the well-tried preconceptions about someone living and writing in the Eastern Cape in the 1840s. This tendency to prejudge earlier writers and especially women writers may unwittingly have become a new post-colonial strategy, a new form

of colonisation, marginalisation and "Othering", an attractive new situation of moral high ground, especially comforting to critics at this end of the twentieth century, and particularly those who might feel in some way that they too might be accused of being white and privileged, if not insensitive and complicit. Perhaps white women writers of nineteenth-century Africa should now be identified as the new subaltern group, victims of a manoeuvre both sexist and racist.

Harriet Ward was middle-class, she was white and privileged, and these were the inescapable conditions of her life. With the benefit of enlightened hindsight, it is possible to judge her insensitive and complicit, but her writings prove that she had a social awareness in advance of her time. One of my aims in this study is to encourage a more sensitive appraisal of her work, and to counterbalance the prejudice with which she is at present approached. One most certainly does not wish to excuse attitudes which thinking people have rightly come to view as offensive and unacceptable, but the post-colonial critic needs to avoid a superficial judgement, often almost a reflex, of what is a complex attitude. Harriet Ward had a sharp-witted, analytical mind, and the capacity to challenge the established conventions of her time. In her broad-ranging critical appraisal of events of the day, she provides a window on the literary and colonial thinking of the time. Her unexpected responses to many aspects of such thinking must encourage us to re-assess our own rather tired, because apparently so self-evident, attitudes to the South Africa of the mid-1800s. To quote Frantz Fanon, "The architecture of [any] work is rooted in the temporal. Every human problem must be considered from the standpoint of time" Black Skin, White Masks (Fanon 1986:14).

A danger to be avoided in post-colonial readings of works written in an earlier century is that of solipsism, or what Laura E. Donaldson calls a "monotheistic reading" (17). The conviction that ours is an irreproachably moral position should not lead us to deny the possibility of good faith in the "Other", and thus

the possibility of a fruitful dialogue with writers of the past.

Because Ward's works are extremely difficult to find, I have felt justified in making extensive use of quotation from them. I have thought it necessary to situate her in her period, and on two continents, in both a literary and a social context, in order to counter modern critical opinions of her as insignificant and stereotypically colonial. My approach is both biographical and literary-critical, and my organisation of the material is chronological; there is a noticeable progression in Ward's thinking, from a fairly conventional acceptance of the patriarchal world construct to a vigorous, almost violent, opposition to many aspects of that world. Her "alternative" experience of the world is reflected in her inability to accept uncritically contemporary hegemonic discourse, and her struggle to find an "alternative" discourse is fascinating, and is central to this thesis.

Note

With reference to my retention in the text of the repugnant word "Kaffir", I should like to cite Jeff Peires: "Before 1850, the word "Kaffir" was generally used by whites, even sympathetic ones...to refer to the Xhosa" (Peires: ix). Ward herself acknowledges that its use was offensive to the Xhosa (Five Years i: 88), but does not opt for an alternative. Where the word appears in its nineteenth-century situation, in quotation, I have, while recognising its offensiveness, felt obliged in the interests of historical accuracy to retain it. For the same reason I have maintained the original variant of the word in each quotation.

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My thanks are due to many for the assistance I have received in the course of this study. Mr Michael Berning of the Rhodes Library, Ms Sandra Rowoldt, Cory Librarian, and Ms Cecilia Blight and Mr JZ Vena of the Cory Library have been unfailingly resourceful and helpful, as was Ms Sue van der Riet of Inter-Library Loans. The librarians of the Bodleian Library and the Manuscript Library of the British Museum deserve my thanks, and so do Mrs Marcelle Weiner of the Brenthurst Library and the librarians of the Killie Campbell Africana Library, particularly Mrs Bobby Eldredge. My thanks too to Ms Arlene Fanaroff of the South African Library, and the librarians of the Library of Parliament and the DON Africana Library. I am most grateful to Miss Rene McRobbie of the Regimental Museum of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Stirling Castle, for her active help and interest.

The Brenthurst Library allowed me to quote from their invaluable collection of Ward letters, for which I express my sincere thanks. I am grateful too to the British Library Department of Manuscripts, who gave me permission to quote from their Ward papers.

I am indebted to the Human Sciences Research Council for financial assistance with this study.

My thanks go to the many friends who have offered help and encouragement, in particular Miss Sally Sampson, who has been generous in sharing with me her biographical knowledge of Harriet Ward, and her enthusiasm. I have benefited greatly from the scholarly help of Mrs Jeanette Eve, from the artistic insights of Ms Marijke Cosser, and from the constructive support of Professor J.A.Kearney.

I should like to offer my sincere thanks to Professor Malvern van Wyk Smith for encouraging and stimulating supervision; I am indebted to him for his scholarship and his friendship.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the external examiners of the original version of this dissertation. I have benefited greatly from their careful attention and valuable suggestions, and hope that this is reflected in the final version of the work.

Finally, to my family, and in particular, to my husband, who has been unfailingly supportive, this work is gratefully dedicated.

Abbreviations Used in the Text

Allibone	<u>A Critical Dictionary of English Literature</u>
AM	<u>Ainsworth's Magazine</u>
BGWL	<u>Bloomsbury Guide to Women's Literature</u>
BM	<u>Bentley's Miscellany</u>
CK	<u>The Cape and the Kaffirs</u>
DBWW	<u>Dictionary of British Woman Writers</u>
FCLE	<u>Feminist Companion to Literature in English</u>
<u>Five Years</u>	<u>Five Years in Kaffirland</u>
HC	<u>Helen Charteris</u>
HH	<u>Hardy and Hunter</u>
JL	<u>Jasper Lyle</u>
LCVF	<u>Longman's Companion to Victorian Fiction</u>
NMM	<u>New Monthly Magazine</u>
PFE	<u>Past and Future Emigration</u>
OCEL	<u>Oxford Companion to English Literature</u>
ROS	<u>Recollections of an Old Soldier</u>
"ROS"	"Recollections of an Old Soldier"
USM	<u>United Service Magazine</u>
<u>Wellesley Index</u>	<u>Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals</u>

CHAPTER ONE

The Growth of a Literary Reputation

The name Harriet Ward is now known only to a few specialists in South African literature or history, and generally these have no conception of the prolific nature of her writing, or of its importance. During the 1840s, while stationed with her officer husband in the Eastern Cape, she achieved a formidable reputation as writer and political commentator at a time when women were struggling for the recognition that theirs could be an intellectual as well as a domestic role. A knowledge of her work would be of interest and relevance to researchers in the fields of South African and nineteenth-century literature, feminism, history and journalism. Investigation has revealed a bibliography extensive enough to indicate that Harriet Ward was an important literary figure from 1840 until the end of the 1850s.¹ As was not uncommon with writers of the time, her generic range is wide, and includes journalistic articles, short stories, poems, novels, accounts of journeys and military activity, autobiography, biography, and topographical description. It is instructive to follow her career, from publication to publication, for the light such a career throws on the events in South Africa at the time, and on the role of the woman writer in mid-nineteenth century England. Harriet Ward deserves today to be renowned for the part she played in both these spheres, and to be recognised as a writer well worth reading. She is a fascinating discovery for the post-colonial critic.

This chapter begins with an outline of what is known of Ward's life, and this is followed by a brief overview of her published work, which will be examined in more detail in the third chapter.

¹ See Appendix One for a Chronology of her published work.

"God Knows I write from Life"²

Judging from the details we have of Harriet Ward's life, the link between life and art in her case is sharply clear: the one is the core of the other. This is true to some extent in every writer, and especially true of the Victorian realists, but the connections are very obvious in Harriet Ward's writing. The success of her work seems closely linked to the intensity of the lived experience. There is no doubt that her practice was to recreate, in a very direct way, the events of her life, and to transform them into fiction and non-fiction. She was fortunate in having a more eventful life than other women of the time, as she followed her soldier husband on active service, and she was inspired by the conviction that a writer's role was to document events, situations and experiences as faithfully as possible. However, what is noticeable and most interesting is that while she began to write in the character of a conventional Victorian woman who happened also to be the dutiful daughter and wife of soldiers, as she finds her voice, she also discovers in herself a resistance to many of the colonial, patriarchal, racial and sexual assumptions of the time. Unable to express this resistance openly, or perhaps not fully aware of its extent, she none the less reveals it in her novels Helen Charteris and Jasper Lyle. An exploration of these works leads to the discovery of Ward's unexpectedly subversive stance with regard to gender, the military, and imperialist politics.

I use the word "unexpectedly" advisedly; it is easy to see the women of the nineteenth century as stereotypical, particularly those who could be said to be instrumental in defending the "colonial enterprise". Harriet Ward is a victim of prejudice of this nature. While studying her work, and in noting the references to her which appeared when her books were

² Brenthurst Letter 4: 3 January 1846.

published and others which are starting to appear in critical discussion, I have been struck by the tone of the commentators, a tone which in its disparaging nature seems little changed over one hundred and fifty years. I reproduce the caustic comments of the nineteenth-century contributor to The Athenaeum in an appendix at the end of this dissertation. They are a reminder of the difficulties women writers had to face from the attitudes of (mostly) male literati towards females who dared to publish, and which have been definitively evaluated by Tillie Olsen, Elaine Showalter, Dale Spender, Gale Tuchman, Sara Mills and Laura E. Donaldson, among others. Women authors at this time were justified in regarding their sex as a barrier to their being taken seriously; hence the frequent use of male pseudonyms or anonymous publication, and the attempt to internalise male values and to adopt a self-deprecatory style. One need only remember Charlotte Brontë's heartfelt complaint to G.H.Lewes when Shirley was published:

I wish you did not think me a woman--I wish all reviewers believed Currer Bell to be a man, they would be more just to him. You will I know, keep measuring me by some standard of what you deem becoming to my sex; where I am not what you consider graceful you will condemn me.³

She was right to be anxious: Lewes had identified the author of Jane Eyre, and as a consequence was exceptionally patronising in his review of this book.⁴

The work of colonial women writers is often dismissed by twentieth-century critics for reasons ostensibly different from those of gender. For example, at a conference in 1993, Harriet Ward's work was given welcome exposure; however, much of the comment was based on a fairly superficial reading of only one of her works, Five Years in Kaffirland, and she was variously condemned as being "stridently imperialistic" (Fourie: 87) and an "unwitting menial" in furthering the imperial cause in the

³ Charlotte Brontë to G.H.Lewes, 1 November 1849. (Quoted by Gérin 1987: 400).

⁴ "Recent Novels: French and English", Fraser's Magazine 36, December 1847 (Ashton: 83).

Eastern Cape (de Reuck: 43). The entry on Ward in the Bloomsbury Guide to Women's Literature, by Dorothy Driver, had earlier recognised that "Ward's fiction... holds contemporary interest for its uneasy negotiation of colonial rule in Africa", but that she "generally takes part in the imperialist project with propagandist fervour" (BGLE: 1122). I should like to suggest in this thesis that Ward was troubled by the "imperialist project", and that a careful reading of her writing will reveal this. Not all colonial women blindly supported the policies of colonial men. In Harriet Ward's case, it is clear that behind her resistance to the patriarchal point of view lie the circumstances of her own life.

Frustratingly, the biographical details are not easy to discover. The few surviving letters give tantalising glimpses of the private person. The memoir she wrote of her father, Recollections of an Old Soldier, fortunately contains an unexpected number of details about her own life, as, more predictably, does Five Years in Kaffirland. Harriet Ward (1808-1873) was born at Thorp, Norfolk, the daughter of Colonel Francis Skelly Tidy (1776?-1835) and Miss Pinder, daughter of the Chief Justice of Barbados. She went to school in Boulogne-sur-Mer and in London, and in 1831 she married Captain (later Major) John Ward (b. Waterford, Ireland, 1798). Their only child, Isabel, was born at Bacon Thorp, Norfolk, in 1832. Isabel married Captain (later Colonel) Henry John Savage (b.1816) in 1849.

John Ward was an ensign with the 67th Regiment on St Helena when Napoleon died in April 1821. Harriet Ward and Isabel accompanied John Ward to St Helena from 1836-1839; he remained on the island with the 91st until 1841, and was present when Napoleon's body was exhumed in October 1840, being once again on active service on St Helena, this time with the 91st Regiment. The Ward family sailed from Cork with the 91st to the Eastern Frontier of the Cape in 1842, suffering the wreck of their troopship, the Abercrombie Robinson, during a storm in Table Bay. They experienced the Seventh Frontier War (1846-7) during their

five years in the colony, and returned to Britain in 1848, where Harriet published her first books, Helen Charteris and Five Years in Kaffirland. John Ward may have been Warden of Dover Castle from 1850 to 1851,⁵ before he and Harriet moved with the regiment to Boulogne-sur-Mer. Almost nothing more is known of their lives after this.

Such uncomfortable lacunae tend to encourage a degree of speculation in the biographer's task of trying to reconstruct the events of a life. One craves more detail, and the answers to all sorts of unanswered questions: what has happened to Ward's Eastern Cape journal? Where is the scrapbook of newspaper cuttings that we know she and John Ward kept?⁶ Did she meet the Empress Eugenie on the official visit to Dover in 1850?⁷ Did they visit the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1851? Was she present at her hero the Duke of Wellington's state funeral in 1852? Was John Ward one of the officers from the 91st chosen to attend? What were Harriet's dealings with publishers such as Routledge? Why was she asked to edit Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe? Michael Holroyd has said that it was "the intimacy of private life that attracted me to biography,"⁸ and it is this intimacy which is largely denied to Harriet Ward's biographer.

Fortunately, Harriet Ward's publications are revealing of her character and opinions. There are, too, a few contemporary accounts of meetings with her. Private Buck Adams was warm in his praise:

Captain Bainbrick [Bambrick] ... had introduced me to

⁵ Information from a letter from a descendant to S Sampson.

⁶ "Mrs English, granddaughter of Mrs Ward, placed at my disposal her grandmother's newspaper cutting book, 1846-50, and Captain Ward's notes on Napoleon's death" (Dunn-Pattison: xiv).

⁷ A suggestion made by Sampson.

⁸ Quoted Batchelor: 208.

Mrs. Ward, wife of Captain Ward of the 91st Regiment. This lady was a great contributor to the Cape papers, also to several magazines at home. On one occasion I was taken by Captain [Bambrick] to sing at a party given by this lady in honour of her daughter's birthday [19 August 1845]. I have every reason to be proud of the great kindness received from that lady.⁹

Two years later, on 1 August 1847, John Hall, a regimental surgeon, wrote to his fiancée:

Met Captain and Mrs. Ward of the [91st] at Colonel Lindsay's. She is the authoress of some twelve papers on the Kafir War, which have appeared in the Frontier Times. She is a chatty, pleasant woman, but rather romantic in her ideas. Her brother, Captain Tidy of the 14th Foot...I know very well, and that was an agreeable introduction to her.¹⁰

From these gleanings and the evidence of her personality in her writing, one gains the impression of a woman who was outgoing and unafraid of showing emotion or of sharing (some of) her ideas. She must also have been highly intelligent, energetic and hard-working, serious about her career, assertive and concerned about injustices. Despite her modest disclaimers, she was generally forthright in expressing strong opinion. She could write an elegant sentence, was sharply observant, and had a talent for graphic description. What close examination of her texts reveals is that beneath the carefully cultivated persona is concealed a profoundly subversive sensibility, conscious of racial and gender-based injustices, and antagonistic to many aspects of patriarchal society and the colonial presence in South Africa. It was impossible for an officer's wife to voice these dissatisfactions openly, even supposing that a non-phallographic form of discourse in which to do so had existed, and one notices that Ward learns progressively to bury her resistance within her texts. While not destroying her reputation as a popular and authoritative writer, she was at least giving partial expression to long-pent-up emotion. To discover a highly analytical and

⁹ The Narrative of Private Buck Adams (1941): 90.

¹⁰ The Life and Letters of Sir John Hall (1911): ed. S.M.Mitra: 177-8.

critical mind at work on the Eastern Cape frontier at this time is a profoundly exciting discovery.

As far as is known, there is no extant portrait of either Harriet or John Ward. The closest we come to being able to imagine what she may have looked like is reliant on the recent discovery of a connection between Harriet and her almost exact contemporary, Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-65). In one of her letters, written on 31 August 1831, Mrs Gaskell mentions a "Harriet Turvey", a "Mr. Ward" and a "Tom Tidy". (A Gaskell scholar has shown that "Turvey" here is probably an error in transcription for "Tidy", and we know that Harriet Ward's brother was Thomas-Holmes Tidy.)¹¹ In a later letter, on 20 October 1831, Mrs Gaskell writes:

So my likeness Miss Harriet Tidy is gone to be married?
[Harriet Ward married John Ward on 15 October 1831.] I met
some girls in Liverpool of the name of Sandbach, & asked
if I were like her but they said not at all.¹²

All we have to go on then is that there is a faint resemblance between Harriet Ward and Elizabeth Gaskell. There is a famous miniature of the latter, painted by W.J.Thomson in 1832, which shows an attractive young girl in romantic pose looking over her shoulder at the portraitist.

Recently, a photograph of the Ramsey portrait of Colonel Tidy wearing his Waterloo medal and the cross of the Companion of the Bath (mentioned by Ward in ROS: 141-2, and now at the regimental museum of the West Yorkshire Regiment: Prince of Wales Own) was published in The Times (4.7.1996). It was "one of the

¹¹ Details of the military careers of the Tidys and John Ward are available at the Public Record Office, Kew. I am indebted too to the genealogical work of William Jervois, genealogist of the Albany Museum.

¹² See J A V Chappell, 'Before Crutches and Chapel Feelings: Five Early Letters by Elizabeth Gaskell (nee Stevenson)', in The Gaskell Society Journal 4: 1990: 1-27; and Jeanette Eve, 'Elizabeth Stevenson and Harriet Carr: A Note', in The Gaskell Society Journal 5: 1991: 74-6.

finest pictures" exhibited in 1819 in Somerset House. Ward compares it with the portrait of the colonel painted by his boyhood sweetheart Aimée twenty years before:

The bright curled hair had become dark, and mingled with grey; the noble brow had more of sternness in it; the eyes were less soft, and the expression of the mouth more firm.

(ROS: 141)

The verbal portrait of her father painted by Ward in the memoir, Recollections of an Old Soldier, is introduced by the editor of the United Service Journal, Major T.H. Shadwell Clerke, himself a "Peninsular officer of distinction" in these words:

There are, no doubt, many surviving cotemporaries [*sic*] and friends who will recognise a remarkable and highly-popular officer in the traits of his character and story, drawn with so much simplicity and effect, in the following sketches, by a daughter who strongly resembles him.

(ibid.: 1)

As is always the case with the few times she is mentioned in contemporary records, Harriet Ward was the one who made an impression, rather than her husband, John, the silent, artistic, not very successful soldier. (Soon after the Wards returned to England, he was placed on half-pay.) Lieutenant-Colonel E. Elers Napier writes: "I have become acquainted here with Captain Ward, of the 91st Regiment, the husband of the lady who has written 'the Scenes in Kaffirland' in the United Service Magazine" (Napier 1849: 374-5). One can only assume that John Ward was fully supportive of his wife's literary achievements, and proud of her fame. George Eliot called her "dear husband", G.H. Lewes, "the prime blessing that has made all the rest possible to me".¹³ No wife, particularly at this time, could have achieved a career without the full support of her husband. Certainly, Harriet Ward did not miss an opportunity of mentioning hers in her work, and followed him loyally as he was moved from England to Ireland, to St Helena, to the Cape, and back again to England and to France.

¹³ Quoted Uglow: 70.

"Forwarding my Literary Views"¹⁴

Ward began by contributing articles to the journal that must have been familiar to her from her childhood, and even more so after her marriage, as she accompanied her husband, Captain John Ward, to St Helena and to South Africa, in the course of his duties as an officer in the 91st Regiment. The United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine (later, United Service Magazine), would have appeared every month in the mess-room of every arm of the British services at home and abroad. As these articles published in the early 1840s met with success, she grew bolder, and by the time she died, in 1873, she had more than seventy publications to her name, and, had, in fact, become a "name" to literate Victorians.

She started modestly, with some articles on the life of her father, Colonel Francis Skelly Tidy, well-known and well-liked in military circles. These were published in the United Service Magazine, and it seems likely that she was working on them while stationed with her husband on St Helena, from 1836 to 1840. She may also at this time have been supplying material to The Times in London, as she was to do so frequently from the Eastern Frontier of the Cape after 1842.¹⁵

Harriet Ward gives some clues to the origins of her literary career at the conclusion of "Recollections of an Old Soldier" (USM October 1840: 223-4). Colonel Tidy lost his savings of nine years in the failure of a banking house in India, leaving no

¹⁴ Brenthurst Letter 2: December 1845.

¹⁵ See G.L.Goff, Historical Records of the 91st Argyllshire Highlanders (1891): "A St. Helena correspondent [of 1838] writes... 'Lieut. Charles Baird McMurdo, 91st Regiment, died on 30th of July, having just completed the 26th year of his age, when an injury in the knee, received as he was returning to his quarters at Ladder Hill on the Sunday week previous, terminated fatally in lock-jaw two days after the symptoms had manifested themselves'". That this correspondent could have been Ward herself is clear from her story "The Young Officer's Death-bed. 'An Ower [sic] True Tale'", USM March 1842: 380-84, in which she gives a barely fictionalised version of this incident.

inheritance to his children. His sons, says Ward, were provided with commissions by kind friends of their father, but she, "as a daughter, must struggle for [herself]". (This despite the fact that she had married in 1831, some years before. One wonders how many Victorian army wives would have acted upon the urgent need to supplement their husbands' incomes.)

She luckily had "encouraging and disinterested friends" who brought her before the public in "one of the principal and standard publications of the day [the United Service Magazine]". Otherwise, she writes, "I should have been unable to make this début in the thorny and difficult paths of authorship" (USM October 1840: 224). Her strong determination to succeed is obvious, as is a sense of how difficult it was for an unknown writer, and particularly a woman. For Harriet Ward, as for Harriet Martineau, George Eliot and others, it was the periodical press which was the means to becoming a familiar name.¹⁶

She began anonymously, however, identified only as "the daughter" of an old soldier, himself known in those first five articles as "Colonel Franklin". (Her status as the daughter of a hero was obviously advantageous and made publication more likely; from then on, unlike the Brontës, she did not seem to feel it necessary to disguise her sex.) In her next pieces for the United Service Magazine, some "Sketches from Military Life", she is named as "the authoress of 'Recollections of an Old Soldier'" (USM February, April, June, August, November 1841). This is true too of "The Young Officer's Death-bed" (USM March 1842), but her by-line reads: "By the authoress of 'Recollections of an Old Soldier, Etc'" (my emphasis). She was perhaps tentative about the propriety of a soldier's wife being known to be contributing to a widely-read military journal. Then, for the first time in the United Service Magazine, her name appeared, as

¹⁶ See Andrew Blake, Reading Victorian Fiction (1989), who comments on "George Eliot's gradual flowering as a novelist, from a background of journalism" (Blake: 70).

the author of the "Wreck of the Abercrombie Robinson and Waterloo" (no. 171, February 1843), and her career as recorder of and commentator on the activities of the troops in the Cape was launched. Because so many of the articles in the United Service Magazine were anonymous, it is not easy to tell whether they were written by men or women. However, apart from Georgina C. Munro, identified in her pieces on the Eastern Cape only as "Author of The Voyage of Life", and traceable through Richard Bentley's letterbooks, I have not been able to find another woman contributor to the United Service Magazine. One must judge that Munro and Ward were pioneers here. Each brings a certain freshness of approach to the careful military prose of the journal, and a personalised touch.

The year before the publication of "The Wreck of the Abercrombie Robinson and Waterloo", Ward had had two pieces published under her own name in Annals of 1842, pieces she would have had to submit by July of 1841: "Friar's Valley. A Legend of St. Helena", (Forget-me-not, 1842), and "The Spirit's Visits" (Heath's Book of Beauty, 1842). These articles would probably explain the "Etc." noted above.

In May and June of 1842, Ainsworth's Magazine published pieces by "Mrs. Ward": "A County Dinner Part", and "The Yeomanry Ball; and an Incident on the Clyde". Not only are these presented under her name, but in the preface to a new volume of Ainsworth's Magazine, written on 28 December 1842, she is listed as one of the writers whose work the magazine is proud to offer in the forthcoming year, amongst others whose names are known today as hers is not: Mrs Gore (originator of the Silver Fork Novel), Mrs Norton and Catherine Parr; her reputation is becoming established. The editor, W.H.Ainsworth himself, goes on to praise "the high talent associated with these names" and "the popularity which so many of them have obtained", but stresses that that talent in his journal is devoted to "some moral end, as well as to gratify[ing] a desire for amusement" (AM 3 February 1842: ii, iii). To a greater or lesser degree in all she writes, Harriet

Ward shares with other Victorian authors the desire to entertain and to instruct.

She left Ireland for the Cape in May 1842, and her article for Ainsworth's Magazine entitled "An Introduction to Mr. O'Connell in 1842" has as its dateline "Cape Town, September. 28, 1842" (AM 3 February 1843: 124). Also submitted from South Africa must have been "The Burial of Oliver Cromwell: a Tradition of 1658" in the Forget-me-not annual of 1843. (The latter, she points out in a letter to Colburn, "has been pronounced by people (unknown to me) the best article in the Forget-me-not [sic] for 43" (Brenthurst Letter 1: January 1843. Obviously, the Annual was prepared in time for Christmas of the year before).

The frustration of being six thousand miles from the publishing capital of the English-speaking world, just as she was becoming an acknowledged literary figure, is obvious. The urgency of sending "home" at least one article with almost every ship leaving Cape Town for England becomes clear. There is a hint of panic in her request in December 1845 to Sir John Philippart, editor of the United Service Magazine, to find a place for the article accompanying her letter;¹⁷ if Philippart has no place for it in his journal, he should have it published in the weekly Naval and Military Gazette: "at all events pray put it in print--There is sad dearth of matter in this monotonous country so when I have an opportunity of making my appearance in print do me the favour to help me". While "[e]very guinea now is of the utmost consequence", the "forwarding of [her] literary views" carries almost as much weight (Brenthurst Letter 2: December 1845; original italics). Dependent as Ward was on the immediacy of real events for her material, there was an advantage to be gained from the outbreak the War of the Axe in 1846,

¹⁷ This is an account of the presentation of new colours to the 91st Regiment, which may not have been published: I have been unable to find it, although a very detailed description of the ceremony is given by G.L.Goff in his Historical Records of the regiment (117-21); perhaps the eye-witness he quotes was Harriet Ward.

notwithstanding the anxiety it brought. At a bound, she became the observer "on the spot" of the action on the frontier, with a public and publications already receptive, and something of real importance to offer them at last. She had gained credibility and managed to find some "matter" in her pieces, "A Voice from Cafferland" (USM January 1844), and "Notices from Kaffirland" (USM May, July and October 1844). (These would form the first half of her Five Years in Kaffirland, to be published in 1848.) Now, almost every month from November 1846 to October 1847, the USM carried the nine chapters entitled "The Present War in Kaffirland, 1846. Written on the Spot" (which would become the second part of Five Years in Kaffirland).

It is noteworthy that at this time a woman should have been permitted such an authoritative role, indeed, one which quite possibly influenced military policy (judging by the regularity with which she was called upon to submit articles to a military journal, and also to edit the work of an army officer); and it says a great deal for Harriet Ward's persistence and dedication to her writing in the hardly salubrious conditions of the turbulent Eastern Cape that she should have achieved such a role. There is evidence that she was a correspondent from the frontier for The Times (and unlikely to have been paid for this except with the gifts of a vase and a grand piano, a story which is part of family legend).¹⁸ The History of The Times says that the first occasion on which the newspaper employed a woman correspondent was in 1859, when their resident correspondent, Henry Wreford, fell ill, and his sister took over the task of reporting on the war between France and Italy and Austria (283).¹⁹ It seems likely that Miss Wreford was preceded by several decades by Harriet Ward.

She was conscious of the importance of her work and of the

¹⁸ Correspondence to Sampson from the late Rosemary Mole, a great-granddaughter of Harriet Ward.

¹⁹ See also Anne Sebba, Battling for News: The Rise of the Woman Reporter: 13.

eagerness with which it would be received: "England seems greedy now of any kind of information..." (Brenthurst Letter 7: April 1847). Her by now well-established reputation made her look longingly towards her return to "merry England" (Brenthurst Letter 4: January 1846). She was armed before she left Africa with a "domestic English novel written in Cafferland!" (Brenthurst Letter 2: December 1845). The novel was Helen Charteris, published in 1848, only months after her arrival in England. Also to be arranged were the bringing out of her United Service Magazine frontier articles as Five Years in Kaffirland (1848), and the reworking of "Recollections of an Old Soldier", in order to publish it in book form (1849).

Harriet Ward's literary skills, as well as her experience and expertise with regard to the Cape, were acknowledged when she was requested to edit Lieutenant-Colonel E.E.Napier's book, Past and Future Emigration; or, The Book of the Cape (1849). It is remarkable that a woman should have received such a commission. Napier himself gave her a very free hand, asking her to "add whatsoever might draw the attention of the Public to the truths" stated in his book (PFE, "Editress's Preface": i). He is, she admits, an "excitable writer", his intemperance tending to give a misleading picture, causing him and others to be misjudged, and so she feels obliged to

modif[y] the tone of the work...and rescue from blame many right-minded men, who heartily deprecate the mischief done by certain members of the communities to which they belong, who perilled their lives for the good of the cause they wished to uphold.... (ibid.: ii)

She added to the book three substantial chapters on emigration (a subject long dear to her heart, with regard to those suffering unemployment and poverty in Ireland and in English industrial towns), and the question of convict labour. So liberally did she exercise her editorial powers that Napier protested, feeling she had exceeded her warrant and misrepresented his views. He felt compelled to put the record straight in his Excursions in Southern Africa (1849). That Ward was justified is borne out by two reviews, both in The Athenaeum: "[T]he intemperate and

extreme opinions asserted in [Past and Future Emigration] ...prevented any publisher from accepting it until Mrs. Ward had drawn her revising pen across its more acrimonious lines" (15 December 1849: 1266). "[Past and Future Emigration] derives its chief value from the fact that it bears on its title-page the imprimatur of Mrs. Ward, and contains a sensible preface from her pen" (8 December 1849: 1239). The last statement is a measure of the high regard in which Harriet Ward was already held by a journal of intellectual repute. She was obviously a recognised authority on the South African situation.

1850 was a fairly quiet year for Harriet Ward. As far as we know, she had only three short pieces published: "Emma, the Sailor Girl" in October, for Bentley's Miscellany; and "Married Soldiers in the Army", published in two parts, for the United Service Magazine (September and October 1850). She was also revising Past and Future Emigration, which underwent a reversal of the main elements of its title, to become The Book of the Cape; or, Past and Future Emigration (1851). She had a new edition of Five Years in Kaffirland in hand, altering and abridging it to be issued as The Cape and the Kaffirs: A Diary of Five Years' Residence in Kaffirland; with a Chapter of Advice to Emigrants... in 1851. She must have been hard at work on her second novel, Jasper Lyle, at the same time.

When an author was required to provide the letter-press to F.R.Stack's drawings of scenes on St Helena, to be entitled Souvenir of the Emperor Napoleon (1851), Ward would have been the natural choice.* Her first-hand experience of the scenes depicted, and her sincere admiration of and sympathy for the late Emperor in his last exile contribute effectively to the production of a remarkable and handsome book, a prototype of the modern "coffee-table" work.

1851 saw the publication of her most important novel: Jasper Lyle. A Tale of Kaffirland. Once again, her own experiences were put to fruitful use. That the book was

successful is evident from its re-issue in the same year, and then as a Routledge Railway Library edition. Even more remarkable is its re-issue, some years after her death, again in Routledge's Railway (Two Shilling) Library (1878 and 1879); this was obviously timed to benefit from the renewed interest in the South African situation as a result of the impending Zulu War of those years.

Between August 1848 and August 1853, Ward had thirteen pieces published in Bentley's Miscellany, and returned to writing for the Annuals, The Keepsake and Forget-me-not. Only those articles based on her South African experiences have much vitality. In fact, her literary inspiration seemed to fail her briefly, a sign perhaps that her life was not providing the stimulation upon which her most successful writing depended. Hester Fleming. The Good Seed and its Certain Fruit (1854) is a sentimental pot-boiler, with a heavily moral and religious theme. Its companion piece, also published in 1854 by John Henry Jackson, was Lizzy Dorian, The Soldier's Wife. The British Library copy of this work was destroyed by bomb-damage in the 1940s, and no other copy appears to exist. It is possible to deduce its subject matter from its title, and to guess that with her economical habit of recycling her writing wherever suitable, Harriet Ward had converted her short story, "Married Soldiers in the Army" into this novelette. The heroine of the latter is "Lizzy Gould, a soldier's wife" (USM September and October 1850). The story, a polemic, concerns the triumph of a soldier's virtuous wife over the difficulties and temptations experienced in the appalling living conditions in the barracks both in England and on the Cape frontier as she follows her husband in the course of his duties.²⁰

²⁰ Ward wrote a letter to the hero of *Nineveh*, Sir Austen H. Layard, in connection with the problem of "jobbery". She concludes with the following request: "Influential people in the Lords have promised me help in the matter of married soldiers in the barracks. When the question comes forward will you give my poor Sisterhood a lift?" (BM Add.Ms. 38983).

Hester Fleming is a sober departure from Ward's usual style and verve. Humour and satire have given way to piety and conformity. Kathleen Tillotson says of Thackeray, "The circumstances of [his] life may possibly account for the gradual invasion of the satirist by the moralist" (Tillotson: 10). It is impossible to guess what the circumstances of Harriet Ward's life were which might have brought about a similar change. Perhaps she was simply shrewdly judging the attraction of the sentimental for Victorian readers.

Then, with great success, Ward turned again for material to the country that had made her famous, and Hardy and Hunter. A Boy's Own Story was published in 1858.

Indefatigably and remarkably, a few years before her death in 1873, she compiled "a new and abridged edition" for Routledge's Railway Library of Samuel Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe (1868), and this was re-issued in 1890. Obviously, in 1868 if not in 1890, the name Harriet Ward was thought still to be one to attract readers. The last words she wrote to her public have a certain poignant significance:

[Clarissa], purified by suffering, and all her worldly troubles over ... passes her whole time in preparing herself for her Father's House and Everlasting Rest.

CHAPTER TWO

The Need for Independence as Woman and Writer

In this chapter, I hope to cast some light on the motivation and compulsion which informed Harriet Ward's desire to be a writer. I look at the restrictions faced by all women of the time, and suggest ways in which Ward managed to counter such restrictions.

1. "The Subject of Woman"

Sarah Stickney Ellis notes, in her Preface to The Daughters of England (1842), that "it seems to be the peculiar taste of the present day to write, and to read, on the subject of woman". Harriet Ward was amongst the forerunners in this debate. By 1869 John Stuart Mill was tackling the "woman question" in The Subjection of Women, recognising what Martha Vicinus calls "the rigid slavelike stereotype" of the nineteenth-century wife and mother, but also that women were nevertheless fulfilling their potential (Vicinus [1977]: ix). In the early 1840s, Ward was acknowledging women's moral responsibilities, centred in the domestic sphere, but suggesting by precept and her own example that they had wider responsibilities, too, and could play a rôle in journalism, politics and the military sphere, for example, and at the same time achieve a measure of financial and personal independence.

It would be interesting to know Ward's unguarded opinion of the works of the conservative and influential writer, Ellis, quoted above. In the 1848 edition of Helen Charteris, Ward writes: "Mrs. Ellis, in her late admirable writings, has shown how much more depends on the 'women of England' than has hitherto been allowed..." (104).

Ellis maintained that "the sphere of woman's happiest and most beneficial influence is the domestic one", but the danger here is that

it is not easy to award to her quiet and unobtrusive

virtues that need of approbation which they really deserve, without exciting a desire to forsake the homely household duties of the family circle, to practise such as are more conspicuous, and consequently more productive of an immediate harvest of applause.

(The Women of England [1839]: 40)

Ellis did not feel the need to justify her own production of applause-evoking book after book, although such proliferation necessitated surely the forsaking of "the homely household duties of the family circle". A real setback for women at this time was the desire on the part of conservatives to ensure that the family life of the young queen Victoria should become emblematic of women's place in society:

...let us never forget, that in the person of our beloved QUEEN we have the character of a wife and mother so blended with that of a sovereign, that the present above all others ought to form an era in British history, wherein woman shall have proved herself not unworthy of the importance attached to her influence, and her name.

(The Wives of England [1843])

Cynthia L. White comments that the devotion of the Queen as a dutiful and virtuous young wife and mother "had a profound effect on women's magazines, narrowing their scope and eliminating all stimulus" (42). Such a depiction had a narrowing effect on women's expectations and aspirations generally.

The emphasis is on selflessness, and the value of obedience (see The Mothers of England (1843: 31-37). Women's activities, especially those of middle-class women, are viewed as essentially frivolous, and Ellis exhorts the mother not to become so involved in morning calls and evening parties that her "sacred duties" are relegated to a governess (ibid.: 66). Even an unhappily married woman should remember that "her highest duty is so often to suffer and be still" (The Daughters of England (1845): 73). "To men belongs the potent--(I had almost said the omnipotent) consideration of worldly aggrandisement" (The Women of England [1839]: 51).

Ward seems to be paying lip-service to these sentiments in the comment just quoted on Ellis in the 1848 Helen Charteris, her

first published work, the reception of which was still to be tested. Her novel had to be carefully designed and calculated to meet the approval of her expected audience. She shows in this novel an initially rebellious heroine brought by experience and her mother's guidance to conform to society's expectations, and a second heroine futilely expressing anger at the patriarchal inhibitions on a woman's finding personal fulfilment in life, and succumbing to societal pressures by dying. It is important here to recognise Ward's initial challenge to patriarchy. As Vicinus says, "large numbers of middle-class women felt the pressures of this narrowly defined ideal" (Vicinus 1977: x).

Jenny Uglow trenchantly sums up what it meant to be a woman in the mid-nineteenth century: she would be preoccupied with

[t]he nature of womanhood; the fear of change; the exclusion of women from the realm of the intellect and from effective power; the alliance in oppression of women, workers and slaves which gives them a shared rhetoric of freedom and resistance; the conflict between the new drive for autonomy and the older ethic of self-sacrifice; the difficulty of achieving independence without losing the possibility of sexual passion and family life....

(Uglow: 80)

These anxieties resulted in "the suppressed anger of women trapped in unequal relations with men" (ibid.: 80). It is obvious from her overt and covert comments about "men's privileges" and "the rights of men" (BM 1848 xxiv: 158) that Ward shared these preoccupations, and that she devised strategies for countering the limitations she found restrictive in her own life and work. This will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter and in chapters six and seven of this work.¹

¹ Some of the comments she makes suggest a sarcastic reference to women's voices being allowed no part in decision making:

"But let that pass [a comment on the Irish problem]: women burn their fingers meddling with politics and get no pity for it" (USM June 1840" 206). "I, being a 'lady, you know,' am by no means entitled or competent to give an opinion..." (USM July 1840: 354) (*italics inserted*). "His sons have all been provided for...but I, as a daughter, must struggle for myself" (USM October 1840: 224) (*original emphasis*).

Something which provided a means of alleviating the pressures inherent in woman's "narrowly defined ideal" could be found in the literature of the day.

Victorian literature functioned as both an expression of and a shaper of the culture and its conflicts. For many men and women, reading the works of the best known and loved writers was a means of managing the emotional ambivalences they felt in regard to their changing roles. Art gave order to and understanding of the conflicting demands placed upon individuals by personal needs, families, and society.... The classic works of Victorian literature...can illuminate the emotional conflicts and resolutions of men and women concerned with woman's proper place.... How women [in particular] effected change from within male-proscribed roles, how they redefined their status in some areas (such as education), and lost it in others (such as social production), are all important aspects of how we should place the Victorian in her proper--but changing--sphere. (Vicinus, *op.cit.*: xii-xiii)

In a chapter entitled "The Suppressed Self", Eva Figes writes:

It was not remotely possible for women to express themselves through fiction in terms of free individualism, because they were not free. To a great extent the social restraints had been internalised, and even those women who were sufficiently intelligent to question social restraints on women had other restraints imposed on them: the restraints of life as it is, which reality imposes on all writers; the restraints of a commercial publishing system which would reject reflections on and of a world too far from the general consensus.

But sooner or later the subjective voice of women was bound to make itself heard. Internal and external constraints ensured that it was expressed with a certain degree of disguise and subterfuge. Sometimes the voice does not know quite what it is saying, or does not wish to know. That the tone was one of anger and grievance, under the circumstances, was inevitable.

(Figes: 114)

The internalisation of constraints could mean that the author herself was only half aware of the import and inner drive of her fiction.

(*ibid.*: 118)

Something which Harriet Ward's reader has to confront is the question of the extent to which she was aware of the sometimes subversive nature of her writing. Did she acknowledge to herself the feelings of resentment she was experiencing, and in her two major novels, Helen Charteris and Jasper Lyle, devise a way of

finding an outlet for these feelings, with the hope that some readers would decode what she was saying? I believe that she did. We need to consider too the subliminal text and the silences in her work.

When she considers the injustices on the frontier and in society generally that the indigenous and women in particular--Xhosa, Creole, British--suffer, her desire is to effect a change through her writing. There are difficulties here. As Dorothy Driver says,

women's sympathy for the oppressed and their simultaneous entrapment within the oppressive group on whose behalf they may desire to mediate complicates their narrative stance....This entrapment is, of course, a linguistic entrapment within the discourse of imperialism, which is to say, the discourse of patriarchy, an entrapment in language itself.

(Driver 1988: 13)

Ward is fortunate in that at the time she was writing and thinking, the events of history had not hardened attitudes to such an extent that it became treasonable to voice opposition to the colonial patriarchy; here is Driver again:

Whatever sympathies may have developed among white women for the indigeous or colonized people, then, white women were also often either enjoined to or manipulated into aligning politically with their own racial group....[W]hite women themselves become the signs that push black people to the further outposts of culture--if women are "other", blacks are more "other".

(ibid.: 14-15)

Ward, ironically, is in the empowering position of viewing her situation as almost as marginal as those whose rights she defends.

Whether Ward realised the extent of the subversive undercurrent in her writing or not, she makes it obvious that she sees her place as a woman in the culture of the time as unsatisfying. Why should men find it easier to make their way in the world than women? ("I, as a daughter, must struggle for myself" [USM October 1840: 224]. "[W]omen must put an iron padlock on their lips, and all right thinking women will admit

that they cannot be too strict in their self-surveillance" [BM 1848 xxiv: 158]). Vicinus's comment in the following quotation identifies the nature of Ward's frustration and that of others like her:

Undoubtedly many middle-class women were happy in their proper sphere. But those who wished for more--for an active participation in social questions of the day, for an economically viable livelihood, for legal justice--it was essential to widen that sphere....Their unshakable conviction that women had peculiar and special characteristics which could and should influence society sustained them through years of struggle.

(Vicinus 1977: xix)

2. The Influence of the Father

It is possible to trace the genesis of Ward's writing career to her relationship with her father. There are numerous examples of the close relationship between talented nineteenth-century literary daughters and their fathers: one has only to think of Fanny Burney, Harriet Martineau and Maria Edgeworth. Harriet Ward's relationship with her father seems to have been of similar intensity, though, unlike the other three, she was never her father's amanuensis. As with these other writers, a strong identification with the father was both energising and inhibiting.

Ward proudly appends Shadwell Clerke's comment that she is "a daughter who strongly resembles [her father]" (USM June 1840: 205) to the beginning of "Recollections of an Old Soldier". She says at the end of the memoir, "[H]e who is no more taught me to believe them [my own poor talents] worthy" (ROS: 273), and this would indicate that her father recognised and encouraged her ability as a writer. Each of the women writers mentioned earlier began her career under the close supervision of her father, and this can be seen to have been inhibiting in many ways. Ward did not have the handicap of writing under the critical eye of a male parent, and in a way this freed her to assert her individuality

early in the development of her career. (That there was far less identification with her mother is evident from a number of comments throughout Ward's work.)

She was nevertheless conscious of her father's shadow or shade while she was writing the Recollections, and the emphasis is on her comparative inferiority in the face of his exceptional ability and status.

[Frank Tidy's old friends] entered into and understood my pride in recording anecdotes of him, even humbly and unworthily as I do...[He is one] whom all will acknowledge to be beyond the praise of my poor pen, albeit I write with the partiality of a devoted daughter. (ROS: 124)

Ward apostrophises her father in tones which would not have seemed emotionally extravagant to Victorian readers, even early ones, though they strike a modern ear as excessive, even allowing for filial piety and obviously deeply-felt grief:

Father! venerated and adored father! I am ever thinking of thee. When I was in my infancy, thy principles of honour were firmly engraven on my young heart; it was my pride to obey the injunctions given me by thee, in thy voice of constant kindness. Truly, in thee the force of example has been very great; and though none of thy sons and daughters can hope to attain the love and honour of such as long have loved and honoured thee, still, for thy sake, and in reverend obedience to thy will, we may prove that the example of such a father has not been altogether lost upon us. (ibid.: 118-9)

In 1832, about a year after her marriage, Ward's father came to see her in Norwich before he embarked with the 24th regiment for Canada. She sensed that it was the last time she would see him, weakened as his constitution was by years in India. As his coach disappeared, she turned away in silent despair, "with a heart bursting with grief".

At that moment, it seemed to me as if all else beside my father in this world had lost its value. Not nearly half my life had been spent with him; but he was so beloved; he stood so high among the brave, the generous and the good,-- what marvel that to me at least, he seemed a creature of a superior order? I loved him; and that love which is hallowed by right-minded pride in its object, can never die!

(ibid.: 226)

The fact that her father was away so often on dangerous service may have contributed to Ward's idolisation of him, and her dread of his death: "Many years before he died, I often thought, 'How shall I bear my father's death?'" (ibid.: 258).² Nowhere does she reveal such strong feeling for her husband, but filial piety could be freely expressed, without immodesty.

When the news of her father's death was brought to her, she was "[d]izzy, ill, and miserable beyond description" (ibid.: 267). A therapeutic way to accommodate this grief was to make a record of her father's life, and this she had the time and the opportunity to do on St Helena.

Elaine Showalter has noticed a striking similarity amongst female novelists of the earlier nineteenth century:

A factor which occurs with remarkable frequency in the backgrounds of these women is identification with, and dependence upon, the father; and either loss of, or alienation from, the mother. This may explain why early feminine novelists had fewer children than later generations. (Showalter 1977: 61)

One factor responsible for the estrangement of gifted daughters from their mothers is the fact that in middle-class families most mothers were

more narrow-minded and conventional than the fathers, who had the advantages of education and mobility....The daughter's nonconformity would increase the strains in her relationship with her mother and lead her to make greater demands on the father for love and attention. Fathers often supervised their daughters' education; they brought interesting friends to the house; they discussed the issues of the day. (ibid.: 62).

Showalter quotes a study by Judith Bardwick which links the emergence of highly developed achievement drives in girls with identification with the father (ibid.: 64). Harriet Ward, her father's "devoted daughter", bears witness to these findings.

² Cf. "'Where should I be without my father? I should sink into that nothing from which he raised me,' Maria Edgeworth worried in an eerie adumbration of the fears expressed by George Eliot and a host of other dutiful daughter-writers" (Gilbert and Gubar: 148).

Her mother is a shadowy figure in Recollections of an Old Soldier; we really only see her greeting her husband after long absence, "with a baby in her arms, till now unseen by its father" (ROS: 90), and surrounded by all her other children, or waiting anxiously on the Isle of Wight for news of Waterloo and reading her husband's letter to her children in a gentle voice, surrounded again by her children and seeming to have little identity apart from the child-bearing one (ibid.: 96-8). It is surely significant that Ward had only one child, and seems to distance herself from her mother's lifestyle by a strongly unmaternal and undomestic stance. (Useful in understanding this attitude is the work Kristeva has done on the representation of motherhood in Western culture, in which, in Toril Moi's words, she questions "the role of women in the symbolic order through an ideological and psychoanalytical analysis of what is also the material basis for women's oppression: motherhood" [Moi: 168]).

Interestingly, in the 1848 version of Helen Charteris, Ward writes, in the voice of her persona, Helen:

I have not dwelt at all on [my father], because, although he had much to do with forming my mother's character and habits, my tale has no other connexion with his name or memory.

(HC 1848: 104)

Much could be read into this statement, regarding the overwhelming influence of the father, not only on his children, but on the tabula rasa of his wife.

It is of interest that Ward's début as a novelist was in a work in which fathers are desperately needed, and yet notably absent (as, for a large part of her life, her own was). Clara is an orphan, Helen's military father is dead, and so is Lionel and Louisa's father. The venerable Archdeacon Beaumont, a father figure, in the act of rebuking the lively and thoughtless Louisa, asks: "Did you love your father?"

"Love him!" exclaimed Louisa, enthusiasm lighting up her eyes and crimsoning her cheek. "Oh, how proud I was of him! How proud I still am of his memory!" (HC 1853: 53)

With Ward's impassioned declarations in Recollections of an Old

Soldier in mind, a projection of the author's own fervour can be recognised in this response. The archdeacon's unqualified love and approval are balm to the tormented Clara. In marrying her father's contemporary, Ellersby, Clara seems to be searching for a figure of authority to replace the dead father. I shall discuss these issues in Helen Charteris, and corresponding ones in Jasper Lyle, in much greater depth in chapters six and seven.)

A character in Ward's second novel, Jasper Lyle (1851), shares the author's filial feeling. Eleanor in Cape Town receives a letter from her father in England expressing anxiety that she is becoming too involved with the rake, Captain Fairfax:

"My darling...write to me at once, you have never mentioned the affair... and your silence makes me anxious....My love, I long to have you with me again". (JL: 245)

Eleanor's mother seems anxious to be rid of her:

No one thought anything of that colourless oval face, those dove-like eyes, that intelligent brow shaded by heavy curls. There was no promise in the thin, small figure; the gentle voice was seldom heard; the smile not often seen; and it was with considerable satisfaction that Mrs. Daveney consented to let the delicate, drooping girl accompany her father on a visit to the Governor's wife at Cape Town.

(ibid.: 173)

Ward's explanation for this attitude will be repeated in Eleanor's letter to her lover. Ward as interventionary narrator writes:

[T]here was not that tenderness of manner which existed between Mrs. Daveney and [her second daughter] Marion. Eleanor had been born during the illness of that best-beloved being [her brother], who had entered the world when dangers beset his parents--poor little quiet thing! she was set aside at once, that this fragile creature might, if possible, be saved. He died; and then there came, as consolation, the bright-eyed, rosy-lipped Marion.

(Ibid.: 173)

Eleanor explains to her lover Major Frankfort (also in a letter) that her letter was from her father and not her mother because

"I had always belonged more to him than to my mother.... I was always reserved to my mother....A sensitive child, once repelled, seldom makes another advance, and I have told you that I entered the world just as the best-beloved one was fading from it. My mother naturally had less thought for me than him. I turned to my father--his

arms were open, and I rested there". (ibid.: 246)

There is no doubt from the evidence in Recollections of an Old Soldier, that one is justified, on this subject particularly, in reading the autobiographical into this declaration. Like Ward's other troubled heroines, Eleanor longs in vain for parental advice: "Dear father! would that I were at home and by thy side. Mother, [even] you would take your stricken daughter in your arms" (ibid.: 247). Significantly, Eleanor names the son born to her and Jasper Lyle, Francis: "I named him after my father" (ibid.: 270). Ward's own father's name was of course also Francis.

However, together with this overt and passionate filial devotion goes a necessarily concealed anger with the father and with the patriarchal system of which he is a representative. One remembers the plaintive note struck in Recollections of an Old Soldier, where the daughter feels her status as daughter to be a severe disadvantage, compared with that of the sons who can so easily find occupation and income because of their sex.

Judging from her writing, one can imagine the frustration Ward felt as a bright and articulate young woman in the earlier nineteenth century; she could see her brothers obtaining advancement and living interesting and fulfilling lives, while her future was projected in the dull limitations of her mother's present. All her creativity and energy had to be damped down as indecorous in a young woman, in much the same way as Helen Charteris's was controlled by her careful mother.³ When Ward turned to books as an escape into a world of adventure, and James

³ Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar discuss the "sickening" effect of "patriarchal socialization": "[A]ny young girl, but especially a lively or imaginative one, is likely to experience her education in docility, submissiveness, self-lessness as in some sense sickening. To be trained in renunciation is to be trained to ill health, since the human animal's first and strongest urge is to his/her own survival, pleasure, assertion" (Gilbert and Gubar: 54). It is a mark of Harriet Ward's resilient spirit that she does not allow herself to suffer a physical decline.

Fenimore Cooper was a favourite, she would be reminded of the circumscribed role of women. "Such works, lacking autonomous female roles, and implicitly addressed to male readers, either leave the woman reader an alien outsider or solicit her to identify against herself by assuming male values and ways of perceiving, feeling, and acting" (Abrams: 209). Another of the books she read was Robinson Crusoe,⁴ where women by their absence from an archetypally masculine world are shown to be superfluous. It is no wonder that Harriet Ward envied women who could disguise themselves as men; even if this were a short-lived liberation, its fantasised possibilities were attractive to someone weighed down, defined and limited by a crinoline. It is understandable too that Ward would occasionally choose the freedom of speech a male narratorial point of view could provide.

The lesions of despair and psychic resistance to a world dominated by fathers can be identified in Helen Charteris and in Jasper Lyle, and have their origins in the hero-worship of her father felt by Ward and generally encouraged in Victorian households. Colonel Tidy was seen to be everything the female members of that household were not, and their existence depended on his. But such patriarchal power is repressive to the female spirit, and some Victorian daughters chafed under this. The father would come to represent the confines imposed by the establishment upon women. Any challenge to these might be guiltily interpreted by the resisting daughter herself as a betrayal of the father, and must be consciously suppressed.

Something which throws light on what Ward was experiencing in writing Recollections of an Old Soldier is a parallel text,

⁴ See Hardy and Hunter:

"You want to go further, Paul--is that it? You and Sandy were both bewitched, I think, by reading Robinson Crusoe on board ship."

"Ah, mother!" cried I, with a sigh, "only think that, after all, Robinson Crusoe is not true!" (HH: 85)

The bewitching idea of being able to 'go further' is usually denied women, who must fantasise what such freedom must mean.

Helene Cixous' Dedans (Inside: 1969), an early autobiographical "novel" that "explores a coming to writing and language", as Verena Andermatt Conley puts it (Conley: 13).⁵ Conley makes the point that

[t]he primary event subtending Inside is the death of the father. It is that break, or rupture, that makes [Cixous] come to writing. Cixous distinguishes between the real and the symbolic--or dead--father. The symbolic father, in Lacanian terms, is the one who brings her to language and writing. (Conley: 13)

As Cixous explained in an interview,

The origin of the gesture of writing is linked to the experience of a disappearance, to the feeling of having lost the key to the world, to have been thrown outside [sic]. To have acquired all of a sudden the feeling of something precious, rare, mortal. To have to find again, urgently, an entrance, breath, to keep the trace. We have to make the apprenticeship of Mortality. (quoted Conley: 13)

So much of the emotion which Ward expresses in Recollections of an old Soldier is suggestive of loss, insecurity and yet a new-found liberation. Ward's memoir of her father was her way of laying to rest an awe-ful presence.⁶ There is here something too of Sylvia Plath's poem, "Daddy":

Daddy, I have had to kill you.
You died before I had time--
Marble-heavy, a bag full of God....⁷

A strong line of connection can be observed later in Jasper Lyle between God-Patriarch-Father-Oppressor, as I shall indicate.

The process of resistance is continued in Five Years in Kaffirland which starts out as an endorsement of the world of the father, the army, the colonial enterprise and masculine decision-making in general; it ends as a more or less overt critique of

⁵ I was unfortunately unable to obtain a copy.

⁶ If we remember how "coerced into didacticism" Maria Edgeworth was by a dominating father (Figes: 27), we might think Ward fortunate that hers could be early exorcised by a memoir.

⁷ I am grateful to Professor van Wyk Smith for pointing out to me the similarity between Sylvia Plath's resistance to patriarchal authority and Harriet Ward's.

all these things. It is interesting to note the sharply authoritative tone of the comments Ward makes in her letters to Philippart, as she condemned what seem to her to be serious misjudgements on the part of the government and the military hierarchy in the Eastern Cape. Her tone in the work which was being written at the same time-- Five Years in Kaffirland-- is far less assertive, while nevertheless fairly robust. It would seem that she was conscious of a restriction of freedom in ensuring the acceptability of what she was saying publicly, as opposed to the frankness she allowed herself in addressing a friend.

Hélène Cixous' comment on the revolutionary role of writing for women is relevant here:

[W]riting is the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought, the precursory movement for the transformation of social and cultural structures. ("The Laugh of the Medusa" [246],
quoted by Kadiatu Kanneh: 137)

For Ward, writing offers a degree of escape from the shackles of patriarchy and colonialism, a release from silence. This line of thought will be pursued more fully in the last two chapters of this work.

The resistance to the father leads to anger with society, the establishment, and English culture, none of which can be expressed without scandal. The self-imposed embargo (which Ward calls "self surveillance" in the 1848 story "Temper") makes a deviant discourse necessary, whereby deep-seated emotions can find an outlet in symbol and metonymy; as Kristeva says, repression leads to symbolisation, and this becomes very clear in Jasper Lyle.⁸ One does question whether what Ward is doing is conscious or subliminal; all the indications are that she knew that as a woman she was not free to express what she felt and thought; and so her intelligence finds a way of using her characters in acts of ventriloquism, so that the consequences of

⁸ Her suggestive use of Byron's "Cain" is an example.

breaking silence are not alienating. Here is Kristeva again, to point out that women learn cunning and how to manipulate masculine discourse to achieve their own ends and to ensure that they are heard:

Let us know that an ostensibly masculine, paternal identification, because it supports symbol and time, is necessary, in order to have a voice in the chapter of history and politics....When, striving for access to the word and to time, [a woman] identifies with the father, she becomes a support for transcendence. But when she is inspired by that which the symbolic order represses, isn't a woman also the most radical atheist, the most committed anarchist? In the eyes of this society, such a posture casts her as a victim. But elsewhere?

(Kristeva 1990: 156, 158)

A number of feminist critics have discussed the sense of alienation women writers feel. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar examine the "patriarchal psychosexual context in which so much Western literature was authored", a context which fills a woman writer with anxiety because she feels "anomalous, undefinable, alienated, a freakish outsider" (Gilbert and Gubar: 48). Patricia Meyer Spacks identifies the psychic trauma for intelligent women when she considers the dilemma of a woman of the seventeenth century, Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle:

Like her modern sisters, [the Duchess of Newcastle] suffers intense conflict about her social role. Her efforts to yield to the demands of her culture cannot entirely succeed because it represents a total denial of personal needs; and in an era when feminine protest was not socially sanctioned, the Duchess of Newcastle manages to express it.

(Spacks: 192)

One result, as we have seen, is that a woman such as Harriet Ward comes to see herself as different from most other members of her sex, in a sense an exile, because of her unwillingness or inability to conform. Kristeva is interesting on this notion of a female sense of dissidence and alienation:

The language of exile muffles a cry, it doesn't ever shout....How can one avoid sinking into the mire of common sense, if not by becoming a stranger to one's own country, language, sex and identity? Writing is impossible without some kind of exile.

(Kristeva 1990: 298)

This state of exile would seem to a certain extent to be

voluntarily assumed, as a means of survival. Kristeva sees that the link with what the father represents has to be severed, and this has relevance to the process Ward undergoes as she finds her own voice:

Exile is already in itself a form of dissidence, since it involves uprooting oneself from a family, a country or a language. More importantly, it is an irreligious act that cuts all ties....The exile cuts all links, including those that bind him to the belief that the thing called life has A Meaning [sic] guaranteed by the dead father....Exile is a way of surviving in the face of the dead father, of gambling with death, which is the meaning of life, of stubbornly refusing to give in to the law of death.⁹
(ibid.: 298)

Harriet Ward can be seen to be an exile from her culture, both metropolitan and colonial, estranged even from her language which cannot be accommodated to all that she needs it to convey. This would account for her attraction to other alienated figures such as the fictional Jasper Lyle and actual exiles such as Napoleon on St Helena, and Magoma on Robben Island, as well as the marginalised people she meets in the Cape: the Xhosa, the Khoi, the San, and especially women.

⁹ The editor of Kristeva's Desire in Language (1980), Leon S. Roudiez, makes a point which is relevant to Ward's situation as exile:

The article Roland Barthes devoted to [Kristeva's] first collection of essays was given an ambiguous title ["L'Etrangère"]; it could be translated either as "The Stranger" or "The Alien" (French language, with its more restricted vocabulary, sometimes allows for pregnant polysemy). Barthes's specific reference is to semiotics, a feminine noun in French, whose "historical role presently is to be the intruder, the third element, the one who disturbs..." (Kristeva 1980: 11).

2. I and Eye: Writing and Riding¹⁰

Females traditionally remained at home, while males went out exploring and adventuring into the world. Ward broke this tradition in two ways; not only did she leave her "home" (impermanent though this might have been to the child of an army officer), but she left her country, an opportunity few women of her time were able to enjoy. Not all officer's wives chose to accompany their husbands; one can gather this from the more or less sedentary life led by Mrs Tidy, Harriet's mother. The aspect of Ward's character which resented the privileges of opportunity granted only to males would have seized the occasion to broaden her experience and to obtain copy for her writing career. After the confining few years on St Helena, the relatively unexplored South African landscape and its people lay open to her point of view. This world could be made hers by the acts of venturing into and commenting upon it. She can thereby surreptitiously usurp two traditionally male roles.

Malvern Van Wyk Smith makes the point that whereas Lady Anne Barnard (1750-1820) had her view of the Cape virtually confined to the area around Cape Town, and even she experiences "relative freedom" (Driver: 1992: 190), Sir John Barrow was a traveller in a more exciting sense, "criss-crossing the new land" (Van Wyk Smith 1990: 3). Great tracts of the country present themselves to his gaze. Something that must strike the reader in Five Years in Kaffirland is the way Harriet Ward traversed the extended terrain of the Eastern Frontier; hers is not the view from her parlour in the white-washed cottage at Fort Peddie or the barracks at Fort England; she is en face with the country and its inhabitants, usually from the back of a horse, and her experience and vision are largely at first-hand. Her situation can usefully be compared with that of her literary model, Maria Edgeworth,

¹⁰ My sub-title is influenced by Richard D. Altick's chapter heading, "New Ways of Writing and Riding" (The Presence of the Present: 183), but his is the American usage of "riding" to mean "travelling", in his case, by train.

whose perspective was severely limited by the restrictions of her class and her gender. Dale Spender makes this clear when she describes the urgency with which Edgeworth wrote to her friends, desperately requesting "firsthand [sic] accounts of their experiences:...she was always urging her brothers...to provide her with meticulous details of their professions and the scope of their views" (Spender 1986: 288) (both actual and metaphorical, one would imagine), so that she could turn these into authentic realistic fiction. Harriet Ward's far greater freedom was due to her situation as a married woman and in particular as an officer's wife. Elaine Showalter highlights these advantages for women like Ward:

[M]arried women could enjoy a wider range of experience outside the home as well as in the library, without fear of scandal. This freedom applied particularly to the wives of army officers and missionaries, who had to follow the regiment (or the mission), but found a wealth of exciting source material when they arrived. (Showalter: 67)

Virginia Woolf makes the point even more strikingly in her essay "Women and Fiction":

...Pride and Prejudice, Wuthering Heights, Villette, and Middlemarch were written by women from whom was forcibly withheld all experience save that which could be met with in a middle-class drawing-room. No first-hand experience of war or seafaring or politics or business was possible for them. Even their emotional life was strictly regulated by law and custom. When George Eliot ventured to live with Mr Lewes without being his wife, public opinion was scandalized. Under its pressure she withdrew into a suburban seclusion which, inevitably, had the worst possible effects upon her work. She wrote that unless people asked of their own accord to come and see her, she never invited them. At the same time, on the other side of Europe, Tolstoi was living a free life as a soldier, with men and women of all classes, for which nobody censured him and from which his novels drew much of their astonishing breadth and vigour. (Woolf: 46-7)

Ward was fortunate in having been exposed to a range of people: the ranks, their wives, the upper classes, the Irish, the Scottish, the Xhosa and other indigenes, the frontier settlers, as well as to a variety of environments. She had great freedom of movement, in being able without impropriety to meet and

converse with any one she chose, far from the conventions inhibiting women in England, and she could move about physically, constantly and literally changing her point of view. As a result, she extended the boundaries of what was acceptable for a woman to experience and to comment on, and her vision is often refreshingly individualistic, as stereotypical thinking is exposed to the challenges of the actual encounter. One of the reasons all this was possible was because of her proficiency and fearlessness in riding.

It seems likely that she was a good rider before she got to South Africa, or she could never have ventured into the rough terrain of the frontier. Ward and Fanny Kemble were at school together in Boulogne, at the ages of eight and nine (USM August 1841: 530), and one can extrapolate from Kemble's reminiscences of her education to Ward's own, on the presumption that girls of their class would have been expected to be accomplished in similar skills.

At the beginning of her acting career, aged seventeen, Kemble was subject to wakefulness and "frequent and severe pains in the side which any strong emotion invariably brought on, and which were relieved by nothing but exercise on horseback" (Kemble: 37).

My riding master was the best and most popular in London--Captain Fozzard, or, as he was irreverently called among his young Amazons, "Old Fozzard". His methods were so good that all the best lady riders in London were among his pupils. His training was eminently calculated to make us all but immovable in the saddle--without stirrup, without holding the reins, with our arms behind us, to go through plunging, rearing and kicking lessons and to take our horses over the bar was a considerable test of a firm seat [sic]. In all of these special feats I became proficient. (ibid.: 37)

These skills would be invaluable to riders in South Africa. Paul Hunter, Ward's alter ego in Hardy and Hunter, says of himself:

I was not accomplished in horsemanship, but I had nerve, and a "good hand" by nature; and if nature will not give this, rely on it, art never will. (HH: 312)

These are surely the words of someone familiar with the skills of riding. Riding has a transformative effect even on the normally rather listless Eleanor in Jasper Lyle:

Eleanor revived to new life on horseback, and her bright bay steed rejoiced in the precious burden he bore....Start not, reader, at the notion of ladies riding for pleasure with armed escorts in a heathen land. Many a time and oft have I traversed these enamelled plains, too much exhilarated with the grandeur of the scene to think of danger.
(JL: 174)

A special mystique seems to attach to riding and women for the writers of the nineteenth century, probably because it was one of the few permitted feminine physical activities. One thinks of Bathsheba Everdene who rides astride her horse when she thinks she is unobserved. Hardy's fascination with women on horseback is explained in a note by Ronald Blythe:

One of the most passionate images which Hardy had of Emma Lavinia Gifford, the girl he was to marry immediately he had finished Far from the Madding Crowd, was of her wild riding by the sea in north Cornwall, and of her seeming to be part of the animal once she was on a horse. Both Elfride, in A Pair of Blue Eyes, and Bathsheba Everdene reflect Emma's dash and prowess when she was
...the woman riding high above with bright hair flopping free--

The woman who I loved so, and who loyally love[s] me.
("Beeny Cliff")¹¹

One remembers too George Eliot's irony in her revealing statement about Dorothea in the first chapter of Middlemarch:

Riding was an indulgence which she allowed herself in spite of conscientious qualms; she felt that she enjoyed it in a pagan sensuous way, and always looked forward to renouncing it.

That there is something vaguely wicked about riding for women is detectable in Helen Charteris: Louisa Cleaveland coaxes the Archdeacon "to forgive her for riding a race with Harry Lorimer across the park, and leaping a fence by way of finishing it in style" (HC 1853: 49). That a good rider needs physical courage, not usually associated with the Victorian "sweet young thing",

¹¹ Quoted in Ronald Blythe's Notes to the Penguin edition of Far from the Madding Crowd (1978), 475.

is plain from a later passage in Helen Charteris, where the elderly Mrs Beaumont says: "...I gathered all my courage together, just as I used to gather my reins and summon up all my spirit when I was a young country-girl and leaped a fence..." (ibid.: 213). Riding provided a means by which women could transgress the limits of behaviour and indulge in sensuous physicality without fear of censure. This freedom is taken many steps further in an environment like the Eastern Frontier of the Cape.

Fanny Kemble's delight in the exhilaration of riding caused her to exclaim: "The death I should prefer would be to break my neck off the back of a good horse at a full gallop on a fine day" (Epigraph: Rushmore, 1970: unnumbered page). While this passionate style was not Harriet Ward's, what she had to say about riding in Five Years in Kaffirland reveals that she shared Kemble's passion for the sport. The war situation did not deter her, nor blazing sun, drenching rain and swarms of locusts. In fact, danger and discomfort seem to have added zest to riding expeditions and been welcomed for what they could add to scene-painting and as vivid demonstrations of female competence and daring. Ward's costume--riding habit, hat and veil--¹² must have been hot and cumbersome gear in South Africa, but nevertheless unavoidable. (She felt sensitive enough to public opinion to defend her "womanly attributes, which I would not abjure for the world" against charges of unfeminine brazenness in riding across "savage" country [Five Years i: 156]). That this was necessary becomes clear when she says of the ride to the Winterberg, "our party was reduced to five, I being now the only lady" (Bentley's Miscellany 1849: 293). There is something

¹² Perhaps, like Wordsworth's sister-in-law before her in 1829, Harriet Ward had her riding habits made by the fashionable Bond Street tailor, George Stultz. He was still the most famous tailor in the 1840s and 1850s (Altick 1991: 275-6). In Helen Charteris, Mrs Mackcrackin mentions that her daughters "got riding habits of green merino just before we left the Cape" (HC 1853: 13). However, the Mackcrackins are not noted for taste, and a colonial riding habit is bound to have been inferior to one made in Bond Street.

symbolic about her throwing back her veil in order to see and to record what she was seeing, as well as in order to be seen as a woman in these extraordinary circumstances.

On her last journey in South Africa, Harriet Ward's party had to cross the swollen Sundays River: the women were swung up on to a wagon which crossed the ford; she says: "A long habit-skirt was a terrible encumbrance", especially when it was "three inches deep in the water" even in the wagon (BM 1848: 476). On the trip to the Winterberg, the party comes face to face unexpectedly with a solitary Xhosa on horseback; Dorothy Driver has coined the term "self-othering" for such a moment (Driver 1995: 46).¹³ Ward recognises what an incongruous sight she must seem to him: "Doubtless the apparition of a lady on horseback, in a habit and hat, startled the savage as much as his appearance had surprised us" (BM 1848: 296). The comment underlines her consciousness of the unusualness of her conduct, appearance and situation, while the costume signifies that she is clearly not abjuring her "womanly attributes". She must at times have wished for the shirt and trousers which allowed Ann Moffatt and "Emma, the Sailor Girl" such freedom of movement. Dale Spender highlights the freedom that the ability to ride gave Australian women in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; as the years passed, women could afford to be less conventional in their clothing:

Miles Franklin was not alone in extolling the virtues of a horse--and mobility--for Australian womanhood; directly and indirectly, there were women authors who portrayed the absence of "polite" conventions and painful clothing in a positive light.

(Spender 1988 [1]: xviii)

¹³ She is discussing Lady Anne Barnard's self-consciousness in dealing with the discourses at her disposal: "[H]er writing presents different aspects of the self, as if the different speaking positions that constitute her subjectivity are engaged in negotiation (or contestation) with one another, the self engaged in dialogue with an 'otherness' within. I call the process 'self-othering'" (Driver 1995: 46).

Ward might not have abjured her womanly attributes, but she had to acknowledge that she could not call herself a "fine lady", even had she wanted to. In the following description, the effect is almost cinematic in its vigorous movement and constantly shifting focus: startlingly different from what a "lady" could normally expect to be looking at let be alone thoroughly involved in:

The close of the first day's journey from Graham's Town brought us to the Koonap River, which we found almost impassable for horses. The troopers of the dragoon orderlies were towed over in the wake of the boat, trembling, snorting, kicking, some turning heels uppermost, and others at last submitting to their fate, and falling exhausted on the bank on reaching it. The river roared and tumbled, and the passage across, in the old boat, with its uncertain rope, would have frightened fine ladies. But people must cease to be fine ladies in Africa. (Five Years ii: 300)

Elaine Showalter has argued that generally women writers were anxious not to present an undomesticated, unfeminine appearance to the world; Harriet Ward, on the contrary, never mentions the domestic, and would obviously far rather be out on a horse with a posse of dragoons than doing any of the things Showalter lists as characteristic of "feminine novelists":

When interviewers came to visit, Mrs. Linton would display her embroidered cushions, fire-screens, and chair-seats; Mrs. Walford would pour tea; Mrs. Oliphant would pose in black silk and lace. Mrs. Craik modestly described the position of the feminine novelists: "We may...write shelvesful of books--the errant children of our brain may be familiar half over the grown world, and yet we ourselves sit as quiet by our chimney-corner, live a life as simple and peaceful as any happy common woman of them all". (Showalter: 85-6)

These roles, one feels, would be anathema, claustrophobia, death of the spirit, to the active, enquiring Mrs Ward. Instead of embroidering cushions, she takes delight in recommending a (side?-) saddle as a shelter to protect her child from the wind at night (Five Years i: 87), and speaking from experience says that she has found that a saddle makes a tolerable pillow. It is quite likely that, like Du Plessis's daughter in Jasper Lyle, "her saddle was a man's...with the left stirrup shortened, and the right one brought over to the near side, [so that] she contrived to sit with comfort and considerable grace" (JL: 313).

Rather than demurely serving tea, Harriet Ward is riding through legions of locusts at a fast gallop, "endeavouring to beat them off with my whip, but all to no purpose!" (ibid. ii: 168), and already mentally recreating the scene for those confined to less exciting lives in England.

Ward introduces her love of riding by means of a flash-back half way through the first volume of Five Years in Kaffirland. She has been prevailed upon by her husband and Theophilus Shepstone to accompany the troops to a meeting with the chief Mhala at a mission station four miles from Fort Peddie. It is a lovely morning, resembling a warm English spring day.

As we cantered on, in peaceful array, over the green turf...many thoughts chased each other through my mind. Not a year had elapsed since, walking one morning with a friend (one of those connected with old, familiar, and beloved memories), we had chatted, as we stopped at the crossing from Marlborough-street to Maddox-street, about rides in Kaffirland, and notes thereon.

(Five Years i: 155)

I have speculated that this friend may have been a fellow-writer, Georgina C. Munro, who was on the frontier during the Sixth Frontier War (1834-5), and who was also a contributor to the United Service Magazine (Letcher 1991). Whoever it was was obviously familiar with the countryside, shared Harriet Ward's fondness for riding, and knew the Eastern Cape terrain well. Like Ward's, Munro's world is not that of the parlour, but of the "masculine" rough-and-tumble life of travel, adventure, unusual sights and war.

On the occasion under discussion, Ward is honest enough to confess that when the advance guard "called out in Dutch that the Kaffirs were in sight, my heart fluttered. As a corrective to this, I gave my horse his head at once, and kept up, at a little distance from the road, with the hand-gallop of the troops". She is determined to resist the beating of her heart and the "slight coldness about the lips" (Five Years ii: 156), and, conscious of the effectiveness of the accompanying English officers and men, stands her ground as Mhala and two hundred followers, all

mounted, descend the hills towards them. This is another cinematic effect. With an ever-empathetic eye for animals, particularly horses, and for the detail that will bring the scene before the eye, she notes the Xhosa horses, "none being saddled, nor, apparently, bridled", which are released "to enjoy the sweets of the fresh grass" (ibid.: 157).

Two months later, she and another officer's wife accompanied the troops again, this time to retrieve cattle reputedly stolen by Tola. In a striking example of "self-othering", this time seeing herself through Xhosa eyes as part of a less than legitimate imperial force rather than as an eccentric Englishwoman, she imagines him "smiling...at so many of Her Majesty's soldiers being sent out to hunt him,--he--a Kaffir Chief--on his own wild ground..." (ibid.: 170).

Although I by no means think the head of a brigade in array for the field a suitable place for ladies in general, my friend and I did not regret having yielded to the various solicitations, that we should proceed a little further with the expedition, which had no chance of becoming, in reality, a warlike one. (ibid.: 172; my italics).

In general, such daring would be unfitting for "ladies", but the subversive implication is that some "ladies" are spirited enough to be exceptions to the rule. And like I'Ons, Ward the artist needs to be out in the field in order to record this landscape unfamiliar to an English audience. The weather on this occasion too was glorious and the countryside beautiful, and no doubt the frisson of danger was thrilling.

Over the turf we cantered, the delicious air imparting spirits to ourselves and to our steeds, and as we advanced, we left the green-jackets [the Khoi Cape Corps] winding along the road behind us, while down between two green hills came the 91st, the shrill bagpipes sounding strangely indeed among these far plains and echoing valleys of Africa. (ibid.: 174)

After this panoramic view, in a passage redolent of deep pleasure, and of a Frederick I'Ons scene,¹⁴ Ward describes the bivouac and the picnic on the banks of the Keiskamma River:

¹⁴ For a discussion of the connections between the Eastern Cape painter and Ward, see Chapter Five.

A beautiful spot was selected; nothing could be more picturesque....In a few moments, the white tents dotted the ground; fires were lit, and, in an incredibly short time. there was savoury evidence of carbonatje. (ibid.: 175)

The only concession to feminine frailty is dismissed at once:

My head ached with the fatigue of the ride, and, perhaps, the excitement of the scene; but that was nothing.

Some unidentified hand spreads a table for her near a "kindly bush",

and a breakfast that would have satisfied an epicure craved attention. I rejoiced over some deliciously-made coffee.... (ibid.: 175)

The world of crochet and fire-screens is gloriously and permanently over-shadowed, as walls fall away and the eye moves outwards and onwards. What has made this unusual experiencing and perceiving self possible are Harriet Ward's riding prowess, her curiosity, a discreet disregard for convention, and a desire to "keep up with the men", if not to overtake them, and to be seen by as large an audience as possible to be doing so.

CHAPTER THREE

Making a Name in a Man's World: Harriet Ward and the Periodical Press

Many of the novelists of the Victorian period started their careers as journalists. Notable exceptions were George Eliot and Mrs Oliphant, whose fame as a novelist led to her being asked after the publication of her seventh novel to write reviews for Blackwood's Magazine (Jay: 247-8). As Andrew Blake points out, "there was no strict dividing line between any form of journalism and the writing of novels" (original emphasis), and novelists who were not journalists were very much in the minority from the 1840s to the 1870s. As far as subject matter was concerned, "all the writings of [most] novelists and journalists...were concerned with the issues of the day, [and] were in some sense therefore journalistic. [Writers'] own critical reactions, like those of most contemporary reviewers and readers, centred around [sic] the notion of 'realism'" (Blake: 70-1). Harriet Ward was not unusual in seeing her role as that of realistic recorder of the details of her world, both in fiction and non-fiction. Hand in hand with this, and in common with writers such as Dickens, Mrs Gaskell, George Eliot, Trollope and Meredith, went a consciousness of the power of words to effect social change, and a duty to exercise that power.

Alvin Sullivan, in his research into Victorian periodicals, estimates that there were 50 000 individual periodical titles in Victorian Britain, and, as was the general rule up to the 1860s, most contributions were anonymous (Sullivan: xiii). Ward, perhaps because of her unique status as a female voice from South Africa, quickly and proudly shed anonymity. Sullivan speaks of

the simple proliferation of journals themselves, for the first time making it possible for a significant number of men (and a few women, such as Harriet Martineau and Elizabeth Lynn Linton) to make their living by writing alone, unsupported by patronage or the crutch of another occupation. (xix)

G.H.Lewes in Fraser's Magazine of March 1847 declared: "To periodical literature we owe the possibility of authorship as a profession" (Sullivan: xix).

It was thus the great age of the periodical, with a highly literate middle class, eager for entertainment and instruction. With characteristic canniness, Ward recognised a market for her work. One should not underestimate her achievement in contributing with such regularity from the Eastern Frontier to periodicals published in London. "For London-based writers, journalism was always an option..." (Blake 70). Despite what must have been the extraordinary difficulties attendant on her distance from the metropolis, Harriet Ward became an active contributor to some of the leading publications of the day; apart from the specialised United Service Magazine, she wrote for Ainsworth's Magazine, Bentley's Miscellany, and The New Monthly Magazine. The success of her articles resulted directly in the publication of two of her first books, Five Years in Kaffirland (1848) and Recollections of an Old Soldier (1849). There is no doubt that her access to the reading public through the periodicals ensured her successful reception as a writer of more substantial works, and enabled her to become a "name". The earnings from her writing were considerable; she was paid thirteen shillings a page by Richard Bentley (Bentley Papers Add.Mss. 46652 f.116), and one can speculate that this was the standard rate. From Bentley alone, she received fifty pounds for her contributions between August 1848 and September 1853. (Bentley paid her fifty pounds in advance for Helen Charteris, to be followed on the sale of all 750 copies by another one hundred and fifty pounds. A reprint would bring her another and final 200 pounds, he promised, according to an agreement in his Letterbook, and the copyright would remain his property (Bentley Papers Add Mss 46615, f.100).

1. The United Service Magazine

Albert Tucker outlines the importance of military journals in the nineteenth century:

Though the British army was relatively small in the nineteenth century, and British society could hardly have been called militaristic, the reading public for military journals was an attractive one after the Napoleonic War.

....[T]hose involved could assume a steady market, minimal competition, and subjects of interest that extended from the narrowly military and naval, to the nostalgic and adventurous, to the broader national and imperial.

(Tucker: 62)

The United Service Magazine was the leading military journal from 1829 until 1888. It started as The United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine, edited by Peninsular War veteran, Major T.H.Shadwell Clerke, and published three times a year by Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley. The editor perceived his readership--active and retired officers, and, presumably, their wives-- as generally more intelligent than most other groups, and therefore interested not only in military subjects but in memoirs, tales and anecdotes.

British officers are so constantly in relation with society at large; are so interwoven with it by ties of blood, mutual sympathies and common interests...that a corresponding expansion of limits...appears expedient to meet the demand for more diffused information.¹

It proved to be the ideal vehicle for Harriet Ward's talents. As Tucker points out, the subjects of the periodical essays "to a high degree reflected certain patterns of literary taste as well as interest in military or naval pursuits" (Tucker: 63). This "soldier's daughter" could provide her discerning readership with authentic military anecdotes, told with attention to detail and a high level of emotional interest, as in "The Young Soldier's Death-bed" and "The Wreck of the Abercrombie Robinson and Waterloo"; with fictionalised but easily recognisable descriptions of military lifestyles, as in "Sketches from Military Life" and "Married Soldiers in the Army"; or with "on the spot" accounts of an exciting and dangerous war.

In 1842, elements of the name of the journal were transposed to read The United Service Magazine and Naval and Military

¹ This was Shadwell Clerke's editorial statement in the first issue of the USM (January 1829), quoted by Tucker: 63.

Journal, commonly abbreviated to Colburn's United Service Magazine (USM), which appeared monthly.² In the same year, Sir John Philippart, widely respected editor of the weekly Naval and Military Gazette, also owned by Colburn, was appointed editor of the United Service Magazine. He was noted for his "constructively critical attitude" to the Duke of Wellington's resistance to military reform (Tucker: 66). He is of special interest in this study, because it is to him, as editor of the United Service Magazine, that Harriet Ward addressed eight of the letters in the Brenthurst collection.

In the first of these, she writes:

I was most happy to hear from my mother Mrs. Tidy that she has seen you and learned that you had known my brave and lamented father. It seems Sir to create a tie [between] you and me beyond that of mere correspondents personally unknown to each other.

(Brenthurst Letter 2: 16-18.12.1845)³

She goes on to express the hope that Philippart will employ her in connection with the United Service Magazine when she returns to England, a wish that does not seem to have materialised: her last piece for it was published in October 1850. (Perhaps at this stage, she had decided to offer even her military articles to Bentley's Miscellany, as Bentley seemed willing to accept a steady supply of work from her. She may too still have been angry as a result of the difficulties she had had with Colburn over payment for Five Years in Kaffirland [Brenthurst Letter 10: 2.1849], and decided to cut ties with his publishing house.)

As many of the letters written to publishers at this time show, women particularly were forced to seek authorship as a

² I am indebted for information on the USM to F.H.Lake, "Regimental Journals and other Serial Publications of the British Army, 1660-1981" (unpublished thesis, London, 1985), and to Albert Tucker, "Military", in Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Publications, edited by J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel (1994).

³ Ward consistently spells "Philippart" as "Philiphardt". I am using Tucker's spelling as probably more authentic.

respectable way of earning. The first editor of the United Service Journal, Major Shadwell Clerke, was probably Harriet Ward's early mentor, judging from a letter she wrote to Philippart:

My good friend Major Clarke [sic] always bid me take facts for my subjects [sic] you see I do so--God knows I write from life.
(Brenthurst Letter 4: 3.1.1846)

Harriet Ward confided in Philippart that payment for her work was of vital importance. (She would not, for example, have been paid as a correspondent for newspapers such as The Times or Colburn's weekly United Service Gazette.) Payment is "a great object to a poor soldiers [sic] wife, my earnings procure me many comforts which otherwise I must do without". In the same letter she urges him to publish her work: "Every guinea now is of the utmost consequence", and reminds him that her usual fee is half a guinea a page (Brenthurst Letter 2: 16-18.12.1846). (See page 13.)

Her next letter, written on 3 January 1846, explains the desperate financial situation the Wards find themselves in, having suffered a shipwreck and borne the cost of the one hundred pounds necessary to enable Captain Ward to exchange from the Reserve Battalion to the First, to say nothing of the looming expense of a three-month voyage home. "Anything therefore that you can admit into the U.S. Mag. will be a great help to me as Mr. Colburn's pay though small is sure" (Brenthurst Letter 4).⁴

The letters to Philippart throw light on Harriet Ward's perceptions of the importance of publishers' readers.⁵ She, indignant at the abuses occasioned by jobbery and patronage in the army, sees no contradiction in requesting Philippart to use

⁴ That this was not always the case becomes apparent from a letter to Philippart in February 1849: Ward reveals that she has had to call in the Second Master of Westminster and "a long-headed solicitor" to force Colburn to pay her for Five Years, published the previous June (Brenthurst Letter 10: 8.2.1849).

⁵ See Jeanne Rosenmayer Fahnestock: "Geraldine Jewsbury: The Power of the Publisher's Reader" in Nineteenth-Century Fiction 28 (3): December 1978, 253-72.

his influence to persuade Colburn to publish her novel (Helen Charteris). She says: "I know there is a great deal of favoritism [sic] in these matters & that Mr Colburn's reader would throw by a work which was sent to the house without recommendation--I have already written to Mrs Hewitt and Col Keppel concerning it" (Brenthurst Letter 3: 16-18.12.1845). The intensity of the tone of this correspondence is an echo of a letter by an aspirant author to Richard Bentley, one of Ward's publishers:

If you could help me to dispose of [my story] you do not know what an act of kindness it would be--The dark clouds of adversity have gathered over me that I can see no bright lining....We have no income. (J. A. Sutherland: 209)

In February 1846 Ward sent two articles for Philippart to forward to Ainsworth's Magazine, and added a plea: "Should you see Mr Ainsworth be pleased to say what you can for me" (Brenthurst Letter 5: 2.1846).

These frantic requests for help show her miserable sense of isolation: she was "on the spot" on the frontier, but her urgent need was to be furthering her own cause in Marlborough Street. Her tenacity seems to have been rewarded: thirty-five pieces were published in the United Service Magazine from June 1840 to October 1850. In the five years from August 1848 to September 1853, she published thirteen articles in Bentley's Miscellany, and it would be true to say that the United Service Magazine and Bentley's Miscellany firmly established her as a household name with middle- and upper-class readers.

2. "The partiality of a Devoted Daughter" (ROS: 124)

Harriet Ward's first articles for the USM were anecdotes from the life of her father, perhaps a topic suggested by his friend, the kindly Shadwell Clerke. Clerke, as editor of the United Service Magazine, comments in an introductory note to "Recollections of

an Old Soldier" on the traits of Colonel Tidy's character and story, "drawn with so much simplicity and effect...by a daughter who strongly resembles him" ('ROS' June 1840: 205).

The memoir is pleasantly written and interesting to read, though Sir John Hall would undoubtedly judge it, as he judged its author, rather chatty and too romantic (Hall: 178). The Athenaeum published a fairly scathing and memorably brief "review" of the book-length version of the memoir, as follows:

Review of Recollections of an Old Soldier: A Biographical Sketch of the Late Colonel Tidy, C.B., 24th Regt. with Anecdotes of his Contemporaries [sic]. By Mrs. Ward, Authoress of "Five Years in Kafirland," Etc.Etc.

Space is spared by a full transcription of the above title, --and almost enough told thereby in recommendation and character of the volume: which addresses a class rather than the general reading public,--and is executed with warm-hearted feeling rather than in nice taste. Part of these "Recollections," we are informed, had appeared in the United Service Magazine; and their success led to the collection, extension and re-arrangement before us.

(17 March 1849: 276)

Despite the derogatory tone here, and the curious suggestion that the work is not in "nice taste", it has an appeal for a variety of readers. Colonel Tidy emerges as likeable, humorous, devoted to his men and his profession, and a much-loved father, husband and friend. The details of his life are vividly and zestfully described, with the personality of his daughter emerging almost as strongly as his own. She, as narrator, sees no point in making herself invisible or keeping her opinions hidden. This is part of the charm of the memoir for a reader searching for clues to the writer's character and the events of her early life. If she has qualms about obtruding herself, they are not very serious ones: "Perhaps my own childish reminiscences are not quite in place in what is professedly a biographical sketch of an old and distinguished officer; but they are so interwoven with affectionate memories of my father..." (ROS: 123). That she should offer an explanation at all is interesting: Patricia Meyer Spacks explains: "The propriety of feminine autobiography is dubious. Autobiography is self-

display, opposed to the female virtues of modesty and concealment" (Spacks: 194). Another of Spacks's comments is relevant to Harriet Ward; speaking of the Duchess of Newcastle, Spacks says: "Because she has discovered that she has no right to assert herself, her self-assertion is devious" (Spacks: 196). In writing the biography of her father, Ward is enabled without too much censure to write of herself.

An example of her relaxed and intimate style, and of the way she blends details of her own biography into the account of her father's, is the extract which follows. She has been discussing the mixed feelings of the soldiers and those they leave behind when a regiment departs for foreign service. She begins ingenuously:

Is this a digression? Perhaps it is. I am so apt to talk as I speak without judgement perhaps. But make allowances for one who has spent great part [*sic*] of her life in saying, "How d'ye do?" and "Good bye." We have our pleasures too--we chartered vagabonds; for if the "Good bye" is very sad, then the "How d'ye do?" is very sweet.
(*"ROS"* June 1840: 210)

After describing her father's warm association with the Irish while serving in Ireland, she interposes:

Poor, poor Ireland! there is great pleasure in duly appreciating your good qualities--they do predominate so far over the bad ones. Pity that as yet no method had been discovered for directing them into a proper channel. But let that pass: women burn their fingers meddling with politics and get no pity for it--"Le bon temps viendra!"
(*ibid.*: 206)

Her father, she says, was tender-hearted:

I think soldiers and sailors keep their good feelings by them longer than most people. So accustomed themselves to the rubs of service, they understand the troubles and toils of others better than those who "sit at rich men's tables, and are clothed in purple and fine linen."
(*ibid.*: 206)

After illustrating another parting with careful and generalised detail, she attempts to excuse what may seem to be a lapse from the course of the narrative: "More digressions--I can't help it;--my narrative being true, the records of past things bring up old scenes before me" (*"ROS"* July 1840: 353).

She roundly admonishes her audience, giving an implicit reason for the digression:

- you who talk of going abroad, your britschka nicely packed for a steam-boat, your courier engaged, your children gathered round you, look out upon the world, and give your sympathy to those who are going abroad, for the purpose of what is commonly called "serving their country." (ibid.: 353)

There is some effective scene-painting, which, in its evocation of a similarly crowded (and probably Portsmouth) household, is faintly reminiscent of similar scenes in Mansfield Park:

Little thinks the casual reader of the hearts aching at these sudden orders. There sits the busy mother, weeping over the linen she is folding; there grieves the sister, with tears falling even on the glittering epaulettes she so carefully wraps in silver paper. And the young brothers and sisters patter up and down the stairs, almost worrying brother Harry with their little gifts. A fair and delicate sister is crying bitterly as she finishes in haste the nicely netted purse, or the curiously worked and well stored threadcase. The old father sits calmly by, apparently reading the newspaper, but his eyes move not; he is wondering whether he shall be alive by the time Harry comes back.... the last moment arrives: the portmanteaus are in the hall...the door is closed...the sisters creep up to their own chamber with their arms entwined round one another, sobbing as they go....The very servants coax away the noisy children, whose clamorous grief knows no control.... ("ROS" June 1840: 209-10)

When Ward was preparing the "Recollections of an Old Soldier" for publication by Colburn, she excised some of the details about herself. For example, these sentences, interesting biographically, are excluded from Recollections of an Old Soldier:

We left Paris and went to Boulogne-sur-Mer. Then came sorrow for me; for I was left behind with an English family, to begin my studies. ("ROS" September 1840: 68)

In the eight years since the "Recollections of an Old Soldier" chapters were published, many more anecdotes of Tidy's life had been sent to Harriet Ward, and the new work was greatly expanded, and rendered slightly more formal.

A most important aspect of the work was left almost exactly

as it was. Ward chose to end the memoir of her father with an articulation of her strong feelings on the need for a career of her own. She indicates her early interest in writing when she mentions the tale "the 'Zanteote Lovers', one of the manifold effusions of my teens" (ROS: 131). The phrase does not appear in "ROS". Her characteristic technique of converting real-life events into fiction is already apparent: turning "an old anecdote...to account" ("ROS" October 1840: 215), she describes, "under guise of romance...a moving incident in the life of a young soldier" (ROS: 131). She publishes, too, some lines which she wrote in her girlhood, on seeing an officer's funeral ("ROS" October-1840: 222). And then, remarkably, comes what can be called a manifesto: she announces her "motives for trying my fortune in one of the various lotteries of the press" (ibid.: 223). She has been discussing the losses her father suffered through the failure of a bank, which prevented his leaving an inheritance to his children. Using metaphor appropriate to "a Soldier's daughter", she writes that she met disappointment

with the weapons of industry--determined to fight my way through the difficulties and perils of authorship--flattered also by the notice and applause, not only of kind and partial friends, but by the critical and uncompromising eye of the press.... (ibid.: 223)

Her strong desire was to work her "own and independent way" in the "thorny and difficult paths of authorship", a task made harder for her, a "daughter", than for her brothers who, as sons of the Colonel, were able to gain commissions in the army (ibid.: 223-4). Her sense of the injustice inherent in the obstacles women faced in trying to earn a living will be one of her recurrent themes. (One thinks for example of the impoverished Clara's dilemma in Helen Charteris: she longs to go on the stage as a singer; acting and singing were the highest paid professions a woman could enter, and were "one of the few spheres in which women could be involved in the creation of a persona rather than wait passively to be acted upon" [Vicinus 1977: xix]. Examples are to be found in the prima-donnas of the musical festival in Helen Charteris.)

Other perceptions of social injustice make themselves felt in this early work. She ran counter to her Tory background, as we have seen, in pleading the cause of the Irish, and the desire to help has gained in intensity by the time Recollections of an Old Soldier was published in 1849, when the ravages of the Famine were all too clear, and emigration to the Cape seemed to her a solution. Her outspoken opinion on the question of jobbery and patronage in the army would surface again many times, as would her outrage at the treatment of married soldiers and their wives. The British class system was a target for barbed comment as well. The patterns were set for her later writing.

3. "A Voice from Cafferland"

Between 1840 and the publication in the USM of the articles entitled "A Voice from Cafferland" and "Notices from Kafirland" in 1844 (which would appear as the first part of Five Years in Kaffirland), Harriet Ward produced only rather lightweight pieces. The five "Sketches from Military Life" seem now no more than imitations of the "silver-fork" genre of fiction,⁶ with a focus on military life. The first is set at Star Court, the family mansion of Major Carnforth Darell, who on his return home is begged by young and old to tell some entertaining stories. Ward seems to tire of this pattern by the end of the third episode, as the use of inverted commas to indicate the storyteller Darell falls away, and the stories become less light-hearted and more maudlin, particularly the last, "The Two Nuns of the Convent of St. S----". One of the heroines is apprehended while trying to escape to marry a young English officer (who as an old man is telling the story); she suffers the gruesome punishment of being walled up alive. Ward finds occasion here

⁶ "Also called 'the fashionable novel', the style was dominant from the mid-1820s until the mid-1840s. The master-mind behind silver-forkery was the publisher Henry Colburn." (John Sutherland, LCVF: 577.)

too for a broadside at the practice of favouritism in the army, and the result is a mixture of tones, and confusion about the author's intentions, with the didactic too thinly veiled:

"Let us hope," said General Hartley, "that this species of favouritism to which you have alluded, may yet be exposed; and that those who are so anxious for reform in every shape, may turn their attention to such matters as most require it, and to the benefit of those who by their good services have deserved it, and can prove their gratitude. I have known some regiments make two consecutive trips to the East or West Indies, while a favourite corps spends twenty years of its foreign service, yachting, dancing, and philandering on the agreeable shores of the Mediterranean, the officers of it passing every other season in London, if so inclined, and pitying 'those poor devils of the --th, who, having been broiled in India, are going out to die in some of the leeward islands of the West Indies.'"

("Sketches from Military Life": USM August 1841: 528-9)⁷

Harriet Ward's own voice is recognisable here: we learn from a letter to Philippart that the 91st and 27th Regiments had not been home since they left Cork for St Helena twelve years before (Brenthurst Letter 7: 2.4.1847). Mostly, though, these "sketches" are offered as a pleasant half-hour's diversion in mess-room or parlour, and closely resemble her articles for the *Annuals*.

Her most interesting work for 1842 is "The Young Officer's Death-bed", perhaps because the first-person narrator is clearly Harriet Ward herself. The setting, though never made explicit, is St Helena; a party is assembled in the Governor's garden on a "glorious" moonlit night. The narrator explains why she has not provided actual names: her tale is "an ower true" one, the Scottish dialect no doubt a clue to the regiment's background.⁸ That the story is indeed a true one is borne out by G.L.Goff:

A St. Helena correspondent [of 1838: possibly Harriet Ward herself]...writes, "Lieut. Charles Baird McMurdo, 91st Regiment, died on 30th of July, having just completed

⁷ Cf. "...[Captain MacGillicuddy's] wife strove to entertain us with her military sketches" (HC 1853: 205).

⁸ See Goff on the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, as the 91st came to be called. The records of the regiment are in Stirling Castle Regimental Museum. (See page 9 above.)

the 26th year of his age, when an injury in the knee, received as he was returning to his quarters at Ladder Hill on the Sunday week previous, terminated fatally in lock-jaw two days after the symptoms had manifested themselves...." (Goff: 86)

The personal makes itself felt early on in the story:

"Exiles" we sometimes called ourselves, and with much show of justice; for although soldiers and their wives choose their career "for better or worse," and gain by their vicissitudes a happy knack of looking on the bright side of things, we still have our yearnings after home.

("ROS" March 1842: 381)

Then the narrator offers a description of a Lascar⁹ festival, the sounds of which can be heard in the background. She infuses it with a sense of the exotic: the activities are heathen and disturbing; the participants "evidently" under the influence of opium as they draw their idol in a car by torchlight through the town. She seems torn between fascination and horror: the fire the Lascars have been dancing around is "sacred", but the ceremony is "frightful", "violent", and unspecified "revolting", the performers "miserable fanatics", involved in "wild song" and "mad dance", an "appalling worship apart from the Christian world". Somehow, although all this "has no distinct reference to the main subject" of the tale, the reader is led to assume that it is an evil portent of what is to come.

A young, quintessentially English officer, "Maxwell", leaves the party as it suddenly starts to rain, to return to the barracks. The listeners hear his "clear English view-halloo" and learn later that

a gust of wind rushing from a gulley in the mountain had cast his cloak before his eyes. His horse becoming frightened, and Maxwell himself rendered helpless by being thus blinded, the animal turned a corner of the mountain from which abutted a sharp rock, and running against it, it scratched his rider's knee....Three days afterwards, these gay young spirits [his fellow officers] quailed: the Assistant-Surgeon--Maxwell's intimate friend--foresaw death from lockjaw! (ibid.:382)

⁹ "Lascar, n. Indian sailor. [erron. f. Hind. LASHKAR army, or f. lashkari military.]" (COD)

Ward would become more fluent at writing effective prose, and this description is obviously overloaded in its attempt to impress the reader with the horror of the occasion. But the young man's death, and his funeral, accompanied by the muffled drum, the fifes and the wail of bagpipes, are movingly conveyed.

The soldiers of his company, iron men as they were, cried like children....and the echoes of their lamentations for the dead answered each other sadly from rock to rock.

(ibid.: 383)

A month later, the man-of-war in which Maxwell's brother was a midshipman, anchors in the harbour. To add to the tragedy, this brother is discovered to have fallen overboard and drowned during a storm.

Ward ends the tale with a characteristically trenchant reminder to the authorities of their lack of concern for the men who serve England; in the words of the Naval Captain:

"So they [soldiers and sailors] perish; and small account their country takes of their loss: and smaller care, still, when they have grown grey in that country's service. Better, perhaps, that these poor boys have been spared the disappointments attendant on those who choose their profession merely for that profession's sake!"

(ibid.: 384)

We know from her Recollections of an Old Soldier that her youngest brother, twenty-six years old, had been landed on St Helena from his ship in 1841, shortly after Harriet had left, and had died of consumption on the island (ROS: 117-8). In recalling the death of young "Maxwell", she would have been reminded of this, and, this, together with the death of her father in Canada not long before, may explain the tone of the extract above: she passionately felt that faithful British soldiers were not appreciated by those in command of the service.

In its truth-to-life and vivid feeling, this story was likely to have stirred an appreciative response from readers of the United Service Magazine. The same might be said of Harriet Ward's description of the wreck of the ships the Abercrombie Robinson and the Waterloo during a storm in Table Bay soon after their arrival in Cape Town (August 1842; the article was

published in February 1843). Her best effects were achieved when recounting experiences in which she was a participant. By contrast, pieces drawn from imagination such as "Sketches from Military Life" (1841), and another St Helena tale, "Friar's Valley" are inert; particularly the latter, a tedious and unlikely account of a legend of the founding and naming of the island, written for the Annual Forget-me-not (1842).

Fortified by a determination to write from the position of eye-witness, "on the spot", Ward now drew for material on the relatively unusual events of her own life, first recording it in her journal (begun during the three-months' voyage to the Cape), re-creating it for a military audience, and then despatching it six hundred miles to Cape Town and six thousand miles to London for publication,¹⁰ before eagerly awaiting its return to the Eastern Frontier, where her reputation was quickly established. While discussing this work and its transformation into Five Years in Kaffirland, she asserted: "The book I bring out will be one of reference & history, a hundred copies may readily be bespoke for G[raha]m's Town alone....I have no fear for the sale of the work" (Brenthurst Letter 9: 24.12 1847).

¹⁰ A popular subject for artists was the Xhosa "letter carrier". The Grahamstown artist, Frederick I'Ons, provided the original sketch for the engraving in the Illustrated London News of 17 October 1846 (244), which shows a cloaked male figure against a landscape of hills, holding over his shoulder a thin stick, at the end of which is a small letter, with its blob of sealing wax.

Some idea of the difficulties Ward experienced can be deduced from the following extracts from her letters: "I write the enclosed letter folded round an article for the U.S. Mag. in a great hurry thinking to seize a passing opportunity" (Brenthurst Letter 5: 2.1846); "I send you a duplicate of my first Chap[ter] of the Kaffir War--lest the other should have miscarried--It went home in July & I have heard nothing of its arrival. I also send you the 6th Chap[ter]...I hear of some one sending home a work to Murrays [sic] House....I hope my papers have reached you safely and that will forestall all others....I write in haste as an officer going home takes this..." (Brenthurst Letter 6: 3.1.1847). One senses her fear that some other correspondent will usurp her place.

With breath-taking confidence, she declared the importance of what she was writing by heading her first piece from the Frontier "A VOICE FROM CAFFERLAND" and adding as unquestionable evidence of its veracity: "Written on the Spot". This self-assurance is further displayed when she ends the heroic rhetoric of the first paragraph with "hear the voice of Truth", and promises regally and authoritatively at the end of each of the two subsequent paragraphs that, should the reader have a need to know about the Cape, "We will tell you". So impressed was Colonel Napier by the bombastic style of this chapter that he reproduced significant portions of it in the "Introduction" to his (and, of course, Harriet Ward's) Past and Future Emigration (1849). Fortunately, she soon abandoned the overblown rhetoric which characterises the introduction to the articles in the United Service Magazine. In fact, though she maintained the chapter unchanged in Five Years in Kaffirland, it formed Chapter Two of that work, and she began instead with the description of the voyage to the Cape and the wreck, reproducing almost exactly the article "Wreck of the Abercrombie Robinson and Waterloo". One wonders why she did not include the interesting biographical poem which serves as epigraph to that article; she had originally appended these lines, an "Extract from my Journal at Sea.--H.W.":

And I have quite determined to begin
 Another chapter in my chequered life.
 Never will I look back on what has been,
 Lest with my duty mem'ry should make strife,
 And lest the friends from whom I'm sadly parted
 Should hear of me as dead, or--broken-hearted!
 (USM February 1843: 194)

Perhaps eight years later the lines seemed too melodramatic.

There is an appreciative review in the weekly newspaper, The Cape Town Mirror, a few months after the publication of Five Years in Kaffirland, which makes a useful point about the readability of that work. The writer comments that the articles which make up the book

excited, we have reason to know, much interest among readers in England, and were frequently copied into the newspapers. The interest is by no means diminished by their collection into a continuous narrative; and we are inclined to think

the journalizing form, which is still retained, preserves a degree of animation that would have been lost in a more deliberate attempt at a regular history. (26.9.1848: 26)

The work has indeed an animation and an immediacy which keep the reader interested and sympathetic. Ward was open to new experience and generally positive in her response. Her attitude may be contrasted with that of George Nicholson Jun., Esq., author of The Cape and its Colonists (1849) whose measure is amusingly taken by George Troup of Tait's Edinburgh Review:

This book is of the grumbling species, one which we dislike. The author is evidently a tolerably rich man, who went out to the Cape in the hope of living an easy life, with Regent Street at a few hours' distance. He was not the kind of man for the Cape, and it was not the country for him. They were not mutually suitable, and so they parted....

(August 1849: 544-5)

Nicholson fretfully remarks, in typically colonial fashion, on the servant situation:

After residing on my farm [near Uitenhage] some months; [sic] the total impossibility of obtaining the necessary domestic servants imposed such hardships on my wife, that I resolved to establish her at Cape Town.

(Quoted in Tait's: 545)

In the quotation which follows, Ward is commenting on a party of Hottentot women dancing as the band of the 91st plays to welcome the Reserve Battalion into Grahamstown (a scene depicted by I'Ons at much the same time):¹¹

some of them [were] young, rather pretty, and decidedly graceful. They came bounding on to meet the drums and fifes, and with their red handkerchief head-dresses, gay-coloured clothes, and glittering ornaments, they formed a picturesque group, as they danced on in front of the battalion, to the great entertainment of the soldiers[I]f the dancers did not move with the stateliness of Taglioni, or the airy grace of Cerito, they certainly rivalled them in the activity of their limbs and the steadiness of their heads. (USM May 1844: 28)

While undeniably and predictably Eurocentric in her view, Harriet Ward was nevertheless capable of seeing the dancers appreciatively as gifted fellow creatures, not simply as 'others'

¹¹ I'Ons's painting, "Near Fort England" (1839), is in the Albany Museum, Grahamstown.

useful for the labour they can provide.

What would form the substance of Chapter III in Five Years in Kaffirland has an opening paragraph which was omitted from the later work. This provides an insight into what Ward believed to be valuable about what she was doing, her medium of publication, and her method.

There are two good reasons why my sketches should be accepted with at least indulgence. In the first place, many--among the young especially--will hesitate to take up a book of "travels," however lightly and agreeably written, who look forward from month to month to the appearance of a magazine as to the coming of one to whom they have been long accustomed, and to whom they are, therefore, in some degree attached....[I]n the second, an able and scientific production is for the most part composed by persons who travel hither for the express purpose of "making a book:" such works contain information literary, scientific, and general; but little do we gather from them of the details connected with the inhabitants of this vast portion of the British possessions. How little that is true has been set before us of the domestic manners, habits, and customs of the Kafirs, or of what I also intend to treat, the life led by the military sent hither. On such details, condensed as much as possible, I propose to dwell; and written, as my sketches are, from Kafirland, and from motives perfectly disinterested, their truthfulness alone will, I am persuaded, insure them that indulgence with which my productions have hitherto been received.

(USM May 1844: 18)

While, from a postmodern and post-colonial vantage point, one might smile wryly at her naïve belief that it is possible to write from "motives perfectly disinterested", or to achieve objective truth, one must agree that detail makes interesting and informative reading. The selection of such detail was something at which she excelled, and is evidence of her powers of observation and discrimination. It also signals her difference from the male travel writers commented on by Mary Louise Pratt: "[T]his informational kind of writing suffered from one serious defect: it was terribly boring" (Pratt 1985: 130). One has only to compare Barrow's description of his crossing of the Great Fish River with Ward's of her crossing of the Koonap or the Sundays to be struck by the difference in sensuous perception. Here is Barrow, who modestly removes everything human from the landscape:

The following day we passed the Great Fish river, though not without some difficulty, the banks being high and steep, the stream strong, the bottom rocky, and the water deep.

(Quoted in Pratt 1985: 123)

This would have been counted a lost opportunity to Harriet Ward, on the spot at the Sundays River, and determined to allow the reader the vicarious thrill of the experience:

The river was fast rising when we overtook the troops
I have only a vague recollection of the oxen making a sudden plunge into the rapid river. My horse's head was seized, and I was told to dismount with all speed; a bevy of young girls, officers' daughters, had already scrambled into the back of the wagon, and looked picturesque enough, with wreaths of fresh jessamine wound round their bonnets, from beneath which eyes peeped out full of mirth, while their incontrollable laughter mingled with the Babel of tongues, Scotch, Irish, and Hottentot!

A long habit-skirt was a terrible encumbrance, and...I got no farther than a sort of shelf [on the wagon]....I was no better off when the wagon was fairly on its way than I should have been on horseback, for my habit-skirt was at least three inches deep in the water.

("The Emigrant Party": 475-6)

In the Koonap crossing, Ward mentions the "alarmingly crazy" condition of the boat and even the frayed condition of the rope ("The Happy Valley": 293), providing a nineteenth-century version of virtual reality, with the human element prominent.

When she finds herself reporting on the Seventh Frontier War (1846-7), an eye for the telling detail stood her in good stead. One thinks of her description of Grahamstown under seige (USM November and December 1846), and the parallel with present-day women journalists reporting on conflicts comes to mind. Guardian reporter and winner of two major awards for her coverage of the Bosnian war, Maggie O'Kane, has said,

In the work of my female colleagues, I see a lot more emphasis on people and human stories....I think all that info. [involving statistics] goes over the heads of people at home anyway. I want to tell stories that people can relate to.¹²

This desire was also Harriet Ward's; O'Kane expresses something

¹² Quoted by Mark Gevisser, "Changing the Face of War Reporting", Weekly Mail (23 July to 29 July 1993), 18.

else her predecessor would have related to when she says: "As I'm about to go back [to Bosnia] I'm really scared but the urge to know what is happening is stronger".¹³ For Ward and O'Kane, it is important to find out, and then to tell those at home, with the hope that something will be done and the course of events will be influenced.¹⁴ (A fuller discussion of Five Years in Kaffirland will follow in later chapters.)

4. Bentley's Miscellany

After the United Service Magazine, the journal which published most of Harriet Ward's work was Bentley's Miscellany. Richard Bentley founded this in 1837, with Charles Dickens as the first editor; he was followed in 1839 by William Harrison Ainsworth, and by Bentley himself in 1842, who sold the magazine to Ainsworth in 1854. Ainsworth edited it until its demise in 1868. According to the Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals,

The Globe, a newspaper not prone to praise the Miscellany, favourably described it in November 1859: "[It] is generally one of the most attractive magazines of the month. The stories are abundant and usually good, the more serious articles at the same time thoughtful and far from heavy." (Wellesley Index 4: 12)

At its inception, the intention to abjure politics was made plain. The explanation for this is that

the Miscellany was a child of its time. The political warfare of the early 1830s starting with the Reform Bill had so perplexed the brains "about tithes, and taxes, and church reform and municipal reform" that in recoil many periodical readers became "mad for enjoyment--for fun and frolic." In this field the Miscellany "stands alone in its glory." (Wellesley Index 4: 4)

To this journal, Ward now directed her offerings. It must have been pleasant for her to turn her attention to something

¹³ Quoted by Anne Sebba, Battling for News: The Rise of the Woman Reporter (1994): 271).

¹⁴ Anne Sebba expresses the same idea: 8-9.

less stressful than the frontier war, and she was adept at the kind of entertainment Bentley's Miscellany offered. Of the thirteen pieces she contributed between August 1848 and September 1853, only three, "The Emigrant Party; or, Our Last Treck [sic] in Southern Africa" (1848), "The Happy Valley; or, The Emigrant's Home" (1849), and "Emma, the Sailor Girl" (1850), have South Africa as setting. Almost all the others are short entertainments, either topographical in nature, or anecdotes from army life.

The material in "The Emigrant Party" and "The Happy Valley" had already appeared in abbreviated form in Five Years in Kaffirland (published in June 1848), and almost exactly reproduced would surface again in Past and Future Emigration (1849). But Ward, with an eye to "the state of the nation", saw here a way to re-constitute the earlier work in the form of separate articles, so as to catch the attention of readers by the use of the word "emigrant", emigration being a topic much under discussion at this time.

The Pringles of Glen Thorn (romanticised as "Glen Lion" in Hardy and Hunter and "Annerley" in Jasper Lyle) were settlers who, in 1820, had established a flourishing community in the Winterberg. Harriet Ward, with her passion for riding, was delighted to accept the suggestion of friends : "that she should really know the true meaning of an English [sic: the Pringles were Scots] farm in South Africa" ("The Happy Valley": 292). The party, accompanied by a small escort of dragoons, but without John Ward, undertook a ride of two hundred and fifty miles into the Winterberg, visiting a Bushman cave on the way and spending two days with the Pringles, whose industry, "loving-kindness" and good example to other emigrants she warmly commends.

"Emma, the Sailor Girl" is based on the true story of Ann Moffatt, who disguised herself as a boy and went to sea (on the Abercrombie Robinson, in which Harriet Ward and her family were sailing to South Africa) to follow her lover, John Marvell.

After a fall from the rigging, she was discovered to be a girl, and was taken on by the wife of Lieutenant-Colonel Lindsay of the 91st, as nurse to her children. To Ann's amazement, Marvell was discovered to be in the 91st, under an assumed name, at Fort Beaufort, where the Lindsays had been stationed. In spite of what looks like earlier reluctance on his part, a date for the marriage was set, but Marvell died while trying to cross the flooded Koonap River on the eve of the wedding. Ann then married Troop Sergeant Major Samuel Moffatt, 7th Dragoon Guards, and in 1851 she died, having borne her husband two sons and a daughter.¹⁵

Harriet Ward was naturally intrigued by this romantic story, the details of which might have enlivened the voyage of the Abercrombie Robinson; however, she did not include it in the account of the journey which appears in Five Years in Kaffirland. Perhaps she was not aware of what had happened, as when she made use of the story again in the largely autobiographical Hardy and Hunter (1858), she wrote:

The poor girl's story was an uncommon one, but we did not hear it until we met her long afterwards at the Cape--and far up the country.... (HH: 71)

Ann Moffatt, known in Hardy and Hunter as Fanny Dean, has a minor but significant part in the plot. There was an adventure-loving side to Harriet Ward's character, which there are good feminist reasons for not calling "tomboyish" (as Mills points out: 35), apparent quite often in the "daring" nature of her rides on the frontier, and in her scorn for those who

clasp their hands at our relation with a shriek, at the bare notion of travelling with an escort of dragoons; drop their crochet or their carpet-work, and declare they would rather sit at home all their lives.... (PFE: 330)

Perhaps a desire to do more of the interesting things men were permitted but which women were restricted from doing is the

¹⁵ I am indebted for the details of Ann Moffatt's history to the appendix supplied by A. Gordon-Brown, editor of The Narrative of Private Buck Adams, 7th (Princess Royal's) Dragoon Guards (1941): 283-4.

reason she was fascinated by the thought of cross-dressing. Such disguise would provide the freedom for a woman to experience a range of activities previously denied to her. There is a possibility that she was the anonymous author of "The Female Prisoner of War. Founded on an Actual Circumstance in the Year 1800" (USM September 1846). The words "actual circumstance" are a clue to her usual modus operandi, and the story might have been one told to her by her father of his encounters with the French during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. She wrote a number of stories with a French background; the style is very much like hers, and the events not dissimilar to those involving Ann Moffatt. Louise's parents separate her from her lover, a midshipman or "Garde de la Marine" in the French navy. She impersonates Charles Durand, who is reluctant to join the navy, and goes to sea in his place. She is secretly re-united with her lover, Pierre Garnier, who discovers who she is when she is wounded in the neck, around which hangs the jet cross he had given her. They are both taken as prisoners of war onto a British frigate, and are dealt with sympathetically by the captain. All ends happily in their acceptance by Louise's parents and in their marriage.

If Harriet Ward were not the author of this story, reading it in the United Service Magazine might possibly have served as inspiration for her "Emma, the Sailor Girl" (Bentley's Miscellany October 1850). She herself plays a part in the latter story. As she and the party riding to the Winterberg approach the Koonap River, they find it in flood, and are escorted across it by a sergeant of dragoons, who proves to be the husband of "the intrepid sailor girl....[H]is wife came to the steps with a child in her arms...and she was doubtless unconscious of the interest with which we surveyed her" ("Emma": 392). The narrator reluctantly loses sight of her as her impatient horse carries her away.

Ward begins "Emma the Sailor Girl" by insisting that it is "not merely 'founded' on fact--the chief incidents are literally

true, and the scene is from nature" (a theme surely by now so strongly her signature as hardly to need the identification of her name). She then proceeds to strain credibility by recounting dialogue verbatim. It is possible that she invents an alcoholic and abusive father for Emma in order to increase the sense of (melo)drama. The climax, as the bridegroom is swept away with his horse down the swollen Koonap river, would probably have been judged a tear-jerking success by its contemporary audience:

Still that cry--the agonised farewell of the drowning horse...the lightning scathes a noble tree, and the terrified and sorrowful people come back to tell that the hapless Edward has passed into the illimitable ocean of eternity! ("Emma": 392)

It is perhaps unfair to juxtapose Sullivan's comment here:

Bentley's was ahead of its time....Unlike the articles in many contemporary magazines, its articles were clearly written and easy to read; turgid and vapid prose rarely escaped the editorial blue pencil. (Sullivan: 39)

Harriet Ward seemed to have maintained an equable relationship with Richard Bentley, who had a notoriously difficult personality. Amongst the Bentley papers in the British Library Department of Manuscripts are numerous entries of interest in establishing where Harriet Ward was living at various times, and how much she was paid for her contributions to the Miscellany.¹⁶ A particularly delightful and revealing letter to I.Morgan, one of Bentley's employees with whom she seemed to be on familiar terms, is worth quoting in full for the light it sheds on her personality, or at least on the persona she presented to the world of being rather romantic and "chatty", and the pride she felt in her work, as well as on the reception of her publications amongst those in her circle:

91st Regt. Portsmouth
July 12 [1849]

My dear Sir

Many thanks for your enclosures. How truly sorry

¹⁶ See Bentley Papers, British Library, Add.MSS. 46560-46682.

I am for poor Mrs. Thompson!¹⁷ My little Neale, the young soldier,¹⁸ will be quite proud to see himself in print. Do you think you could spare me two Miscellanies next month? for I shall be asked for the loan of mine and I want Lord Frederick [sic] to see the sketch.¹⁹ I am in Mr. Bentley's debt for two "Helens" [illegible excision] and 3 "Memoirs."²⁰ I think no more. This debt can be deducted if you like, or allowed to stand till I pay it back in print!--just as you think right--Will you be kind enough to pay the sum due to me into the hands of

Messrs Barron and Smith

4 Upper Charles St. Westminster.

I am going to prepare my daughter's wedding kit (trousseau!) & my earnings will help nicely.

Truly yrs H. Ward.²¹

The story, "Our Little Soldier", another "sketch from life", might be said to represent the tone of all the pieces offered to Bentley's Miscellany by Ward. A feature is her tendency--almost another trademark--to digress, which however does not irritate, and probably was of added interest as a result, to her readers. She begins with an assessment of the life of a soldier, a very positive, good-humoured one: "There be some in this world who imagine a soldier's life to be one of constant peril, toil, and hardship; but it is not so" ("Our Little Soldier": 140). The meals are good, hot and wholesome, and in the evenings "song and laughter, jest and dance, are rife, somewhat to the disturbance...of studious men, who strive vainly to read, and are fain to get up and join in the glee" (ibid: 140). This observation is made, appropriately, from outside and looking at the "long rows of lighted windows" of the barracks (ibid: 140).

¹⁷ Unidentified.

¹⁸ Almost certainly the model for the subject of "Our Little Soldier. A Sketch from Life", published in Bentley's Miscellany of August 1849.

¹⁹ See Surgeon-General Munro, Records of Service and Campaigning in Many Lands (London, 1887), 220: "Lord Frederic Fitz-Clarence...commanded the Portsmouth district at this time...".

²⁰ Abbreviations for Helen Charteris and Recollections of an Old Soldier.

²¹ B.M.Add.MS. 46652, f.12.

The "studious men" can seek refuge in the "little room of some steady serjeant [sic]", and the narrator is diverted into a description of the accoutrements of such a room, down to the clock, which "would wake its owner if it stopped ticking, it has held a place so long beside his bed..." (ibid: 141). By association, this leads to the story of the imaginary sergeant's dead friend, who once owned the clock, and who is even given a name: O'Reilly. The mood is lightened by a reference to the disadvantages of sergeants' not being celibate; the presence of their wives in "huge bonnets, which were out of fashion fifteen years ago" and gaudy gowns is felt in the sergeants' rooms; and the description of the decor is completed to include "a huge covered basket for marketing, a row of curiosities on the mantel-piece, flanked by a polished cocoa-nut and an ostrich-egg, a pet dog, very ugly and cross...a perpetual baby, and no end to other children" (ibid: 141). One wishes she would let this satiric vein surface more often. Obviously, the sarcastic tone she allows herself in the United Service Magazine would be inappropriate in Bentley's Miscellany, and as in the articles for the Annuals, she has shown herself adept at interpreting the needs of an audience.

At last, the topic of the article becomes the focus of the narration: "Our little Soldier", a boy who has enlisted in the regiment (identified only by a dash, but presumably the 91st) of his father, who died in Africa. The lad is thus saved from idleness and viciousness and from being a drain on the tax-payer. He plays the cymbals in the regimental band, but aspires to being a drum-boy [sic] (ibid: 142). The narrator is reminded, in her free-associational way--of another drum-boy, less steady and more spirited, drowned in the sea below Ladder Hill on St Helena, and his touching story is included here. Our little soldier's virtues are shown by his selling the shaving brush and razor provided in his kit--a joke is made by the regiment about these articles not yet being needed--in order to send some money home to his mother, and a moral is subtly conveyed. During the course of the story, a visit to the regiment by Victoria has been

described, and the Queen is shown laughing delightedly as she points out to her family the little boy's wonderment as he gazes at the royal party.

It is intriguing to imagine the reactions of the regiment to the latest copy of Bentley's Miscellany as it arrived at the barracks in Southsea, especially as Neale, the little soldier, was obviously destined to read about himself. How, one wonders, would the sergeants' wives have reacted to their unflattering portrait? Had she disguised the serious aspirations of her rebellious self so well that the men of the regiment could think of Harriet Ward as "Our Little Authoress", harmless and easily patronised?

Apart from the piece entitled "Temper",²² its title an implied compliment to Mrs Opie's novel Temper; or, Domestic Scenes (1812), Ward's other articles for Bentley's Miscellany are predictably bland and undemanding. The same is true of those she wrote for Ainsworth's Magazine, and for another journal that Ainsworth edited at the time she was writing for it, The New Monthly Magazine, though her pieces for these two journals have the liveliness of personal experience clearly detectable in them.

5. Ainsworth's Magazine and The New Monthly Magazine

Like Bentley's Miscellany, Ainsworth's Magazine was aimed at "entertainment, with a sharp eye to mid-Victorian taste....The tone was to avoid seriousness".²³ As the Wellesley Index points out, a wider reading public had arisen "which could not enjoy--or could not afford--the major reviews, or magazines like

²² This is the most strongly "feminist" of all Ward's work, and will be discussed in Chapter Six.

²³ The Wellesley Index 3: 5. I am indebted for information generally on Ainsworth's Magazine and The New Monthly Magazine to the Wellesley Index 3.

Blackwood's and Fraser's. Here they found their own periodical level" (Wellesley Index 3: 8). Much can be gathered from Ainsworth's assurance to his readers on 28 December 1842, that nothing would appear "in the shape of covert slander, personal attack or indecent frivolity....In a word, we render our work, in the best moral and literary sense, a FAMILY MAGAZINE".²⁴ Though not in the class of the intellectual journals, Ainsworth's Magazine was a really good periodical of its kind, with a circulation of 7 000 in June 1842, the year of Harriet Ward's first contributions. Apart from the editor himself, "whose historical romances had brought him a contemporary fame second only to Dickens's" (Wellesley Index 3: 8), well-known contributors were Leigh Hunt, G.P.R. James, and Thackeray.

Harriet Ward's first pieces for Ainsworth's Magazine, which show a lighter, more playful side to her than hitherto, appeared in "The Lady's Page", a novel feature of the magazine. It relied on descriptions and topicality for its interest, and contained short essays and verse contributed entirely by women. It was here that Lady Harriette D'Orsay paraded her bleeding heart. The Honorable Mrs. Norton, "the Byron of poetesses," whose personal life made more colorful reading than her verses, was also represented, as were the fashionable writers, Mrs. Elizabeth Stone and Mrs. Catherine Frances Gore. (Wellesley Index 3: 8)

"A County Dinner-Party" is domestic realism with a vengeance. The story is marked by biting satire (Lady Broadlands rises "looking like a hearse for an unmarried person") and dry humour ("stray dragoons...on the look-out [sic]--not for wives--dragoons not being connubial--but for good shooting grounds, and hunt luncheons and breakfasts"). Here is the germ of an idea for that more detailed portrait of county life which will appear in Helen Charteris some years later. In fact in this work, there is a trenchant comment by a dragoon, in circumstances very similar to those under discussion, the likeable Irishman, Harry Lorimer:

"Hospitality!" cried Harry. "Now do you call a county-dinner party hospitality! My good fellow, neither your host nor

²⁴ "To Our Readers", Ainsworth's Magazine 3: February 1843: iv.

hostess would care a rush if you choked yourself at their table, except, indeed, for the trouble and expense it would cost them to have your funeral performed." (HC 1853: 102)

He proceeds to give in witty synopsis the gist of Harriet Ward's "A County Dinner-Party": his comments read as though taken from her working notes for this story:

[T]he host and hostess bow and smile...the young ladies look stiff...the young gentlemen look stiffer....The old gentlemen long for dinner; when that is over, they long for their carriages; the ladies coax the children, and wish them in heaven, or any where out of their way....An attempt at music--a death-like rubber of whist... a sleepy parson on one couch, a yawning hostess on another; mysterious-looking butler handing round coffee, ramrod footman following... hostess tells lies: says "she is sorry her guests are in such a hurry;"...People go--host and host delighted--very glad they need not give another dinner-party for the next three months. (ibid.: 102-3)

Ward shows a fine eye for detecting class condescension: the hostess has called in the parson's daughter from the next village, "who plays very well", and who is rewarded with a night in the mansion and a lift home in the carriage next morning. (Ward never mentions Jane Austen, but seems to have been affected subliminally by her; perhaps, like Charlotte Brontë, she could not really appreciate her.)

And who is that in the sad coloured silk dress and coral negligée [sic], seated at a small table in a bay window with a book in her hand which she cannot see to read, though she does not like to create observation by rising to reach a candle from the Pembroke table near her? It is the governess: she is another "very respectable person;" she always rises when addressed by any one, and lets you know, by the first opportunity, that she is of a Scotch family, and spells her name Johnstone, and not Johnson.

("The County Dinner-Party": 249-251)

In contrast is the amiable, warm-hearted tone of "The Yeomanry Ball; and an Incident on the Clyde". This is told in the first person, and the narrator is an enthusiastic participant in the "Yeomanry Ball". Her friend is appalled at the idea of

mingling with the yeomanry (a volunteer force raised from farmers) and their rustic wives and sweethearts, but the narrator is enchanted, and expects to pass "a right merry evening, and to see real merry faces".

And so I did. Oh, the laughter of those Scottish lasses when once the first country dance was over, the gay reel superseding it, the shout from the orchestra, the knapping of fingers, the Highland halloo, and the clapping of hands! ("The Yeomanry Ball...": 315)

Rather oddly lumped in with this is an account of a trip down the river Clyde, possibly autobiographical. The author's stout-hearted spirit is evident from her choosing to remain on the deck of the steamer even in the rain, "having an invincible antipathy to going below" (ibid.: 316), which might translate as an antipathy to behaving as a woman was expected to. Her strength is tested when reports come from the cabins of a dead woman and a drunk man. Though afraid, she is impelled by an "impulse of curiosity", and discovers the "corpse" lying on the bunk to be only a ship's figure-head. The drunk man alongside erupts into Scottish dialect: "'Hoch, sirs!' said he, 'dinna be making sic a stramash about the figure-head of the Kilmun steamer, that's ganging up to Glasgow wi' me, to hae a dash o' paint pit upon her'" (ibid.: 317). There are echoes here of Maria Edgeworth's Irish hero Thady Quirk in Castle Rackrent (1800), and pre-echoes of the dialect-speaking Irish Mackcrackins in Helen Charteris and Paul and Sandy's Highland relations in Hardy and Hunter. The narrator finishes the tale with a joke entwined with a characteristic utterance: "And I vow also, that this is no mere 'traveller's tale,' but a 'real live incident!'" (ibid.: 317).

Ward, in keeping with the general practice of Victorian writers of fiction, shows in these stories a passion for topical detail, which reaches intensity in Helen Charteris, and will be discussed in more depth in connection with that novel. An example here is a reference in an "incident on the Clyde" when the narrator sees the ghastly figure stretched on the bunk: "Horrible visions of men connected with Burke and Hare (the wife of the latter I had seen only a few days before, with a lovely

infant in her arms,) came across me". As Richard D. Altick, in his fascinating discussion of Victorian topicalities, points out, Burke and Hare were "resurrection men", infamous in 1828 for their "wholesale traffic in fresh cadavers" for the anatomical lecture room at the University of Edinburgh (Altick 1991: 514). Ward's reading public in 1842 would have had no trouble in recognising the reference, especially as the latest of Madame Tussaud's "stellar attractions" was her models of the Edinburgh "resurrection men" (Altick: 514). Similarly, in "A County Dinner-Party", Lady Broadlands uses a screen "bought from Rowland" to preserve her complexion from the fire. Rowland, vidé Altick, was a well-known supplier of beauty aids for men and women (Altick: 229). The satisfaction involved in recognising this kind of allusion is that of the sense of a shared background in readers, what one would call insider knowledge.

On 28 December 1842, Ainsworth wrote a prefatory page to the new volume which would appear in February 1843; it is an indication that at this early stage of her career, and after only a year as one of the contributors, Harriet Ward was recognised as part of a select group of well-known women writers.

That our friends and fellow-labourers in the happy fields of romance, essay-writing and song, have felt, in the spirit which they have flung into their compositions, that they had attached themselves to no failing or doubtful adventure, renders its prosperity doubly gratifying.

We may be permitted to remind our old readers, and to inform such new ones as the new year may bring, of the exertions already made to fulfil our first promises. These exertions may be best estimated by a glance at a list of contributors to the volumes already published. Among the ladies, we enumerate--

Miss L.S. Costello,	Miss Pardoe,
Countess Harriette D'Orsay,	Catherine Parr,
Mrs. Gore,	Miss Skelton,
Hon. Julia Augusta Maynard,	Mrs. Stone,
Hon. Mrs. Norton,	Mrs. Ward,

in addition to others, who, like the gifted C.S., retire under the transparent shade of their initials. (ii)

The same issue of the magazine (February 1843) contains "An Introduction to Mr. O'Connell in 1842", by Harriet Ward, dated

"Cape Town, Sept. 28, 1842". While delineating O'Connell as pleasant and approachable, the article serves as a guide to the persona Ward generally presented. She was given to fascination with eminent public figures, such as Napoleon and Wellington:

the simplest remark of a man of genius and celebrity has always an interest in my eyes; and without possessing any of that morbid curiosity which induces some to seek out any who have become celebrated, no matter whether by good or evil deeds: I confess to the weakness (if it may be so called) of wishing to make the acquaintance of any man or woman who may have distinguished themselves from the rest of the world by superior ability....I had always had a curiosity even to see the Agitator [O'Connell]. (122)

Artlessly, she confesses to having at one time followed him "all along Pall Mall, to the very steps of that princely building, the Reform Club"; there are suggestions here of a journalist in pursuit of a scoop. She claims that even his bitterest enemies will allow that he is "a wonderful man" (122). The meeting takes place in a carriage in Dublin, after she is introduced to the "great man", and he offers her a lift home through the rain. This informal situation allows a cordial relationship to develop; she is already predisposed towards him, and he seems charmed by the fact that she is her usual "chatty" self, as Hall described her (Hall: 178), and not at all cowed by his fame. Her forthrightness in declaring that she thinks his political arch-enemy, the Duke of Wellington, "the greatest man in the world" and that "I only say this lest you should attribute my desire of an introduction to you to any other motive than that of great admiration of your genius", makes him laugh, as well it might.

She shows her open-mindedness by remarking that, "having seen quite enough of the world (heaven help me!) to have rubbed off the rust of narrow-minded prejudices, I felt 'how little indeed do we know of one another's inner life!'--how hard it is to judge of a man's private character by his public character..." (124). This statement might be emblematic of herself. At the end, there are mutual regrets "that differences of religious opinions between persons professing to be Christians should cause dissensions among families and destroy the ties of friendship" (124). This is a remarkable piece for her to have written: as

an Englishwoman, of Tory background (as she mentions on page 123), and a soldier's wife and daughter, at a time when British troops were being used to control the discontented Irish and when it was unfashionable to support the Irish cause. It is yet another indication of the independence of her thinking and her fearless expression of it.

Another well-structured little essay, with some satirical touches, is her last work for Ainsworth's Magazine, "A South-African Pic-nic", which appeared in September 1846. She begins by describing an English picnic, and at the same time revealing the unmaternal side to her nature: "The family pic-nic is only endurable if you can send the children on before you with nurses whom they like better than their mammas, and with a separate establishment of plates, dishes, goblets, etc.". Otherwise, some "fat little child" will end up "crawling over the table-cloth, or walking into the pies...stepping ankle-deep into a luscious mass of currants and raspberries, a river of damson juice, or a small flock of pigeons buried in jelly" (172). She becomes acerbic in considering who should be invited; certainly not "[o]ld bachelors and orderly spinsters, who cannot bear to be put out of their way"; her diplomatic skills as a hostess are perhaps indicated in her advice that "cross chaperones must be flattered, and stray newspapers thrown in the way of cranky papas".

[An] especial batch of good wine should make its appearance the moment the young people are about to move, and the necessary orders for departure must be given in good time to servants, and children must be despatched as soon as they have had enough to eat. (173)

There are shades of the Box Hill picnic here.

The horizons expand as the author goes on to say that far pleasanter are those unavoidable picnics when one has been on a fifty-mile ride in South Africa, and can find a clear "vley" to stop beside. The horses are off-saddled and proceed to roll; "a roll to a Cape horse is as refreshing as a feed". Then she holds up a "magic mirror" so that those at home can picture the "dusky

Hottentots, the colonial cavalry", present not only as "guards against the savages, on whose territory we sit" (significant remark), but to "take care of our horses, light our fire, and toast our carbonatje" (173). More local colour is provided by the appearance of a snake, and then by a Xhosa chief; a pack of fox-hounds passes by, hunting a jackal, and then there is a thunder-storm. The party reaches a cottage after a ride under the stars, and the author is made nostalgic for "merry England" by songs around the piano; soon the summons comes to return to the "comfort of [the real English] home", but the lingering thought at the end is of the friends and pleasant meets, songs, journeys and picnics in Africa. As with the other Ainsworth Magazine essays, this is fresh, detailed and mercifully free from rhetoric.

Less successful is the rather forced entertainment for The New Monthly Magazine, "The Resurrection of the Bell; or, The Good Effects of a Royal Visit", which is unlikely to have been a first-hand account, having been written in South Africa and published in October 1846. It bears the stamp of an early example of "faction". Perhaps it was suggested by a newspaper report, because it concerns a visit by Queen Victoria and Louis Phillipe to a French village. The queen's charm manages to overcome all prejudices, including that of an old Frenchwoman. "[T]here was our little Queen Victoria laughing and chatting, and Louis Philippe, le grande monarque [sic], looking delighted, and a real pleasant smile lighting up the usually dejected features of the gentle Queen of France" (184).

Harriet Ward's other work for this periodical, the significant account of "Amakeya: A Tale of Kaffirland" (January 1849), will be discussed in Chapter Six. The New Monthly Magazine, with Leigh Hunt, Frederick Marryat, Frances Trollope and W.M. Thackeray as contributors, was clearly an important periodical, as the Wellesley Index makes clear:

Years later, writing of the 1830s, Richard Garnett associated the New Monthly with Blackwood's and Fraser's: all three "were full of excellent reading, and frequently

contained essays and fiction of first-class merit; yet a large proportion of their contents was designedly light and jocular, nor were they steadily animated by any lofty purpose." (Quoted in Wellesley Index 3: 168)

To be associated with this magazine, too, would have been a feather in Ward's cap.

6. The Annuals

"Like a brotherless hermit, the last of its race," 'The Keepsake,' we believe, alone survives to preserve the tradition of that splendid class of gift-books which for many years had such popular acceptance with the public under the generic title of Annuals.

Thus, with heavy irony, begins The Athenaeum review of The Keepsake Annual for 1853 (11 December 1852: 1352). That the writer is being ironic becomes plain when he speaks of the "miserable mediocrity" of the genre, and damns with faint praise the present volume as "somewhat better than many of its predecessors" (1352). (It contained Harriet Ward's "A Sketch from Boulogne-sur-Mer".)

Andrew Boyle, in his Index to the Annuals defines the genre:

Between the early eighteenth twenties and the late eighteenth fifties, there appeared in various guises, a number of yearly volumes, in decorative bindings, which, under a multitude of names, came to be known collectively as the "Annuals." Flourishing before the commencement of Queen Victoria's reign and dying out before twenty years of it had passed, they embodied all that which is now known as "early Victorian." (Preface [unpaginated])

He goes on to say that they grew up out of the ladies' pocket books or diaries, which apart from the usual information, were "enlivened with riddles, small verses, etc.". The literary interest developed later. They were often edited by titled women such as Lady Blessington and Lady Stuart-Wortley, and contributors included Mrs Barbauld, Wordsworth, Mary Shelley, Thomas Pringle, Maria Jewsbury, Laetitia Elizabeth Landon ("L.E.L.") and Felicia Hemans. According to Boyle, Wordsworth

proved himself a "shrewd haggler" with the editor of The Keepsake, Charles Heath (Preface). Annuals were suitable as gifts from admirers to young ladies, and could be read "without incurring the stigma of Bluestocking" (FCLE, 24). As Winifred Gérin remarks,

Not only fashionable society adopted the "Annuals"; in the course of the 20s the sale for them became general, spread from the capital to the provinces and into every polite home, where, among other places, copies found their way into Haworth Parsonage. (Gérin 1987: 42)

It seems that some women professed to share The Athenaeum's view of the Annuals, nevertheless. Emily Eden, writing in 1838 from Simla, says,

A new box of books arrived yesterday....Perhaps the Annuals might have been left out, but other people like to see them. (Eden: 152-3)

Ward, who had eight stories published in Annuals, is even more scathing:

The Dean's lady had been yawning over an Annual for the last half hour in spite of strong coffee....(HC: 116)

And again,

Amid the heap of rubbish which usually forms the letterpress of the annuals, one sometimes stumbles on an elegant page, by some unknown hand. (HC: 239)

She seemed to think it demeaning to write for the Annuals;²⁵ perhaps she did so only in order to be paid, while feeling that she should have been writing more significant articles. It is confirmation that she saw her audience as a far more important one than ladies in with-drawing rooms, the accepted innocuous readership for writers of her sex. Alison Adburgham makes an important point about the importance of this "publishing phenomenon" (236) for women at the time: for one thing, as we have seen, many Annuals were edited by women.

Moreover, they provided a new outlet for women writers, an

²⁵ It is of interest that the donnish Archdeacon Beaumont in Helen Charteris, of whom the author's appreciation is unqualified, is shown to be a reader of the intellectual Athenaeum (HC 1853: 198).

elegant prestige outlet in which their work appeared in company with that of many well-known authors, men as well as women. Intellectuals might scorn the annuals, but there were very few writers of the day who did not, sooner or later, contribute to these decorative drawing-room volumes.

(Adburgham: 235)

Articles for the best Annuals, whether paid for by a publisher's cheque or not (Lady Blessington paid contributors often with a present, usually of jewellery [Adburgham: 258]),

were always written for educated and cultivated readers. If a classical or mythological allusion or reference to world famous belles lettres was made, there was reliance it would be understood....

(ibid.: 262)

Ward's work for the Annuals is a reminder of her fluency with words, and her ability to hold the reader's interest. The stories are always elegant and well-contrived. Her second contribution, as she was anxious to point out, was well-received: in a letter to Colburn, as we have noted, she says, "Pray tell Mr. [William] Shoberl [editor of the Forget-me-not Annual and chief reader to Colburn (Gettmann: 189)] that 'Oliver Cromwell' has been pronounced by people (unknown to me) the best article in the Forget-me-not for 43..." (Brenthurst Letter 1: 7.1.1843). What makes this sketch interesting now is the light it throws on Harriet Ward's professed fascination with the famous, and her ambivalent feelings towards great men who, because of their controversial political careers, it might be indecorous for someone in her position to exalt. Napoleon and Daniel O'Connell are two who come to mind. We see this dilemma in more complex form when she comes to write the story of Jasper Lyle, inspirational liberator to the Chartists and villain to everyone else in the novel of the same name. Cromwell the regicide is described as the "guilty parent" (107) of the heroine, his daughter, but in the closing lines of the story, he is referred to as "the great ruler" (123). "It is well known that, with all Cromwell's errors, he had, or appeared to have, his generous impulses" (109). As the effigy of Cromwell lies on a bed of state above his coffin in Somerset House, spectators pass silently by, casting looks of curiosity, not unmingled in some cases

with disgust.... Truly, there were none to say "God bless him!" He who had raised himself by struggling for the freedom of his country had become in the end a thorough tyrant, and detested and dreaded by all. (118)

There are similarities with her most complex fictional character, Jasper Lyle.

This "Tradition of 1658" concerns a belief that Cromwell's body was spirited away by his family (so that it would not be desecrated by the rabble at the Restoration), and was secretly buried at a country house in Stoke Newington. Judging by the footnotes, Harriet Ward must have done some research into the subject. Annuals were essentially for the Christmas trade, and because they had large sales in Britain's Indian empire, as well as in America and the Colonies, they were produced by the end of July "to be shipped for the long voyage round the Cape" (Adburgham: 261). Ward's story would have to have been left with Shoberl before the Wards sailed for South Africa in May 1842, unless it were posted from Madeira during the voyage, which ended in August that year.

The next article for an Annual was submitted nearly ten years later: "A Sketch from Boulogne-sur-Mer",²⁶ for The Keepsake of 1853. This is a rather appealing hotch-potch of genres; it starts almost as an extract from Baedeker, with descriptions of picturesque views, and dashes of history involving the time when Napoleon's army of invasion was encamped here. "Let us sit down by the Tour d'Ordre, and imagine Napoleon watching [the English ships]" (40). Austerlitz "drew the imperial troops from the heights of Boulôgne. Glory, bathed in tears, waited on that mournful victory" (41). Then the narrator's attention is drawn

²⁶ Harriet Ward and Fanny Kemble were at school together in Boulogne, and the latter describes the environs of Boulogne thus: "The only agreeable impression I retain of my schooldays in Boulogne is that of the long half-holiday walks we were allowed to indulge in. Not the two-and-two dreary daily procession around the ramparts, but the disbanded freedom of the sunny afternoons spent in gathering wild flowers along the pretty secluded valley of the Liane, through which no iron road then bore its thundering freight" (Ransome: 8-9).

back to the present by the sound of a girl's merry laugh, and she seems to recognise "that pretty face and silver tongue" (41). In fact, she must know her intimately, for she embarks on the complicated story of Jacqueline's lovers, first digressing to imagine that with the help of a "glass" she can see the line of "dear old England's coast" (43). We are invited briefly back to the time of Godfrey de Bouillon and the Crusades, and then revert to the present to hear how a vielle moustache in Boulogne was rescued after the Battle of Waterloo by men of the 27th Enniskilleners. "'I have fought in many lands,'" says Old Waterloo, 'but give me, as the most generous of fellows, be he friend or foe, the British soldier'" (44). Off we surge again into the more recent history of Jacqueline, and the ending is an incongruously religious one: "Ah, may we not interpret [the text that says there shall be 'no more sea'"] as a covenant between God and man, that there shall be no more partings, no more sorrowful and uncertain 'Farewells?'" (47). Possibly, this was just to the taste of the young ladies who received this Annual that year. It would have been fortunate to escape the disdain of the critic in The Athenaeum, or Harriet Ward's own self-disgust.

"'Too Late.' A Tale of the War" in The Keepsake for 1857 was Harriet Ward's last contribution to an Annual; in fact, this issue of The Keepsake ended the era of the Annuals. The war here was the Crimean War (1854-56), and the tale begins with two sisters reading an announcement in The Times to the effect that peace has been signed. They are in mourning for the death, a week before, of their father, Colonel Fontenoy. It is an opportunity (one wonders how appropriate in this context) to remind readers of the injustice of favouritism in the army. The colonel

had been a most gallant soldier; but for his gallantry he had been rewarded only by promises. Alas! he grew more grey while awaiting the fulfilment of them; and more favoured, but not better, men stepped over that grey head on the ladder of promotion, and sat looking down upon him from the top! (140)

A year before this story was composed, Harriet Ward had written a letter to Sir Austen H. Layard, enlisting his help in just such

a cause (BM.ADD.MS.38983: f.220).

The news that the Colonel (like Colonel Tidy) has been awarded the Cross of the Order of the Bath comes too late: he is already dead. The story is full of topicalities and actual dates, and descriptions of the action in the "snowy wastes" of the Crimea. Of interest is this oblique reference to Florence Nightingale, whom one would expect to be one of Harriet Ward's heroines:

"since I cannot join that sweet sisterhood who are soothing the horrors of war and pestilence in the East, grant my sister and myself our share in women's mission...."

(149)

As we shall see, Ward was conscious of her own share in "women's mission".

From these examples, one might judge that Ward was striving to maintain her reputation, in spite of being obliged to write for the Annuals. Other periodical outlets seem to have been failing her, which is probably why at this time she was preparing Hardy and Hunter (1858), which was to be her last novel.

As Elizabeth Barrett Browning's most recent biographer, Margaret Forster, reveals, the poet loved magazines, and at the most reclusive period of her life was able to keep in touch with the contemporary world through them (Forster: 120-22).

She did not go to the theatre but read all reviews closely so that she was well aware of Macready's fame as an actor not to mention that of the Kembles. She did not go to concerts but knew that contemporary British composers counted for little and that audiences wanted to hear Mendelssohn above all. She rarely visited art galleries but was familiar with the work of Sir Edwin Landseer, William Etty and J.M.W. Turner. (120)

This is a small reminder of the importance of periodicals in the daily lives of mid-nineteenth century readers and writers, and of the wide range of readers they attracted, from the most intellectual to those seeking only light entertainment. It is impossible that Harriet Ward's name should not have been familiar

to readers across this range. She would not only have been well-known to a female audience, but would have been a household word to the predominantly male readers of the United Service Magazine and Bentley's Miscellany: truly an achievement in the mid-nineteenth century.

Note

It is obvious that Ward made use of her father's old friend, Sir John Philippart, and his journal, the United Service Magazine, to launch her into the publishing world. Not so obvious, perhaps, is why she should have chosen to publish in journals such as Bentley's Miscellany, The New Monthly Magazine, and Ainsworth's Magazine. It seems that she wanted publications that were middle-brow, with a good mix of fiction and non-fiction. She had started in a journal with a largely male readership, and would have wanted to maintain the status of a readership of men as well as women. She would thus probably deliberately have avoided The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine (1852-79), Mother's Friend (1848-95), the Household Friend (1850-52) and the Ladies' Polite Remembrancer (1843-45). (The Annuals were concession enough to "ladies'" tastes.) She seems to have avoided journals that were too lowbrow (The People's Journal), or too highbrow, such as the Athenaeum, or Tait's Edinburgh Journal, which focussed on (Whig) politics and economics, with some literature and science, but abjured fiction. The British Quarterly Review, though very well-received, might have been unsuitable because it was basically Evangelical and designed to "educate Dissenters" (Wellesley Index 4: 114). It published Livingstone's "Missions in South Africa" in 1851. In choosing the journals that she did, Ward seems to have found exactly the right audience for her style, shaped as it was to inform, to educate and to entertain.

CHAPTER FOUR

"A critique from the margins": Five Years in Kaffirland and the Counter-Hegemonic Voice¹

In Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism (1991), Sara Mills gives a nicely judged analysis of travel writing situated within its period. She also considers the "discursive restraints" placed upon women travellers engaged in recording what they were experiencing. Firstly, her approach substantiates my conviction that, from a post-colonial point of view, it is legitimate to make judgements about the work of writers of earlier periods only if one is careful to place such writings in their historical context. It is simplistic to condemn a writer like Harriet Ward for not having conceived of the world in a more "enlightened" way. Then, what Mills has to say about colonial discourse analysis gives point to my suspicion that, far from simply echoing and endorsing the decisions and actions of the British colonial power and patriarchy, Ward was one of those nineteenth-century women travellers who seriously engaged in a critical assessment of such decisions and actions, and that, for her time, her thinking was enlightened. Such women often used criteria to assess the justice of a situation which differ from those "masculine" ones based on utility, the convenience of the colonial power, and apparent logic. Compassion and identification with subject populations played a significant role in colouring what they saw and in forming their opinions of situations they encountered. The tensions apparent in Ward's discourse are evidence of her uneasiness with the role expected of her as a colonial woman, and in particular the wife of an army officer. That this has something to do with her perception of the inequality of power between women and men seems irrefutable, as I hope already to have demonstrated.

¹ Both phrases are Sara Mills's: see Mills 1991: 22-3.

Mills argues that although women's travel texts are produced and received within a context comparable to the discursive construction and reception of male texts, the different pressures exerted on women writers lead to "negotiations in women's texts which result in differences which seem to be due to gender" (Mills 1991: 6). During the discussion of Ward's Five Years in Kaffirland in this chapter, the focus will be on ways in which Ward is at times unable to conform to contemporary thinking; her point of view can be quite distinct from that determined by the patriarchal and the colonial power.

Further, Mills illuminatingly synthesises the work of Michel Foucault, applying it to feminist theory and colonialism and the production of text. Foucault is interesting on the organisation of "reality" through speech acts or statements (l'énoncé):

The analysis of statements...is a historical analysis but one that avoids all interpretation; it does not question things said as to what they are hiding, what they were "really" saying, in spite of themselves, the unspoken element that they contain, the proliferation of thoughts, images, or fantasies that inhabit them; but on the contrary, it questions them as to their mode of existence, what it means to them to have come into existence, to have left traces, and perhaps to remain there, awaiting the moment when they might be of use once more; what it means to them to have appeared when and where they did --they and no others.

(Foucault 1972: 109)

As Mills says, "It is in the analysis of statements that it is possible to trace women writers' ambivalence in their position in relation to power" (Mills 1991: 10). The tracing of ambivalence through Ward's "statements" is the focus of my analysis of her most influential work, Five Years in Kafferland.

Writings about the empire are often characterised by their "truth claims" (ibid.: 10). Ward frequently insists that she is offering the "truth": "Hear the Voice of Truth!" she declares in Five Years in Kafferland (i:28). (See page 60 above.) This chapter attempts to assess Ward's perception of reality.

It is helpful to bear in mind Mills's caution that, when one

looks at writing by women in the colonial period, one needs to be aware that the writers are under two forms of constraint: that of the "discourses of imperialism" and that of the "discourses of femininity". Under the first constraint, the writer is positioned within the accepted "narrative and descriptive techniques" particular to a colonial situation. These focus on underlining the difference between the colonial power as a race, represented by the writer, and the nation under observation. Mills draws here on Said's notion of the process of "Othering", a process in which it is essential for Europe "to regard European behaviour as the norm and hence to assert itself as a superior race" (Mills 1991: 88). While colonial women writers subscribed in varying degrees to such conventions, some felt a qualified affiliation for the colonised race, because of the similarly inferior status they recognised in their own position, a point made by Catherine Barnes Stevenson (Stevenson: 11). Mills notices, however, that Stevenson ignores "the difference in power relations between the western women travellers and the people among whom they travelled":

This analysis also lacks a way of explaining why it was that although some women travellers expressed some affiliation with the other nation, many did not, and also those who did express affiliation, at other points in their texts expressed a belief that the colonised nations were in fact inferior to western nations.

(Mills 1991: 92).

In her discussion of the constraints of the "discourses of femininity", Mills shows that all Victorian women writers were consciously either conforming to the conventions expected of them with regard to morality, sexuality and socially acceptable behaviour generally, or challenging them. They thought of themselves constantly as gendered beings, in a way men were not obliged to do, and this consciousness is foregrounded in their texts as they either conform to, or contest, the rules of discourse (ibid.: 103). As Mills emphasises, female writers were forced to take into account at all stages of the production of their texts the reception their writing would have. She concludes then that

the clash of feminine and colonial discourses constructs

texts which are at one and the same time presenting a self which transgresses and which conforms both to patriarchal and imperial discourses. In short, women travellers could not wholeheartedly speak with the voice of colonial discourse, at least not consistently, firstly, because of their role in western society and the way this was structured by the discourses of femininity, secondly, because some of them had rejected this role by travelling unchaperoned, and thirdly, because they had few discursive places within western colonial institutions.

(ibid.: 106)

When confronted by the difficulties of a coherent reading of women's colonial texts, critics often select those parts of the texts which can be comfortably dealt with according to the criteria which are applicable to masculine colonial writers, and remain silent about those parts which are difficult to accommodate within such a framework (ibid.: 5). The point Mills is making is most relevant to this study: one needs caution when tempted to generalise about travel writers as a group, and it is especially dangerous to insist on accommodating the perceptions of women travel writers within the framework one would use for their male counterparts.

What makes an examination of colonial women's writing so fascinating, as Mills indicates, is that "these texts constitute counter-hegemonic voices within colonial discourse" (ibid: 22-3).² In my study of a woman writing transgressively from a number of margins or frontiers, I find this statement particularly resonant. Mills states further that the constraints women were under were actually an enabling factor, in that their writing could "disclose the nature of the dominant discourses and constitute a critique from its margins" (ibid.: 23). This seems to me what Ward quite consciously sets out to achieve in her writing from the Eastern Cape frontier of South Africa.

Mills's assessment is useful in identifying the inadequacies of one of the few critics of colonial writing who devotes

² See Katharine M. Rogers: "...writing is necessarily a form of self-assertion, and a woman who thinks at all will not see herself or her situation quite as a man does" (Rogers: ix).

attention to Harriet Ward: Catherine Barnes Stevenson, already mentioned. In accusing Ward of prejudice and of desiring above all, in the manner, presumably, of a female Cecil Rhodes, that Britain should extend its hegemony through South Africa, Stevenson is guilty not only of prejudice herself but of a very superficial reading of the texts, the only one she seems to have glanced at being Five Years in Kaffirland. Her critique is beset with inaccuracy: she confuses Port Elizabeth and Fort Peddie, locates the Eastern Frontier in Natal, and anachronistically describes the country as "a land torn by racial tension" (Stevenson: 20). She grudgingly accords Ward "a degree of literary skill", and at once contradicts herself by stating: "But Mrs. Ward is by no means a powerful, sophisticated, or lively stylist" and decides that "to write an entertaining account of domestic life and travel is not in fact her aim" (ibid.: 21). Instead, she sees Five Years as "a polemic designed to praise the British soldier, document the Army's honor and heroism, and draw a negative picture of the African" (ibid.: 21). She seems unaware of the book's genesis in a military journal, and consequently deplors the "excruciating detail" with which the military history is documented (ibid.: 21). What Stevenson does recognise is that Ward was a political writer whose aim was to influence public opinion and governmental policy. Like other critics, however, she fails to see the subtle subversion at play here, the challenge to existing hegemony.

Stevenson makes the point that Ward "reluctantly but dutifully" followed her husband to South Africa (ibid.: 19); the evidence is that she willingly followed him, but was ill and suffering from grief after the death of her father. This is an example of Stevenson's tendency to read superficially and to obscure the facts by the imposition of her own assumptions of what a situation should have been. That this is a common tendency among modern critics, and particularly with women, can be demonstrated by contrasting this statement of Stevenson's with another, where flippancy is used to blur details which are verifiable from the text:

Harriet Ward was an army wife in the doughty mould of Lady Sale and bonny Mrs Duberly.³ When her husband set sail for the Cape in 1842 to fight the Kaffir Wars, she insisted on taking her child and following him in moral support. The family suffered both shipwreck and scarlet fever on the miserable troop-ship...; but neither could deter Harriet, and after a long, unglamorous cattle-waggon trek she arrived at the Grahamstown barracks all set to terrify the Hottentots, Fingoes and Kaffirs uprising around with her sheer Britishness. (Robinson: 272; emphasis added)

Stevenson and Robinson are representative of those critics who find it less complicated to read writers such as Ward selectively, to suit their own purposes.

1. Realism and Autobiography

Harriet Ward, observer of and participant in the events of the War of the Axe (1846-7), the central event of her book, Five Years in Kaffirland (1848), saw her role as that of a journalist on the spot. Because of her situation and her inclination, reporting was intimately involved with autobiography. It is clear that later autobiography became inseparable from her fiction.

In following the Victorian tradition of literary realism, she believed that "truth" was the aim of all writing, and that, in order to convey truth, one simply had to recount the actualities one had personally experienced. Her model was one of her professedly favourite writers, "our own dear English Miss Mitford--God bless her!" (Five Years ii: 205),⁴ a writer whose

³ Lady Sale (1787-1853) was the heroine of the First Afghan War, and is one of the very few women to be published in the United Service Magazine. (She died at the Cape on her return from India.) Mrs Duberly (1829-1903) accompanied her husband to Balaclava in 1854, was as passionate about riding as Harriet Ward, and witnessed the Charge of the Light Brigade from the back of a horse.

⁴ See also HC 1848: 16: "But I know little of the world, having seen it, as Miss Mitford says, 'out of back windows'". Miss Mitford shared with Ward an admiration for Daniel O'Connell (See Margaret Forster, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (121).

circumscribed life was very different from Ward's own. Mary Russell Mitford (1787-1855) claimed that she "always wrote on the spot and at the moment and in nearly every instance with the closest and most resolute fidelity to the place and the people" (Our Village [1824-32], quoted by Todd: 470). In her Autobiography, Harriet Martineau (1802-76) praised Miss Mitford as "the originator of that new style of 'graphic description' to which literature owes a great deal" (Martineau 1877 i: 418).⁵

In her biography of Mrs Oliphant (1828-97), Elisabeth Jay looks at the by no means simple question of the critical relation between the author and the work (Jay: 2). She is discussing Mrs Oliphant's fiction, but emphasises the point that any form of composition inevitably requires the writer to select and reshape "elements derived from 'real life'" (ibid.: 2). She cautions against assuming "a direct synchronistic relation between the life and the art" (ibid.: 3). It is easy to fall into this trap in the case of Harriet Ward. Her stance of eye-witness, of her necessary and validating presence "on the spot", dominates her perception of her role as writer.⁶ She points proudly to the fact that what she writes is based on her journal entries. Mills reminds us however that, in Foucault's terms,

⁵ Harriet Martineau's comments are given in full in the next chapter.

⁶ There is a curious echo of this realistic approach in a statement made at a talk by Margaret Drabble at Waterstone's Bookshop in Covent Garden on 27 November 1990: in discussing the way writers use their journalistic experience as material for their novels, she remarked: "I think it unfair to describe a scene if you haven't been there"--Harriet Ward's sentiments exactly. Drabble in fact ended her novel The Gates of Ivory (1991) with her hero on one side of a border; his crossing over into Vietnam had to wait for the next novel (the last of a trilogy), by which time Drabble had been able to visit the country herself.

See also Blake: "Charles Reade wrote novels after consulting his collection of notebooks and newspaper clippings, boasting that his novels were 'a fiction built on truths...gathered...from a multitude of volumes, pamphlets, journals, reports, blue-books, manuscript narratives, letters, and living people'" (Blake: 75-6).

"what happened" and "what was seen to happen" and "what was written" are entirely dependent on the rules of discursive formations, which allow certain things to be described; hence there is no question of a "simple transcription" (Mills 1991: 85).

This can be revealingly placed alongside Ward's statement: "I trust that a simple narration of the facts will place all in a true light" (Five Years i: 204).

A letter to Philippart in November 1847 shows how painstakingly she attempted to authenticate what she wrote:

You will see a few alterations in my chapter--I wrote it before I started my journey [to the Winterberg] intending to send it in the beginning of Nov. but as I was going to visit many scenes of warfare among those who had been engaged with the Gaikas [Ngqika], I deferred sending it off till afterwards--I made many enquiries from people in command whose authority is indisputable--all doubtful points I erased--.

(Brenthurst Letter 8)

And a few days later:

I have been assisted with books of reference by influential people military and civil, much of my information is derived personally from men high in command & have no fear for the sale of the work....I am promised maps of the new country & expect to be able to wind up with Sir H.Smith's entrée again....The newspaper account of his arrival was perfectly correct.

(Brenthurst Letter 9)

The fact that Ward was "resident in Kaffirland", and not "merely travelling" (ROS: 125) lent weight, she felt, to what she offered. Edward Said has pointed out that for many homebound British writers,

"abroad" was felt vaguely and ineptly to be out there, or exotic and strange, or in some way or other "ours" to control, trade in "freely", or suppress when the natives were energized into overt or political resistance.

(Said: 87).

Harriet Ward was emphatically present at the scene; "abroad" had a vivid reality for her, and she felt obliged to help her readers experience this reality with all the graphic power she had. "[A]ll this I write from what I see and hear around me, and from every one whom I meet on this side of the Great Fish River" (Five Years i: 136). The use of eye and ear would seem necessarily to

make what she wrote a reflection of the real and therefore true. In the memoir of her father, she insisted, "I write no fiction: the scene, as I have mentioned it, occurred. It is no picture of the imagination" (ROS: 160-1). Andrew Blake writes illuminatingly on the relationship between literature and history: "Literary texts are so freely used by historians and sociologists that we often fail to see the very real problems involved in using them as direct evidence either of past or present realities" (Blake: 1); Ward would have been affronted at the thought that what she had written could not be used as the basis for historical fact. Ward correctly judged the requirements of her mid-nineteenth-century readership: "Contemporary readers...tended to react to their reading in similar ways; they were concerned ... with the notion of literary realism, and with an awareness of what they were reading as 'realistic'" (ibid.: 69). Ward told Philippart that Five Years would be a work of reference and history (Brenthurst Letter 9: 24.12.1847). It was a matter of honour to her that her fiction should be equally authentic: "would you had a map, dear reader, to trace the country I would fain describe" (JL: 191). The question of subjectivity was not one she entertained. She meant to be objective, strove to be accurate, and that was enough. The fact that she was also controversial, opinionated, challenging and political was blithely ignored; these qualities were all part of "the truth".

A way of distinguishing the features of Harriet Ward's literary persona is to contrast her with Sarah Wallis Bowdich Lee (1791-1856). In the Preface to her Stories from Strange Lands; and Fragments from the Notes of a Traveller (1835), Lee indicates what she thinks the role of a writer should be:

[In this collection] every story is founded on truth, every description of scenery, manners, and customs, has been taken from the life....[M]y great difficulties have been to repress an exuberance of observation and circumstances, in the fear that I might become trifling, and to avoid an egotism which would be tiresome. The number of I's I have scratched out, the sentences that have been turned and twisted, to avoid the provoking monosyllable, almost surpass

belief; for it is very natural to wish to impress on the reader that we have been the witnesses or actors in unusual scenes, in order to stamp them with veracity; and while they are vividly before us, as we wrote them, we are apt to forget that we ourselves are not as interesting as they are.
(xiv-xv)

Ward seems to have far fewer qualms about centralising herself as the heroine in her narrative, but her concern to "stamp [her work] with veracity" corresponds to the self-effacing Lee's.

2. "A Critique from the Margins"⁷

A major stumbling-block of the time, as already indicated, was the attitude of readers towards women writers (see Mills 1991: 70-1). Ward knew what her position as a woman should be: passive, unthreatening, unaggressive, always supportive of the status quo, above all, quiet; she knew too that intelligence and experience had given her the opportunity, and the right, if not the duty, to speak out, to theorise, to correct fallacies and attempt to change malpractices. This dichotomy accounts for the schizophrenia apparent in her early comments. As early as the second page of "Recollections of an Old Soldier", she had remarked deprecatingly, after a comment on the good qualities of the Irish: "But let that pass: women burn their fingers meddling with politics and get no pity for it..." (USM June 1840: 206).

The following month, she wrote: "I being a 'lady, you know,' (as the little girl says in the nursery song,) am by no means entitled or competent to give an opinion on such subjects [as the abuse of putting soldiers on half-pay], but may tell you what I know". Her tension can be sensed in the uneasy syntax, and her true feelings are concealed in the faux naïveté of the remarks which follow: "Whenever I tell a story of this kind to the big-wigs, they say,--'Indeed, it is a very hard case, but unfortunately it is the rule of the Service [sic].' And so, big-

⁷ Mills 1991: 23.

wigs, the sooner you break this rule the better; for all the world must know it is a very bad one, and quite unworthy of a 'generous nation.' Now, isn't it?" (USM July 1840: 354-5).

Jay mentions the well-documented tendency for the autobiographies of nineteenth-century women to display "a degree of self-denigration wholly at odds with the evidence and spirit of either their letters or their less personal public writings" (Jay: 290). In Harriet Ward this seems a gesture, a ploy to keep the critics quiet and ignorant of the truth that she was in fact radically challenging woman's accepted role. As with Abby Morrell, as I shall show, she felt that women had something to offer that was different from what men could but was of real value nevertheless. Dorothy Driver analyses a feminist development in the late eighteenth century which, in contrast with the ideology of femininity, "offered another way of being a woman" which meant that

women had access to different perspectives, albeit contradictory, on themselves and the world. The habitual self-depreciation, for instance, was coupled with a sense of potential equality with men....The sense of apology at being no more than a woman went hand in hand with the relatively aggressive social development of "Femininity"--compassion and sensitivity, for instance--giving a certain moral and spiritual superiority to women.

(Driver 1995: 52)

"An Introduction to Mr O'Connell" begins: "I have always given it as my opinion, that women should never interfere with politics--certainly not openly and avowedly..." (AM [February 1842]: 122). There lay the problem in Five Years in Kaffirland: she had to interfere "openly and avowedly", in spite of her dictum against such unwomanly conduct. A little later in the same article, she returns to worry at this bone: "However, let me again disclaim all intention of leaning to one side of politics or the other--at least, in print" (122). In both these

examples, the discursive conflict is made startlingly clear, and is a reminder to be wary of labelling even such apparently autobiographical transparency as reflecting the unmediated vision of an author. Mills's discussion of Mary Kingsley's complex authorial persona is relevant here:

...in a letter, Kingsley says about her personal feelings: "I keep them out of print just as I keep them out of almost all of my conduct...for they are savage things that would make people...shrink from me"....Such a statement is a clear warning against arguing that Kingsley the person can be found in her texts since she herself draws attention to the fact that she has consciously excised her "feelings" from the text. It also shows us how clearly Kingsley felt the pressures on her to conform textually. (Mills 1991: 93)

It is highly likely that Ward would have felt that the personal feelings which lie beneath the surface of her novels Helen Charteris and Jasper Lyle were "savage things" that would make people shrink from her if openly expressed in print. The "pressures to conform textually" are enormous.

In May 1844, Ward disingenuously sounds the theme again, in an early episode of what was to be Five Years in Kaffirland:

[A]lthough I cannot hope to invest [this account] with an interest equal to that given to such narratives by more experienced travellers, to say nothing of more ingenious writers than myself; yet the circumstance of having threaded the weary way, in company with some five hundred others, soldiers, soldiers' wives, and children, may throw over it a certain charm in the eyes of some, while a better object would be attained were my narrative to elicit a consideration in favour of such advantages as might be bestowed on the soldier, with material benefit to him.... (USM: 20)

The charm is that of truth-to-life. Implicit is the suggestion that a woman has a different but none the less worthwhile point of view. The consciousness of usurping a customarily male role--that of intrepid traveller in a savage country--provides the motive for this apparent diffidence.

It is illuminating to compare Harriet Ward's perception of her role as writer here with that of Abby Jane Morrell (1809-?), who accompanied her sailor husband, Benjamin, on a voyage "to the Ethiopic and South Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Chinese Sea,

North and South Pacific Ocean, in the years 1829, 1830, 1831". Having married her cousin at the age of fifteen, borne him a son, and then decided to go with him to sea so as not to be apart from him, this ardent, educated and committed twenty-year-old from New York begins her narrative with an apology to the public for appearing in print, when her husband has already published his account of the same voyage in 1832, the year before hers appeared. ("It was thought advisable, for reasons which it cannot, however, be interesting to the public to be acquainted with [!], that the narrative of Capt. Morrell should be first published", even though Abby Jane's pages were not only written but printed before his work [Morrell: iii].) There is, however, it is pointed out, a "marked dissimilarity in the style and spirit" in which each has been written (ibid.: iii):

The narrative of Capt. Morrell is essentially practical and descriptive; and its contents are the results of a sailor's observations: the present work is of a more reflective character, and exhibits the impressions made upon the mind of an educated female by scenes and occurrences so different from those which it is the lot of women generally to encounter....The scenes and adventures of which Mrs. Morrell was a witness were highly interesting in their nature, and it is believed that an account of them, divested of nautical technicalities and descriptions purely maritime, will be read with pleasure, especially by readers of her own sex and country. (Morrell 1833: iii-iv)

These observations appear in the third person "Advertisement", which is followed by a "Preface", written in the first person, and it becomes clear that Abby Jane Morrell's ostensible motives are interestingly similar to Harriet Ward's. The former started to keep a journal of the events of the voyage, and then was overcome by "an irrepressible desire to make some observations on a subject which has become of no small interest to philanthropic sympathy--I mean the amelioration of the condition of American seamen" (vii). Much the same desire, to advertise the plight of British soldiers, was felt by Harriet Ward. Like Ward, Morrell was aware that some might feel it strange "that a woman should take up a subject so foreign to those which generally occupy the attention of her sex" (vii). She was confident, however, of being better qualified to offer

suggestions, because disinterested and without prejudice. Nevertheless, she is fearful about the reception of her work:

I tremble when I think I am about to offer [my remarks] for the consideration of the public. Perhaps they will listen to me kindly. It has been said, that when Napoleon was brooding over his disasters no one dared approach him but a pet child, who played around him and induced him to take nourishment and repose. Let the public therefore consider me in the capacity of the child; and if there be any force in my suggestions, they will go for what they are worth; if there be none, why they will pass off with a smile.

(vii-viii)

One senses the awareness, shared by Ward, of trespassing in a male world, and a similar desire to appease anticipated criticism by rendering apparently harmless what looks like an invasion (and, in a way, is one). "It is seldom," Morrell goes on disarmingly to say, "that a female can know any thing upon this subject; but as I have had some opportunity for becoming acquainted with it, I hope I may be excused for venturing to give my opinion" (viii). Her only desire for earthly honour after death is to be known as the mariner's friend. It would never have been necessary for a male travel writer to have adopted such a tone or even to have composed such a preamble to his work.

L. K. Worley makes the point that Victorian women travel writers sensed that "the very act of writing--especially a travel narrative with a strongly autobiographical element--might reveal an unwomanly preoccupation with the self" (Quoted by Mills 1991: 71). Morrell and Ward appear to be trying to avoid accusations of unwomanliness by explicit statements of intent focussing on some charitable motive for their having resorted to print. This will also serve as a disguise or smoke-screen for the transgression of having overstepped the boundary of acceptable behaviour.

Although diffidently, both these women offer as valuable a woman's perspective and the possibility that a woman's advocacy in the concerns of traditionally male spheres of influence such as the army and the navy might be effective. Each treads carefully, aware of a minefield, but none the less firmly.

Diffidence diplomatically cloaks confidence. By mid-century, it would have become far less startling for women to be voicing political opinion and offering suggestions for reform. One thinks of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852), which would generate powerful abolitionist feeling in America and England, eight years before the American Civil War. Florence Nightingale's efforts in the Crimea (1854-6) would highlight the need for hospital reform. Caroline Norton's pamphlets, English Laws for Women (1854), and A Letter to the Queen (1855) would be a woman's voice in support of the Divorce Bill and the Married Woman's Property Bill. Harriet Ward herself by 1855 would have gained the confidence to write to the distinguished reformer, Sir Austen H. Layard, Member of Parliament for Aylesbury, in her campaign against jobbery in the armed services (B.M. Add.MSS. 38983, f.220).

Abby Jane Morrell seems to have been more overtly feminist than Harriet Ward at this early stage of her career. Morrell sees no reason why women should not become conversant with technology: "Woman as I am, I never will sail another voyage without some knowledge of [the science of navigation]; enough to make ordinary calculations cannot lie very deep when so many [men] pretend to it" (142). Then comes realisation of the uniqueness of her position and the responsibility this entails:

A female feels herself lost in the great mass of her countrywomen, but when abroad she represents them all; and she must be dull indeed if she does not understand the situation. I was the first American woman who had visited some of the places I have described, and being a subject of curiosity, no one could be indifferent to such a situation; it is not, however, to me a matter of vanity. Our men have been everywhere, but our women have not wandered much from home. (144)

British patriotism was in its infancy in the first half of the nineteenth century, and one would expect Americans to feel more strongly patriotic about their country at this time than the British about theirs. Harriet Ward more subtly indicates her pride in representing the women of England, in being the first woman to report on a dangerous situation of war, and in being admired for courage and sagacity, as she was by the chief Tola.

It must have been a rare woman who could converse with and be taken seriously by a Xhosa chief. Tola asked "how it was that white women spoke with the minds of men? A female offering any opinion at all was a source of astonishment to him" (Five Years ii: 260). As so often, Ward throws out a reverberating statement of this nature, and leaves her own feelings expressively silent: does she want to add "and not only him"?. Why should she need to utter so many self-deprecating disclaimers if the men of her own country, in contrast to the Xhosa chief, did not share Dr Johnson's opinion about women preachers? Tola's statement is an indication of the voiceless condition of Xhosa women, something which Ward was to work towards countering, and which will be discussed more fully in chapters six and seven.

Her characteristic false modesty reveals itself in Chapter IX of "The Present War in Kafirland": she says, "I do not pretend to call my chapters a real history of the Kafir war" (USM August 1847: 512). Significantly, by the time she came to publish Five Years in Kaffirland, she saw fit to omit this sentence. The tone of what follows invites the reader to supply the omissions:

For want of abler [presumably male] hands, my pen has sketched the leading events of the past year's war, and if little ability has been displayed in a task difficult to any one, but especially so to a woman, I have only to hope, that when cleverer hands than mine [i.e., male again] shall publish the result of their experience, they may be guided by the same wish to be impartial and useful as myself.

(ibid.: 512)

Only a month later, she is showing more confidence, though the deprecatory phrasing is still there:

...having, as a soldier's wife, gained the benefit of experience, and therefore a certain right to offer, at least, an idea to those who are at a loss for any other precedent or advice, in a colony convulsed as this is by border wars, I beg to say, I am of opinion that....

(USM September 1847: 113)

The emphasis on being a "soldier's wife [daughter, sister]" is interesting. In a way these designations seem to act as inhibitors or handicaps at this stage of Ward's writing career. She would develop strategies to overcome the inhibitions. Perhaps an indication of her growing assurance is the way in which in time a soldier steps into the shadows generally inhabited by females, and becomes identified as "husband of Mrs Ward, authoress of...".

3. "Speaking with the Mind of a Man"?

Although one feels uneasy with the phrasing of this sub-title, as the question mark indicates, because it implies, as Tola no doubt intended, that generally only men are wise and entitled to express strong opinion, using it is an indication of the extent to which Harriet Ward transgressed the contemporary boundaries demarcated for acceptable female utterance. As her book shows, she was not blindly chauvinistic and purely imitative of imperialistic thinking in her consideration of the presence of Europeans in Southern Africa. It becomes obvious as one reads more of this work that she is speaking most distinctly with the mind of a woman, in that she is challenging many of the assumptions of colonial (masculine) thinking and characteristic modes of observation and discourse.

At the back of one of the second edition copies of Five Years in Kaffirland, there are bound in some pages of advertisements for "Mr. Colburn's New Publications". Colburn was a byword for his practice of "puffing": the compilation of bogus favourable reviews of his publications, usually in his own periodicals. But the review here of Five Years seems authentic enough, and is a guide to the reception of the book by some of its readers:

Mrs. Ward...courageously determined to accompany her husband, Captain Ward...direct [*sic*] to the theatre of war in Kaffirland....[She] kept a journal, in which she noted down whatever she considered worthy of record during the entire period of hostilities.

Mrs. Ward's narrative is one of deep interest, full of exciting adventures, and wild and graphic descriptions of scenes the most extraordinary which could be presented in the eyes of a traveller.--Sunday Times

(Five Years end-page 2)

The reviewer misses any subtlety in the work, and sees it as no more than a boisterously good adventure yarn. Ward saw a more serious role for it.

It is likely that she was happy to convert her sketches for the United Service Magazine into a book for a number of reasons. One must have been a desire for further fame as a writer and commentator. Then, she believed that she had produced a truthful record of the situation on the frontier, and that it would be to the benefit of soldiers abroad on active service, settlers in South Africa, the Afrikaners on the Cape frontier and the indigenous people if Exeter Hall (the government department in charge of the colonies) were to take her suggestions into account. She saw the work too as a guide-book for intending emigrants, and larded it with practical advice and hints from personal experience, such as how to make a barometer from an anchovy bottle and a salad flask (Five Years i: 113), how to preserve milk (ibid. i: 63), and how to situate a tent to best advantage (ibid. i: 63). Because England seemed "greedy [for] any kind of information" about the colony,⁸ judging by the pictures in the Illustrated London News (Brenthurst Letter 7: 2.4.47), she felt sure that the day-to-day biographical details she provided would be of interest, and so she accommodated the book to fit the genre of travel account, with a focus on the anthropology of "the domestic manners, habits, and customs of the Kafirs" (USM May 1844: 18), but with a different perspective from those of travel writers such as Francois le Vaillant and Sir John Barrow.

⁸ Cf. Daniell in 1820 on "the avidity with which the Public is disposed to receive any information that may tend to increase the scanty knowledge we possess of the interior of Africa..." (Daniell: Preface); the keenness continued at least until the end of the century.

To show the independence of her ideas, and to counter accusations that the book is a "polemic designed to praise the British soldier" and "document the Army's honor and heroism" (Stevenson: 21), I should like to examine the following extract, which deals with the unsuitability of sending Dragoon Guards to the frontier; Ward argues that it would have been better to have sent out Light Cavalry or to have augmented the local Cape Corps, for

...though Dragoon Guards are very fine fellows "in their way," they are not the men for this country, or its warriors. The Hottentot soldier, with his green jacket and clay-coloured trousers, his keen eye, quiet patience, and tolerable knowledge of the Kaffir language, is the man to meet an enemy who fires from behind a bush, and keeps the soldier dodging him and his locality for days. The tall upright Dragoon, in his red jacket, will be a capital mark for the Kaffir's assegai, or musket, or the long roer [gun] of the Boer; and when he is got rid of, what a prize the horse that carries nineteen stone will be! Then the Dragoon, on his arrival, must be taught frontier geography concerning kloofs, valleys, flays [vleis], short cuts, friendly or hostile kraals, Etc. Etc.; and he must be suitably mounted. I can fancy a Dragoon Guardsman eyeing his Cape charger for the first time! And how he will bluster at his Hottentot guide, who would laugh in his face if he dared turn six feet into ridicule! But the Hottentot will smile quietly when there is neither food nor water, and draw his girdle of famine tighter round his waist, and travel on under the sun (which overpowers the heavily-accoutred Dragoon) uncomplainingly. (Five Years i: 101-2)

She is trespassing on decidedly male territory here, but the irony and dry humour are a subtle disguise for clear criticism of official policy. While the British soldier is gently mocked, the soldier honoured is the Khoi. The practical information is impressive, based on experience and close observation of the terrain and the type of warfare. The point of view is amusingly that of the Khoi soldier, for whose wisdom, adaptability and endurance the Dragoon is seen to be no match. This is hardly the standpoint of a bigoted imperialist or racist, and the reader can detect no trace of "Othering"; on the contrary, the writer aligns herself, as one sharing common experience of the country, with the indigene. At the time, this would have been an idiosyncratic, if not heretical, point of view. Is this the "negative picture" (Stevenson: 21) that Stevenson accuses Ward of painting of the

"African"? In fact, this might be seen as a variant of the concept of "self-othering" developed by Dorothy Driver: the colonial viewer becomes aware of "relative value" involving a "dislocation to her sense of her status as superior in this unknown land" (Driver 1995: 48). Like Lady Anne Barnard, under discussion here, Ward easily slips into this mode of viewing; it is rare to find it in male travel writing.

Appropriate here is Mills's concept of "going native" (Mills 1991: 98). Whereas this term is normally derogatory, meaning that in adopting the dress and customs of the people of a colonised country, travellers have "let the side down" in "potentially [aligning] themselves with that culture" (ibid.: 98), Mills wishes to "reclaim" the term so that it becomes a phrase with positive connotations. Women travel writers who show affiliation with the people of the colonised country, says Mills, indicate a demand for

a recognition of the importance of interaction with members of other nations, not as representatives of the race, as in male-authored accounts, but as individuals. This alternative, this "going native" by women, constitutes both a challenge to male Orientalism and a different form of knowledge about other countries. (ibid.: 99)

One can see an indication of this kind of affiliation in Ward's approach to the people of the Eastern Cape, and I shall return to this in the chapter on Jasper Lyle.

Mary Louise Pratt looks at two aspects of travel writing: the manners and customs convention, which aims at scientific detachment, and the sentimental convention, where the narrator is an actor in the drama (Pratt 1985: 121, 131). The passage from Five Years in Kaffirland quoted above would fall into the latter category, as would most of Ward's narration in this text. Pratt describes sentimental texts as "characteristically dialogic in the Bakhtinian sense: they represent the Other's voices in dialogue with the voices of the self and often tender the Other some credibility and equality" (ibid.: 132). This can be recognised in what Ward is doing in the extract quoted above. Pratt goes on to say that

The European's relations with the Other are governed by a desire for reciprocity and exchange. Estrangements and repulsion are presented as entirely mutual and equally irrational on both sides. Parody and self-parody abound.[T]he self sees, it sees itself seeing, it sees itself being seen. And always it parodies itself and the Other. (ibid.: 132)

The passage under discussion seems to me to be conveying a more sympathetic attitude towards the "Other"; in fact, a transformation occurs and the Dragoon Guard has undergone a metamorphosis into the Other, a more sophisticated approach than that exhibited by Pratt's sentimental travel writer.

Pratt identifies an interesting feature of the writing of Sir John Barrow (1764-1848), whose Travels into the Interior of South Africa in the Years 1797 and 1798 (1801) was standard reading for intending visitors and emigrants, including Ward herself (Five Years i: 88). Pratt comments on how, in describing the colonial landscape, Barrow's narrative "does everything possible to minimize all human presence, including that of the people whose journey is being told" (Pratt 1985: 123). At one stage, Barrow writes:

The nights [in the Black Mountains--the Swartberg] had been so intensely cold and piercing, since we entered upon the desert, that our horses, being accustomed to the stable, immediately grew sick and low-spirited, and two of them this day fell under the severity of the weather. (Barrow 1801: i.96).

There is no mention of the suffering of the humans. Some light is thrown on this self-abnegation by Barrow's obvious scorn for Le Vaillant: "It is sometimes allowable for a traveller to be 'himself the hero of each little tale:' but Monsieur Le Vaillant is an hero on every occasion" (ibid.: ii.21).

A standard device of colonisers, allowing the colonising nation to assume the right to annex the country, is to depict it as unpeopled and unexplored: nobody seemed to be occupying it. (This goes with the fantasy of planting the "first footprint".) "The landscape is written as uninhabited, unpossessed, unhistoricized, unoccupied even by the travelers themselves"

(Pratt 1992: 51). What distinguishes Ward from this convention is her interest in describing the population as well as the landscape. She peoples the country of her narrative most vividly, and in doing so, she is according the indigenous population far more humanity than Barrow found it possible to do. Her picture is thus refreshingly personal and more "realistic" for the eyes of Victorian readers. In itself, it is a critique of the conventions of masculine travel writing. Admittedly Barrow, Auditor-General of the Cape, in July 1797 was on an exploratory mission on behalf of the Secretary of State, and so one would expect his presentation of what he finds to be more severe, official and "scientific" than Ward's.⁹ She professed to be writing for entertainment and instruction, but, in fact, Ward's and Barrow's aims were not too dissimilar: both were engaged in providing a rationale for European settlement. Nigel Penn has explained the impersonality detectable in Barrow's account by pointing out that the keen cartographer regarded his Travels as having informative rather than literary merits:

The unpublished reports [held by the Brenthurst Library] are characterised by an extremely colourless tone as Barrow tried to become an invisible producer of only that category of information which he considered to be of utility to his employer. This attitude was also to influence his approach in the published version for even though the public accounts were enlivened by the insertion of the narrator into the text the effect was strangely impersonal.

(Penn: 30-31)

⁹ In An Account of Travels (1804), Barrow defines the nature of his book: it is "the natural history of a country little known; the general description of its surface and appearance; the manners, customs, and state of society....[and] not the least important [are] the local advantages it may command in a political, military, and commercial point of view..." (2).

4. "The Violent Arcadia"¹⁰

Even the earliest travellers to the Cape experienced highly ambivalent feelings towards it, as they delighted in its beauty and richness, and recoiled from its dangers. Malvern van Wyk Smith identifies in the literature describing the experience an attitude of "problematic appropriation":

a puzzled "reading" of a terrain which is both familiar and unknown, welcoming and hostile, a place where the European feels he has somehow always belonged--indeed, to which he feels he has a right--while at the same time sensing its utter strangeness. (van Wyk Smith 1990: 2)

Ward's reactions are similarly complex. To begin with, the passengers on the troopship sailing from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth are troubled by "a singular streak of light in the sky" which increases nightly in size and brilliancy (Five Years i: 57). This puzzling and possibly inauspicious phenomenon turns out to be a comet. (At the same time, on another continent, it disturbed Ludwig Leichhardt's party and presaged the failure of their attempted exploration of the Australian interior and Leichhardt's own death.) The soldiers and their wives are in a despondent state, having lost their possessions and almost their lives in the shipwrecked Abercrombie Robinson. On landing, Ward tries to rally herself to a description of the scene, and is already struck by the contrast between the European and the African:

The regiment has landed, and the little encampment formed on the green opposite the windows is very picturesque. How strangely the wild, dusky-looking savages contrast with the soldiers; the latter busy in their preparations for their comforts, the former lounging idly in their skins and blankets, draped not ungracefully round their dark forms! (ibid.: 58)

Unwittingly, she is laying the ground-strokes of her future response to the experience of Africa. The scene is picturesque to a European sensibility, and therefore, luckily, worthy of description. The soldiers, dutifully conditioned to the work ethic and the mundane, are seen with approval as active, while

¹⁰ Sydney Clouts: quoted by Van Wyk Smith, 1990: 2.

the Xhosa seem (to a modern reader) wilfully bent on re-inforcing all the European prejudice against them which Ward too had imbibed: they are seen as wild, savage, and above all, idle.¹¹ What the recorder must perforce notice, albeit reluctantly, is the inherent grace of the Xhosa, and by implication, their similarity to ancient Greek sculpture. Her subliminal confusion is revealed in her use of the double negative, and there is a pre-echo here of her description of the demeanour of the chief Sandile as displaying "something wild and almost interesting" (ibid.: 147).¹² The ideas will surface again and again in her writing, and are expressions of the difficulties of 'reading' the signs in a new and strange place.

Ward's state of mind in this early chapter is indicated by her reference to suicide or mirth (ibid.: 60) as optional responses to the appalling thought of traversing the unknown terrain in a "huge machine" of a waggon (ibid.: 59). The near-hysterical sense of misery and dislocation can be felt in this description of chaos:

...the memory of friends at home...was strangely blended in my mind with the sights and sounds of outward objects; with the bellowing of oxen, the shouts of Hottentot drivers, the screams of children and scolding voices of mothers in neighbouring waggons, and the mingled oaths and laughter of the soldiers, as they picked up stray baskets, tin mugs, puppies, and babies, the later animating the scene by occasionally tumbling off the waggons. (ibid.: 60)

She does not feel the need, as a male writer such as Barrow would almost certainly have felt, to put on a brave face; she knows her

¹¹ The alleged idleness of the "non-European" was a byword at this time. This stereotyping is fruitfully examined by J.M.Coetzee in his essay, "Idleness in South Africa" (Coetzee, 1988: 12-35). For special reference to the Xhosa, see Clifton C. Crais: "'Thievishness' and 'indolence' [were] part of the innate character of the Xhosa according to the élite..." (Crais: 132). He quotes the Reverend Niven who argued that lobola and polygamy made the male sex "accomplished idlers, the personification of indolence" (ibid.: 132).

¹² Cf. also Ward's comment on Cosani Jack: "He has rather a suspicious character but has never proved unfaithful" (Five Years, ii: 21: my italics).

human feelings at the time will be of interest to her reader. But after the outspan at the end of the first day, her spirits start to revive and she becomes more appreciative of the scene at "Zwart Cops", which can be accommodated in conventional eighteenth-century landscape description, with "parterres" and park-like aspect, and a classical perspective of receding hills. "Comforting" and "comfortable" are now words which characterise the relief provided by hot food and drink and welcome rest, and now "much order reigned in the camp" (ibid.: 63; my emphasis).

Mills invents a useful phrase when discussing Nina Mazuchelli's descriptions of travel in India (1876):

The text as a whole orients itself towards Britain objects and people are represented through a normative filter which is based in Britain; events and landscapes are filtered through a clearly British sensibility.

(Mills 1991: 182: my emphasis)

Mills sees this orientation as serving two purposes: it "ratifies the narrator within feminine discourses since 'a woman's place is in the home' (even while that dictum is being violated)", and it situates her "within colonial discourses whereby the other nation is seen as a poor substitute for the British landscape" (Mills 1991: 182-3).

In portraying the "beautiful ford of the Sunday River", Ward's description re-inforces Mills's ideas:

"Who would imagine," thought I, "that such a scene of peace and beauty should be one of the fastnesses for wild beasts?' Green boughs met each other across the stream. Down such a pleasant-looking river I had often glided in "merry England," singing, by the way, with young companions, to the gay music of our guitars, whilst the splash of oars kept time to the measure of our happy voices. There, in our own happy land, no lions prowled in our neighbourhood, no panthers could we fancy glaring on us from the bush, no venomous reptiles awaited our feet as we stepped upon the green sod from the boat.

(Five Years i: 74-5)

She then discusses the South African climate ("beautiful all the year round"), and in all honesty has to remember England's "dark November days and painful frosts...still, even with these outward discomforts, look at our firesides!" (where, perhaps, she senses

her reader thinking, a "lady" ought to be, instead of in this wild country amongst venomous reptiles).

While Mills's theory of the "normative filter" seems attractively apt here, I would suggest that there is another reason for what looks like the constantly repeated crime of a Eurocentric focus. Ward's aim is to bring an unusual scene into reality for her readers, and what better way to do this than to work with what they already know? So, for example, ant-hills are described as resembling "hay-cocks in England, being about that size" (ibid.: 77), and the spot chosen for a bivouac on the heights above Grahamstown, at "Sly [Slaai] Kraal", is compared with the grouse moors of Scotland and the wildest parts of Yorkshire (ibid.: 81). One can detect no derogation here; on the contrary, similarity, and not inferiority, is stressed.

Context is something one needs constantly to remind oneself of: the narrow focus on the immediate characterises the journalistic form of discourse. This is the beginning of Ward's "five years" in South Africa, and the successive journal entries invite the reader to watch the narrator's process of orientation, from a dispirited disappointment in what is experienced for its being so unlike what she is used to, to a growing appreciation of the new life and a sense of exhilaration in the unusual experiences. One can detect, though, the weariness of the journal-keeping traveller in "Graham's Town is not worth describing....It is a great straggling place, irregularly built, and in a dirty and disorderly state" (ibid.: 84). By the time she is settled at Fort Peddie a few weeks later, she is able to write, "Certainly a South African morning is incomparably beautiful" (ibid.: 173; my emphasis). The colony now assumes the position of superiority. The narrator delights in the perfume and colour of the mimosa blossoms (however foreign to the English experience), and the smooth, velvety, undulating grass. She affectionately salutes her companions, the Hottentot soldiers, who are a comforting contrast to the "fancied" wild beasts lurking in the passage previously examined.

Inevitably, the dispiritedness returns as the stresses of war take their toll, and the country comes to represent something monstrous. "Everything in Africa is in extremes" (ibid.: 235). Even the "vaunted climate of South Africa" is perfect for only a few days of the year (237). Half way through the second volume, Ward is portraying a frontier river as the Styx, as far removed from "a cheerful, honest English torrent" as could possibly be imagined. Even the "Fingo herdsman" is a "Charon grim!" (Five Years ii: 170). The landscape provides the objective correlative now of all her fears and sensations of violence and betrayal, and perceptions of hell rather than of arcadia dominate. This is strikingly borne out in a passage taken from near the end of the first volume of Five Years in Kaffirland. She has been describing the "Clay Pits", a place which takes its name from the red clay found there with which the Xhosa paint their bodies, a name she finds "unseemly", as the spot is so apparently suited to the European sensibility, being a "fairy place", with an "emerald green" valley, a "crystal spring", "starry jessamine", and convolvulus; only the euphorbia, baboons and inevitable, but unseen, "serpent" remind us that this is Africa. The spot was once the scene of a resting-place for Harriet Ward and her party. "We were very merry, then, and the valley rang with laughter and with song, as we tried the echoes. And now the savage lurks there, like the lion lurking for his prey" (ibid. i: 296-7). Ward remembers her shock when, at the time, she expressed herself enchanted with the spot, and some one said,

in an indifferent voice, "This is where poor -- was killed in the last war; and where the waggon was stopped, and the poor creatures with it were murdered!" (ibid. i: 297)

Danger and death are felt to lurk beneath beauty, and the country becomes "the land of banishment and anxiety" (ibid. ii: 141). It is relevant to remember Thomas Stubbs's poignant story of the disputed territory of the Clay Pits, where his father was murdered when Stubbs was very young. Some time before the murder, Stubbs's mother was made anxious by what seemed to be threatening and well-armed Xhosa warriors, and, his father being away, a twenty-two-year-old cousin was sent to investigate. Mrs Stubbs insisted that he go unarmed: "I have loaded the guns but we will

not let them see them until we find out whether they are enemies or not" (Stubbs: 162). On hearing a friendly greeting--"'morrow, morrow'"--

[the cousin] brought them to our tents. When [sic] my mother motioned to them to sit down, and then we saw they were all women with long sticks in their hands. We gave them a lot of Settler's bread i.e. hard biscuit. (162)

What could have been an incident cementing mutual trust and liking was destroyed when a number of settler farmers arrived, and arrested five hundred women, forcing them on to farms to work. As Stubbs remarks, the women were legally allowed to be collecting clay, and in fact had their permits with them, a fact which the settler farmers chose to ignore. What emerges positively from this sorry account is Stubbs's recognition of common humanity with the Xhosa and his acknowledgement that the women had been abused by the high-handed behaviour of the settlers: "This was the first piece of injustice done to the natives by the Government, and this we had to suffer for afterwards" (ibid.: 162). There is a welcome reminder here that not all settlers were blunted to human feeling and a sense of fairness in their dealings with the Xhosa.

5. The Xhosa: Magnificent or Murderous?

As I have already suggested, Harriet Ward's attitude towards the Xhosa is complex and problematic. Influenced by the Rousseauian tradition of the "noble savage" and the classical and heroic illustrations of Daniell and others, she is predisposed towards seeing the Xhosa, male and female, as physically superb creatures, and her admiration is not always as grudging as the example given earlier in this chapter. Alternatively, perhaps the tone of that example may have been an indication of expectations confounded: she did not expect to feel such strong admiration. (Interestingly, unlike many European travellers in relation to colonised people, she hardly ever views the Xhosa as childlike, though at one significant moment, she calls Sandile a "wild child

of nature" [Five Years ii: 54]. She sees the Xhosa generally as formidably intelligent foes, and is more likely to see a childlike quality in the San people ["Bushmen"] and the Khoi ["Hottentots"].) She traces the origins of the Xhosa, following Barrow, to the Ethiopians (Five Years i: 120, 138-9; Barrow 1801: 1: 212), and again and again, she uses the word "magnificent": "Near [Sandile], in silence, stood his two followers, magnificent-looking creatures, with complexions of dark olive, set off by their bright blue head-dresses. Their attitudes, as they leaned on their assegais, were easy and graceful" (Five Years i: 147). If "creature" here is a signal of "Othering", it also carries implications of aesthetic creativity, as in sculpture. She frequently mentions the "finely moulded" arms of the young Xhosa women (ibid. ii: 279), and even the men (JL: 96).

Traceable here is the influence of such illustrators as Le Vaillant (1790 and 1795) and Samuel Daniell, illustrator of the second edition of Barrow's Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa (1806). Even while the text may be derogating the Khoi, San and the Xhosa, the illustrations depict them in stylised classical poses of great beauty, as van Wyk Smith has shown in his seminal work on the iconography of the Khoi. For example, "[Daniell's] figures combine the graceful elegance of a classical idealism with a high degree of ethnographic realism" (Van Wyk Smith 1992: 322). In 1820, William Daniell, son of Samuel Daniell, produced a large and beautiful book entitled Sketches Representing the Native Tribes, Animals and Scenery of Southern Africa, from drawings made by the late Mr. Samuel Daniell, engraved by William Daniell. In spite of such descriptions of the "Hottentot" face as "in general extremely ugly", the "illustrative notices" compiled by "Dr Somerville and Mr Barrow" abound in favourable comment. The description of the Khoi man just quoted goes on to add "the teeth are beautifully white" (25) and the drawing depicts the subject as imposing and dignified. The "Female Hottentot" on the next page is beautiful and seems to regard the viewer with serious attention. The caption speaks of a tendency to frowning and an "ungracious expression", which

are ascribed to "an effort to exclude the offensive rays of the sun". The people are "cheerful and good-humoured". The engraving entitled "Caffres" reads: "[T]hey are strangers to intoxicating liquors, and their minds are unaffected by violent or corroding passions. The countenance of the Kaffer [sic] is always cheerful, and his whole demeanour bespeaks content and peace of mind" (27). One remembers that this is 1820, and the frontier wars that are to distort such appreciative and unbiased attitudes and expressions lie in the future.

Very few travellers ever came to the Cape with innocent minds and eyes. They had done their reading and could not have escaped the conditioning of colonial discourses. Alistair Cooke once commented, "Travellers invariably find what they are looking for".¹³ Being a military wife, Ward would have been aware of the earlier frontier wars, especially the Sixth (1835), and had no doubt heard of "atrocities" committed, at least on the part of the Xhosa. (Those committed by settlers and soldiers--one thinks of the shameful way in which Hintsa was done to death after having "trusted the honour of a British Governor [Sir Benjamin D'Urban]"--would have been judged to have been justified as against a barbarous "enemy".)¹⁴ So the stereotypical ways of viewing the Xhosa as wild animals, barbarians, idlers, liars, thieves, murderers and traitors already informed her expectations. The miracle is that at times she could discard this conditioning, if only temporarily.

Was Harriet Ward racist? Timothy J. Stapleton believes she was: "Ward and [Alfred Whaley] Cole were so overtly racist, even

¹³ "Letter from America", BBC broadcast, 13.11.93.

¹⁴ See Peires, 1981: 111-2. Peires indicates that D'Urban's and Sir Harry Smith's letters present a different account of how Hintsa died from the official one. One hopes that Ward would not have been so callous as to make the following statement had she known the truth: "Hang one chief publicly (shooting him in a kloof, like Hintza, would not go half so far,) and there will be a sudden stop in cattle-stealing" (Five Years i: 135).

by nineteenth-century standards, that they must be read with suspicion" (Stapleton: 140). If one extracts certain of her comments out of context, the answer must be in the affirmative. Revulsion is the only reaction anyone in the post-Nazi world can have after reading her discussion of the thickness of the Xhosa skin; one might try to explain this episode dispassionately as an ill-informed attempt at secondhand anthropological detail -- "It must be allowed...that a Kaffir skin more resembles the hide of some powerful animal than the skin of a human being" (Five Years ii: 127) -- and might adduce as a parallel the case mentioned later of the Xhosa woman who

came into Graham's Town lately, to tell Colonel Somerset that Pato [Phato] desired to meet him, and that speedily, as his tobacco-pouch was worn out, and he only waited for his enemy's skin wherewith to make a new one!

(ibid.: 172)

Paul Fussell believes that most travel writers, following their medieval and Renaissance ancestors in their search for wonders, are on an "implicit quest for anomaly" (Quoted by Mills 1991: 86). This not only authenticates the travel writer's experience, but re-inforces his or her endorsement of the difference between the home country and the one travelled, and the former's superiority. There may be shades of that here. One remembers too a parallel to the mutilation of Hintsa's body, in the mutilation of Captain Bambrick's body after the battle of Burn's Hill, when his skull, right hand and skin were allegedly sent to Myeki, "a celebrated witch-doctor or worker of spells" (Five Years ii: 172), the "dreaded war-magician chief of the Mpondomise" (Peires: 158, 137).

Further examples of extreme forms of "Othering" abound, motivated by the desire to dehumanise, humiliate and punish the Xhosa. This desire increased as the war progressed, as personal danger intensified and close friends of the Wards (and disregarded numbers of Xhosa warriors) died under appalling circumstances. Wars objectify enemies, and normal human compassion falls away to be replaced on either side by hatred and the desire to avenge lost friends and relations. The reactions

are no more excusable for that, but perhaps one understands them better if one remembers the circumstances. Towards the end of the second volume of Five Years in Kaffirland, Ward, imagining that the present truce will last only another ten years (it lasted barely five), utters a prayer which is a pointer to her "shattered" nerves (ii: 324): "God forbid that I, or any one that I love, should be on the spot during 'The next Kaffir War!'" (ii: 235).

Ward shows a streak of disconcerting violence at times, exhorting the authorities to hang the Xhosa chiefs, or shoot or starve the people into submission (Five Years ii: 139). However, in times of peace, and even sometimes during the war, she is less rabidly racist towards the Xhosa, if one will allow degrees of racism, than many of her contemporaries. What helps to put her attitudes into perspective is this statement by one of the leading settlers of 1820 and Grahamstown Journal proprietor, Robert Godlonton, in his Narrative of the Kaffir War 1850--1851--1852: "Sir Henry Pottinger was managing the war subject in such a manner as would in a short time have effectually and for ever extinguished the Kaffir people; but a false economy on the part of the Home Government caused the needful appliances to be withheld..." (i:6). Ward does not advocate genocide, no matter how heated her emotions. In this she differs from her fellow author, Louisa Meredith, who in 1852 wrote My Home in Tasmania During a Residence of Nine Years: while recounting colonial life from the point of view of the white ruling class, Meredith "at the same time provides a chilling contemporary approval of the massacre of the Tasmanian Aborigines" (BGWL: 171).

What one realises in reading Five Years in Kaffirland is that at least for Ward and the British military forces in the Eastern Cape, apartheid as an ideology lurks in the future. In her first years in South Africa, Ward provides evidence of an easy-going relationship between the British and the Khoi, Mfengu, Xhosa and San. There seems to be no thought of colour-consciousness when Amakeya, daughter of the chief Maqoma, is

fêted as the belle of the camp at Fort Beaufort (Five Years ii: 106, 279). While stationed at Fort Peddie, Ward often had meetings on sociable terms with Xhosa chiefs:

Our most interesting visitor is the Christian Kaffir Chief, Kama [Khama]; his habits and demeanour are those of a gentleman, his dress is of good, though plain materials, and his mild voice, coupled with its smooth and gentle language, is pleasant to listen to. He has long been a convert to Christianity, and is so disinterested that, some time ago, he created a dangerous party against himself by sending back to her country a Tambookie [Thembu] woman --who had been offered him as a wife--saying that the religion he had embraced permitted him only one wife.¹⁵ We showed Kama, the other day, a six-barrelled revolving pistol, and an air-cane. What wonder and admiration were depicted in his fine countenance! The Kaffir seldom expresses open surprise; all that he says is 'Soh! soh! repeated slowly, and with a reflective air. Kama was more delighted with the workmanship of the pistol, than with the wonderful power of the air-cane.

(Five Years i: 148-9)

Here is another Fort Peddie episode, which seems to suggest that Harriet Ward was a gracious hostess and that the Wards had an open-house policy towards the Xhosa chiefs:

I was rather amused at the "introduction" of the chief Gasella [Gasela] to me...I was sitting over the fire, chatting with an officer, when Pato [Phato, Khama's brother] and an inferior Kaffir came in, followed by a dirty, miserable little man, in a threadbare surtout, broken hat, Etc. On my asking Pato some question relative to the quarrel with the chiefs... he pointed to the wretched little object who had advanced to my elbow, and said, "There--Gasella." I stared, and, feeling some sympathy for the creature [who had had to pay an unjustly heavy fine of cattle], gave him a chair. Both asked for wine and tobacco; I gave them some cigars. At this moment, Kama arrived, and, seeing they intended lighting their cigars at my sitting-room fire, he pointed out the impropriety of it, and they departed.

(Five Years i: 163-4)

There is fellow feeling expressed in this account of the unfortunate chief, and, to those in the know in Eastern Cape circles, an implied criticism of the way he has been treated.

¹⁵ Peires confirms the truth of this dangerous action: the Mthembu were a royal house, and this refusal to marry an Mthembu princess would have constituted an insult (Peires, 1981: 131-2).

Another intriguing account is that of a meeting with Bothman (Bothomane),¹⁶ "an inferior Chief, and quite dropsical. We one day met him out riding: he begged us to raise our veils, which we did, laughing, and he acknowledged the courtesy by a sound between a bark and a sigh" (Five Years ii: 260-1). The feelings behind all the actions here are enigmatic: as so often, Ward does not add an authorial annotation, nor do we know why she recounts this story at this point, years later, when the now discredited and ailing Bothomane is the subject of a discussion on his part in the attack on a British escort in charge of a Xhosa prisoner (ibid.: 260). All that can be guessed is that some good-natured exchange took place, before the distrust and hatred of the war made such things impossible. Would such a request have been regarded as an impertinence in England? Would there have been any question of acceding to it? Is there the faintest suggestion of eroticism here, almost never seen to surface elsewhere, or is it simply an indication of the harmlessness of the Xhosa towards white women, the strange conventions of Xhosa behaviour, and, correspondingly, those of women in a remote country? Is Ward subtly reminding the reader that these two women¹⁷ are travelling unescorted or unchaperoned through "wild" country, and are far from the restraints of normally modest behaviour? From Bothomane's point of view, do the "bark and a sigh" show his incomprehension at the behaviour of white women, and a recognition of all that their presence, as they ride freely through his country, symbolises for his people?

Ward uses this incident again, in a romanticised form, in "A South African Pic-Nic", where she can be seen, by contrast, to be making use of "Othering", particularly with reference to

¹⁶ Stapleton offers no evidence in support of his assertion that Bothomane was "actually one of the worst cattle thieves" (Stapleton: 43).

¹⁷ In her descriptions of riding expeditions, Ward mentions that another officer's wife was her companion (Five Years i: 160; 172).

"manners and customs", to a far greater extent than in the more sympathetic earlier version:

See,-- a Kafir chief, wrapped in his tiger-skin, steps out from a green nook and scans the party. They stop to speak to him--he veils his face at their approach. It is his mode of showing respect to one of the gentlemen, an officer of rank. They greet him, he draws near, and having made his salutation, grows familiar; he ventures to lift the ladies' veils. We can hear the clear laugh of light-hearted girls ringing across the valley--they have given him something; he kisses their hands and retires.

(AM September 1846: 174)

The chief is depicted as decidedly inferior in this version: his dress is highlighted as primitive and strange to Ainsworth's readers, as is his behaviour; shown courtesy, he behaves with permitted impropriety and actually lifts the veils, as it would not have been possible in the riding incident for him to do; there it is willingly done for him by the women. The derogatory tone is notably missing from the earlier account. The girls here condescendingly give him something, and he, a chief, acknowledges his inferiority by kissing their hands.

There is proof here of the lack of consistency in Ward's depiction of the Xhosa. One might almost view it as schizophrenic when one examines the elements in another two passages. The first appeared in the United Service Magazine of October 1844, and the second in the same journal in December 1846, by which time the War of the Axe had directly affected the tone of the writing.

[T]here could not be a finer subject for a painter than a tall Kaffir, majestically formed, with one foot firmly planted before him, his head thrown back, his kaross draped round him, leaving his right arm and foot free and unfettered, in the act of poisoning [sic] an assegai before he sends it flashing through the sunlit air.

(Five Years i: 139-40)

As van Wyk Smith points out, this is "pure Daniell",¹⁸ and is proof that Ward is writing in a tradition already firmly

¹⁸ A comment made to the author. I am indebted to Professor van Wyk Smith for pointing out to me the connections between the way Ward chose to describe the Xhosa and that chosen by well-known illustrators she would have been familiar with.

established in the ethnography and iconography of the Cape indigene.

In contrast is this next description, in which the Xhosa is objectified and dehumanised:

A Kaffir meditating a death-blow with his assegai is a terrific object. Now he advances, his eyes starting from their sockets, his brilliant teeth glittering between his huge lips, which emit these horrible imitations [of "lions, tigers, jackals, wolves, snakes, Etc."], his head thrown back, his whole body writhing and trembling in the excitement of his anxiety to take a steady aim, his arm upraised, and his spear poised. The very sight of him is sufficient to inspire the bravest with dread, for such encounters cannot be considered fair fights between man and man. (ibid. ii: 251-2)

That both these passages, particularly the second, can only be based on hearsay, is obvious; but they provide graphic evidence of how much was lost in mutual understanding, trust and tolerance with each successive frontier war. (Ward herself mentions the mutual respect and affection between Suthu, mother of Sandile, and Lady Smith, when the latter was stationed at the frontier.)¹⁹ From this point, the connotations of the animal (as in "huge lips", "glittering" teeth, "writhing" body) become closely associated by Ward with the Xhosa in her representation of their wildness, savagery and inhumanity.

Clifton C. Crais is illuminating on the "rising racism of the British settlers" on the frontier (Crais: 139), and his findings help to shed some light on the complexity of Ward's response to the Xhosa.

Once respectable and virtuous, living in an Edenic land where most vices were blamed on the intrusion of Dutch trekboer [*sic*], Xhosa came to be regarded as base and "the most depraved of the human race", inhabiting a dangerous expanse which only contributed to instability and the perpetuation of "barbarism"....[W]hat all agreed upon was that in the inner character of the African lurked the thief

¹⁹ "The absence of Lady Smith, who had been present on that spot [Kingwilliamstown] in 1836, was regretted by all who remembered her. Old Sutu presented herself at Fort Cox...and begged some intelligence of 'her mother'" (*Five Years* ii: 341).

and the recidivist criminal, the dangerous, the potentially mad. The elite redefined the character of the African, indeed his or her very body on the one hand, and their "customs" and society on the other, in terms of negative stereotypes which metonymically demanded domination.

(ibid.: 138)

Naturally, in this process of redefinition, "the African was gradually stripped of his individuality" (ibid.: 138). This goes some way towards illuminating the indefensible behaviour of Sir Harry Smith towards Maqoma:

When Maqoma, who had consistently opposed war in 1846, offered Smith his hand, the Governor ordered him to the floor. Tradition has it that as he lay prostrated before the jeering spectators, Smith's foot on his neck, Maqoma said, "You are a dog, so you act like a dog. This thing was not sent by Victoria, who knows I am of royal blood as she is".

(Peires: 166)

About the time of this, Smith's first public meeting with the Xhosa chiefs, 7 January 1848, Harriet Ward and her family were thankfully preparing to embark from Cape Town for "home". There are strong indications that she would have felt such dehumanising treatment to be beneath an Englishman's dignity, too. Nowhere in her recorded conversations with the chiefs do we find the equivalent of the arrogant tone employed by Smith: "You will no longer be naked and wicked barbarians..." (ibid.: 166). Generally, Ward accorded those chiefs she had had conversations with a measure of dignity; she did not demean them or treat them as if they were children or simple-minded, as Smith did. She offers a largely sympathetic picture of the defeated Maqoma:

Macomo, with all his people, has been removed to the neighbourhood of Algoa Bay. He was opposed to the war, from policy, from the beginning; but, when once the cry was raised in the mountains, he immediately assumed the command, being the General of the Gaikas, and, when sober,²⁰ an able warrior and councillor.

(Five Years ii: 280)

²⁰ Peires says there are references to the drinking habits of the chiefs in a number of "obviously biased European sources....But the number and detail of references to Maqoma's alleged alcoholism is quite exceptional and therefore somewhat persuasive....[O]ne should consider that Maqoma was encouraged to drink by the Colonial authorities because it kept him quiet. He received a daily ration of liquor" (Peires: 243-4). Cf. A.W.Cole: "[Macomo] seldom drinks at home" (Cole: 181).

All the lively and humanly interactive vignettes she has given us of contact with a people on what she does sometimes call their land could not have been forgotten by her, nor can they be forgotten by her readers in post-colonial times. This is counter-hegemony in practical application.

However, after close contact with the settlers, especially such élite representatives as Colonel Henry Somerset, Ward is bound to have absorbed some of their ways of thinking, and to have been more receptive to this conditioning after months of anxiety during a violent war.

The identity of the colonial élite was tangled up in the discourse of the Other. The settler élite became the opposite of what the African innately was--lazy, thievish, libidinous and so on--but the central point is that settlers depended on these negative assessments in their definition of self. (Crais: 150)

There is evidence that Ward comes to South Africa prepared as an Englishwoman to find the Xhosa strange and certainly not equal to the British, but initially she is not racist in her thinking. Unlike the settler élite, as described by Crais, she does not think in Manichaeian terms --- for example, those of civilisation and barbarism; she is open-minded to a remarkable extent, and prepared to see the Xhosa chiefs she meets as human beings with universal human problems. Her attitude is comparable to that of Thomas Stubbs, who cannot relish killing Xhosa:

It is far from pleasant to command a waylaying party. - You there sit [sic]. You hear them coming on perhaps humming a tune. You see them and almost look in their eyes and you have to give the signal for their death warrant. I have heard people talk very lightly about shooting Caffers, but I believe it is by those who have never experienced it. For I have always felt grieved that my duty compelled me to it. You certainly don't think much about it after the first shot is fired. But before that, and after the excitement is over is the time any man must feel it. (Stubbs: 155)

Here is Stubbs's contemporary S. W. Dell in similar vein:

Every man seemed rather to lament that it had been his painful duty to assist in depriving those fine young forms that lay outstretched before them of that life that neither mistaken policy nor a false philanthropy however repentant

could ever restore. (Quoted by Stubbs: 243 [endnote])²¹

Presumably, Crais would distinguish Stubbs from "the colonial elite", as he was not a successful landowner. Unlike the settler elite in general, Ward was too intelligent to see the situation in simplistic terms, and the fact that she was not as deeply involved as far as long-term survival went was another factor which allowed her to see the difficulties of the Xhosa more clearly. Her work, Five Years in Kaffirland, shows her engaged in a discursive struggle to find an appropriate response to the people and the situation.

6. "These Happy Wretches"

Van Wyk Smith suggests that Ward "wrote better than she knew" in Jasper Lyle (1851) when she seemed to be indicating on an almost subliminal level that the Xhosa were victims in the process of being dispossessed of their Eden by the British (van Wyk Smith 1990: 11-12). That this is true is borne out by an interesting incident recorded as early as October 1844. One notices that the narrator's point of view is from the back of a horse; she is passing by as if she were a tourist, and what she sees from this distance is a Rousseauian pastoral paradise:

²¹ Ward's, Stubbs's and Dell's attitudes are in striking contrast to the bitter racism of Iris Vaughan in her novel O Valiant Hearts, written earlier this century, which directly plagiarises Ward's Five Years in Kaffirland, particularly the scene of the shipwreck in Table Bay. Vaughan's hero had "always wanted to kill savages" (Vaughan 136), and delights in mutilation and violence during the war with the Xhosa. Hatred and "Othering" can hardly go further. It is extraordinary that in some of the darkest days of race hatred (1984), a South African publisher, Howard Timmins, saw fit to publish this inflammatory novel (previously unpublished). I am grateful to Jeanette Eve for pointing out the strong likelihood that Vaughan had used Ward's text without acknowledgement and for her own purposes.

I confess that, as I have ridden through the kraals, and seen the groups of Fingoes, or Kaffirs,²² sitting about their fires, surrounded by their children, cooking their corn, chattering and laughing, while at a little distance young boys basked in the sun, playing with pebbles at some game, or, lying on the grass, idle, and happy in their idleness, without a thought beyond the present, any more than the herd that cropped the green herbage round them, I have said to my companions, "How can we expect these happy wretches to be other than savages?" The earth yields them food, and their cattle, milk and clothing. Trees provide them wood for the frame-work [*sic*] of their huts, and their fires, and the clay on which they sit is shaped into utensils for their use. Wise in their own conceit, they must be but too happy and independent to change their condition of their own free will. They have no idea of the sin of a theft, or a lie, being equal to the folly of being found out. (ibid. i: 130; USM October 1844: 181)²³

The unrecognised, or unacknowledged, serpents in this prelapsarian idyll are of course the settler and the dragoon, destined to destroy Xhosa happiness and independence. If it were not for the barb in the last sentence, Ward would even seem to be exemplifying the thinking of the "cambric-handkerchief" brigade (ibid. i: 134), the philanthropic societies, whom she invariably derides by hurling in their teeth their description of the Xhosa as a "pastoral and peaceful people" (ibid. i: 213; ii: 94). It is hard to believe that she is not critically examining the justice of the colonising venture.

Just as in Jasper Lyle, Ward seems to show in Five Years in Kaffirland an inclination to veer towards "Satan's party" (van Wyk Smith 1990: 11). She cannot resist a sense that the Xhosa will be losing much that is precious in being forced to submit to the colonial power. She recognises the dangers implicit in the desire of the European powers to create lucrative markets in the

²² Ward usually distinguishes between the Mfengu (generally referred to as "trusty" or "gallant") and the Xhosa. Here she sees them as sharing the same pastoral existence.

²³ Le Vaillant had praised this world as paradisaical, too: his five years in Southern Africa were "the only period of my life to be regretted, the only one at least in which the cowardice of mankind never affected me, in which I could safely defy their injustice, their benefits, and their tyrannic sway" (le Vaillant 1796: iii. 488).

colonies for their industrial products. There is something of this in her depiction of the magnificent figure of the Xhosa warrior draped in his kaross: "Their [the Xhosa's] wearing clothes will be an excellent thing for our manufactories, but will help to enervate the savage" (*Five Years* i: 140). Apart from the fact that "in Ward's day the word 'enervate' belongs to the growing pseudo-science of degeneration"²⁴, the use of the word, with its suggestions of lassitude, spiritlessness, subjection and dejection, is a sign that it is not simply dress that preoccupies her thoughts, but a perception of the loss of something valuable. One would cynically assume that enervation in its subject population is exactly what would cause an imperialist nation to rejoice.

A similar sense of barely-expressed regret can be detected in Ward's reference to the importance the traders have assumed in creating hitherto unfelt needs in Xhosa lives; should the former withdraw, "[t]he Kaffir [would be] miserable without tobacco; men, women, and children indulge in smoking to an extraordinary degree"; snuff, too, "is another luxury with which they have become fairly infatuated... and the English blanket is now one of the necessities of life". Young T'Slambie [Ndlambe] girls will quarrel for a monopoly of bright blue [beads], and the Gaikas (Nggikas) set up an opposition in necklaces of mock garnet and amber". There is significant juxtapositioning of the fake and the tawdry against the naturally aesthetic in the next sentence: "Birmingham buttons ornament the skin cloaks of the women of Kaffraria, and brass bangles, from our manufactories, conceal the symmetry of their arms, which are models for sculpture" (ibid. i: 196-7). There is also suppressed opposition to the cynical opportunism of British industrialism.

In a passage which strangely pre-figures the frame narrator's musings on the yawl on the Thames in the opening of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Ward is reminded of England's

²⁴ My thanks are due here to an anonymous examiner of this thesis.

barbaric past: "...I could not but commune in my own mind on the ways of that inscrutable and unquestionable Providence, by the working of whose will, England, from her original state of ignorance, insignificance, and barbarism, is now the chief ruling power of the world, and sendeth her ships and her soldiers ...'even to the uttermost parts of the earth'" (ibid. i: 66-7). Implicit here is a questioning of the presumption of one country to assume the right to move into another for the purpose of increasing its power and decreasing that of the other, and a recognition of a common origin in "ignorance", "insignificance" and "barbarism".

Another ambivalent description, highlighting what was and what is now, occurs after the Xhosa have been defeated. Ward is remembering an interview she had with Tola before the war.

It was in a picturesque spot near Colonel Somerset's residence at Post Victoria, in the centre of a large bower, which had been constructed round some splendid trees. What had once been a fair pasture land for Tola's herds, was now worn with the tread of soldiers' feet; the stir of the camp filled the air which once breathed over a comparatively silent space, and not far from us a band played Irish tunes, to which Tola's Kaffir councillors and attendants listened with a grave silence, unmoved at the grotesque attitudes of Hottentot children [dancing perhaps to the music].

(ibid. ii: 258-9; my emphasis).

One cannot ignore Ward's sense of sympathy for the changed situation of the chief, in what was once so obviously his land. The soldiers, the band, seem inexcusable and crass intrusions, an impression given emphasis by the expressive solemnity of the Xhosa observers as they silently bear witness to their displacement. (In a letter to Philippart in January 1846, she had written: "Our occupying their [the Xhosas'] country enrages them terribly" [Brenthurst Letter 4]). Ward's "romantic" streak is at play, but permitted only temporarily. Any further suggestion of a sympathetic point of view is rudely destroyed by her completely dehumanised description of Tola's face as "resembling that of a wolf--the eyes glaring and the teeth projecting, and his hair, dressed with red clay, [looking] more like a knitted worsted wig than anything else" (ibid. ii: 259). See him as a potentially

dangerous but pathetic foe, and it is easier to ignore the suspicion that what has been done to him is inexcusable. In the circumstances, it was not politic for her to follow the line of thought she had started. In the end, as the wife of a British army captain, she was bound to applaud a British victory on the Cape frontier, in spite of her recurrent misgivings. In the end, one woman's voice could make no difference to official policy. Elsewhere one can also detect a suspicion that that policy is not inevitable and just. It is an indication of Ward's ultimate powerlessness vis-à-vis Exeter Hall that she suppresses this suspicion. But what she begins to develop is an alternative discourse in which she can express a subterranean disquiet, a discourse which is at its most powerful in Jasper Lyle.

What is ironic is that the description of Tola as a wolf precedes the account of a conversation of which she is obviously very proud; it is at this point that Tola asks her how it is that white women speak with the minds of men. A Xhosa man accords her the recognition she craves; she should offer him some reciprocal loyalty. The incident at Post Victoria seems to indicate a tortured sensibility: as a woman and a human being, she would sympathise with the chief's losses, but those who speak with the minds of men must harden their hearts and preserve the colonial version of events, and the only way to do this is to engage in the strongest form of "Othering" possible: the reduction of the "Other" to the status of animal. (Yet more irony: Ward often seems to find it easier to relate to animals--admittedly, horses, dogs, cattle, rather than wolves, snakes, etc--than to human beings. She has great empathy with the animals suffering as a result of the war. She imaginatively re-tells what is presumably one of Somerset's stories, including the point of view of the "poor half-starved horses, with their tails turned towards the driving rain, and quite crest-fallen, [which] neighed joyfully on the approach of any human being, in hopes of food" [ibid. ii: 68.] This vividly encapsulates for the reader a sense of the bitter hardship for beast and human in this war, and invites a question on its logic and its legitimacy).

While Ward does not openly admit that the Xhosa are fighting for the continued existence of the way of life she seems to be admiring in the passage about their pastoral freedom and happiness (ibid. i: 130), and that their livelihood and wealth are ineluctably founded on cattle and land for grazing, her awareness of these truths is made plain through this projection: "I never see a poor patient-looking Cape ox, that I do not think of the strife continually existing here for the sake of its race" (ibid. ii: 142). There is an even more remarkable projection in her description of the way Xhosa warriors each night circle around the cattle captured from them in a British bivouac:

Some called out to the troops, "Take care of the calves you have got, we will have them in two years!" Others exclaimed, "Let us rush upon them!" "No, no," said another party, "who ever heard of attacking a kraal of guns?" Some crept nearer the bivouac, and entreated their favourite pack-oxen to come out to them: "What business," said they, "have you among white men? Come out to us--we will treat you kindly. Leave the Umlunghi [white men], who will ill-use you and make you work." (ibid. ii: 15)

It seems that she here makes a sympathetic transposition from beast to human, implicit in "who will ill-use you and make you work". It is certainly a prescient summing-up of what would be the relationship between the whites and the Xhosa for at least the next century. And where else does a contemporary writer so challengingly contest the legitimacy of this encounter?

Although often exhibiting all the worst qualities of "Othering" with regard to the Xhosa, Ward does allow herself to report on such normally positive characteristics as their astuteness. These accounts are closely aligned to "Othering", however, as can be seen when Ward compliments her much-admired friend, Colonel Somerset, the leader of the colonial forces in Grahamstown, on being "as ready-witted as a Kaffir in the bush" (ibid. i: 282). She mentions that "A Kaffir, though a savage, is a keen lawyer, and a narrow observer of human nature" (ibid. i: 105); at another time she calls the Xhosa "keen logicians" (ibid. i: 117), judged especially from their exchanges with the missionaries, whose discomfort at being routed by the sharp intelligence of the Xhosa Ward seems to enjoy. After praising the

good qualities of the Christian convert, Khama (his "gentleness, consistence, patience", the fact that he does not ask for presents and gives very little trouble [ibid. i: 160]), she makes a lofty statement about some of the Xhosa ideas, "social and political, [which are] of honourable principle; their good rules, however, never proceed from a proper distinction of right from wrong, but from a necessity to preserve order, and steadiness to a cause" (ibid. i: 161). How, one wonders, is this meant to reflect on Khama, for whom she would otherwise never have an ill word? The uncomfortable conclusion is that she has internalised the patronising colonial view of him as a "tame" Xhosa, his accorded status never admitted as being equal to that of the coloniser.

However, that she was far from being a stereotypical imperialist can be deduced from her dismay at the end of the war when it was decided to substitute the Xhosa place-names with English ones, ostensibly to "define and fix a certain line of boundary, that no dispute or disaffection might hereafter arise among the people on a question of right or occupation", as the government edict cunningly put it (Five Years ii: 337). "The 'Great Place' of Sandilla is now called York, the country allotted to the Amabala people, under Stock, Lincolnshire....and Umhala's district...Cambridgeshire; another portion of the I'Slambies [sic; Ndlambe], under Tois, are settled 'within the county of Sussex'". Her sense of the absurdity of this, and her reluctance to accept such a desecration of Xhosa tradition can be sensed in her comment:

The substitution of English names for the ancient and poetic denominations which the Kaffirs have hitherto distinguished their abodes, is a necessary measure; but who can reconcile himself, at this juncture, to London at the mouth of the Buffalo River, on the borders of Kaffirland; York some forty miles distant, lying among the Amatola Mountains; Cambridge near Fort Waterloo...and so forth?

(ibid. ii: 338; my emphasis)

As can be seen from this quotation, Ward found the Xhosa language highly poetic and musical. She is enthusiastic in her praise of it, declaring that "its simplicity bears a strong resemblance to

that of the Bible. The term 'eating up' [for example] has precisely the meaning of the same word in the Psalms" ("Amakeya", NMM January 1849: 19). Her response is more complex than that of simply according Eurocentric approval to a non-European discourse.

7. "Something Singularly Wild and Almost Interesting"

Ward's reactions to the young paramount chief of the Ngqika, Sandile, are particularly noteworthy. He was twenty-one years old when she first met him, and she hardly ever mentions him without invoking his wildness; but this is not the wildness of the wolf, but of a "child of nature" (*Five Years* ii: 54). She is intrigued by the story of his escape from infanticide: he was born with a withered left foot and ankle, and so, it was believed, would normally have been killed at birth.²⁵ At their first meeting, at Fort Peddie, "he reined in his horse, and leaning forward in his sheep-skin saddle, took a quiet survey of us. There was something singularly wild and almost interesting in his demeanour" (*ibid.*, ii: 147). Now, it is a Xhosa chief who is in the saddle, with the white observers in a position of subordination. His supreme self-confidence catches her interest, as well as his utter naturalness and unself-consciousness. It is hard to fathom the intentions and feelings behind the phrasing, "almost interesting" in its juxtaposition with "singularly wild"; one would expect the latter phrase by definition to indicate something of absorbing interest. Perhaps the apparent aberration is a linguistic pointer to the narrator's inability at this moment to come to terms with what she feels. It certainly suggests an intriguing ambivalence, which makes itself felt elsewhere in her writing. I shall have more to say on Ward's portrayal of Sandile in the next chapter.

²⁵

Stapleton identifies the infirmity as a club foot (38).

As a postscript to this discussion of Five Years in Kaffirland, one might feel a frisson of interest in noting that the copy of Ward's The Cape and the Kaffirs, her revised version of that work, which was donated to Rhodes University Library in 1932 by the historian Sir George Cory, has a hand-written inscription on the flyleaf in the year of its publication:

To Erwin Millidge, pupil of 4th Class in High School of Edinburgh this prize was adjudged for exemplary conduct and for private studies by John Carmichael: Master. Sepim [?] 1850.51

Harriet Ward would have been pleased by this Scottish educational connection and the accolade conferred on her as a writer and authority by John Carmichael. There would have been satisfaction too, perhaps, that a young male mind would be influenced by the opinions of one of the most respected women writers of the day.

Jenny de Reuck emphasises the power a writer such as Ward wielded:

As [Ward's] are almost the first "popular" reports about the people and events in the colony, they occupy a significant position in shaping awareness of the nature of the indigenous people of the colony. (de Reuck 1995: 44)

My interpretation of the effect of that power differs from de Reuck's. Whereas she sees Ward, limited by her historical specificity and her class affiliations, as contributing to a reification of colonial prejudices with regard to the Xhosa and other indigenous people, I hope that I have shown Ward's representations of those people to be at times controversial enough to act as a challenge to received colonial attitudes. The voice we hear is individualistic and independent, and emerges from a conviction based on experience that the "imperial/colonial semiosphere" (ibid.: 44) is in many ways a flawed one.

CHAPTER FIVE

Five Years in Kaffirland: Harriet Ward, Frederick I'Ons and Nineteenth-Century Ways of Looking at South Africa

"We must not suppose that the world turns to us a legible face which we would only have to decipher" (Foucault)¹

This chapter is a discussion of the painterly way in which Harriet Ward represented landscape, particularly in Five Years in Kaffirland, and the close similarities of her work to that of the artist, Frederick I'Ons. The association between Ward and I'Ons can be seen as the mutual support and encouragement of two viewers of the terrain, far from a known world and struggling to make sense of a new one. They were conscious of themselves as writing and painting "from the margins", keeping in touch with the metropolis by means of "reports" which would help to shape public opinion and might even have influenced policy. I'Ons contributed sketches for engravings in the London Illustrated News, and army officers bought his paintings, sometimes even commissioning them, as souvenirs of their time in the Eastern Cape. These documentations from the "periphery" would have been of interest to viewers at the "centre" on their return.

Before her arrival in South Africa, Harriet Ward's work was markedly lacking in the vividly visual. The stimulation of a new environment seems to have prompted a fresh vision, and a desire to use the aesthetic principles of the time to invoke a realistic view of landscape and people for her readers.² She was of course

¹ Foucault 1981: 67.

² Cf. Jay on Mrs Oliphant: "It is improbable that the humble circumstances of her upbringing would have afforded even the basic instruction in water-colours that formed part of many middle-class girls' range of accomplishments" (Jay: 251). Harriet Ward's insistence on seeing her new world in painterly terms suggests that she had had some instruction in the principles of painting.

following in the footsteps of the earlier explorers of South Africa, whose works she had read, and who devote much space to topographical and other description. It would have been a delight to find on her arrival on the Eastern Frontier a "clever painter"³ who shared her desire for accurate representation of their strange environment.

The portrait, landscape, genre and figure painter, Frederick Timpson I'Ons (1802-1887), arrived in the Eastern Cape from London in November 1836. (The Great Trek would begin in 1838 with Piet Retief leading the dissident Boers from Grahamstown to Natal to escape the influence of the British.) There is evidence that Ward and I'Ons knew each other; J.J.Redgrave and Edna Bradlow in their biography of the artist cite I'Ons's order-book, now in the Africana Museum, to show that in 1846 Captain Ward bought a picture of "The Battle of the Amatola", "a skirmish in which he had taken part, and suffered great hardship according to his wife's description" (Redgrave and Bradlow: 18). Apart from this, Harriet Ward and Frederick I'Ons were fellow artists in an artistically barren and remote little community, each pining for the stimulation of the metropolis they felt so far from. John Ward, too, was an artist.⁴ They were even neighbours: the Wards

³ I'Ons was often referred to as a "clever painter", as confirmed by Marijke Cosser in her thesis, "Images of a changing frontier; worldview in Eastern Cape Art from Bushman Rock Art to 1875".

⁴ "Captain Ward, of the 91st, had been in St. Helena with the 67th Regiment in 1821, at the time of the emperor's death, and had been admitted to see the body as it lay in state, when he took a pencil sketch of the face of the great soldier. Strange to say, he was again in the island, with the 91st Regiment, when in 1840 the body was exhumed, and had an opportunity of comparing the sketch taken twenty years previously with the face as it appeared. Ward found his sketch still a perfect likeness, for the face and features of the great dead were not even touched by decay, and appeared as if in the repose of sleep. The original sketch I saw several times, and I also saw a copy of it in one of our illustrated papers some years ago" (Munro: 104). (The nearest I have come to tracing the copy is an engraving in The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction (27 May 1843: 321), one of the first illustrated periodicals. The drawing shows Napoleon's body lying in state on

lived in the Fort England barracks above Grahamstown,⁵ and I'Ons and his large family lived in "Bellevue Cottage", a substantial property with a garden and an orchard a few yards away (Redgrave and Bradlow, 1968: 18, 22). Harriet Ward refers to a "clever painter" in Five Years (ii: 173), and this phrase is used to describe I'Ons in the Illustrated London News, to which he contributed at least four sketches for engravings in that journal:

We are now, by aid of a clever and accredited Artist, resident in the Colony, enabled to illustrate, in a series of vivid and faithful sketches, the leading scenes and incidents of the war, accompanied by some very interesting notes by our Correspondent....

(Illustrated London News 220 [IX] 18.7.1846: 39)

In the issue of the week ending 8 August 1846, there were some "original sketches" of three Xhosa chiefs, "Umkie", "Cobus Congo" and "Negrimmo", "by Mr I'ons [sic], a clever artist, of Graham's Town" (Illustrated London News 223 [IX]: 82). Then follow "a few biographical memoranda": "Umkei, Umkye [Mqhayi], is a chief of the Gaika [Ngqika] tribe; the drawing of him was made by Mr I'Ons at the request, and in the presence, of the writer of this brief

a camp-bed under a canopy in the "chasseur's uniform" he had requested (322). The accompanying article mentions an exhibition in Baker Street at which the original bedstead on which he breathed his last (complete with bloodstains from the application of leeches to the patient) is on display. "The scene is therefore actually that which was witnessed at St Helena" (322). The original sketch was owned by a descendant living in Devon when Dunn-Pattison was writing in 1910 (101-2); I have not been able to trace it.) Captain Frederick Marryat was on shore when Napoleon died, on 5 May: "A skilful artist, Marryat did a sketch of the face before the post-mortem took place, and another of the funeral" (Johnson: 86). The sketch is in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

John Ward provided the neat little sketch for the engraving facing page 217 of Five Years which shows the "Passage of the Troops across the Tyumie, on the 18th April, 1846". The "Map of the Scene of the Present War in Kaffirland 1851' in The Cape and the Kaffirs (1851) is identified as by "Major Ward, late 91st Regt.". One wonders whether some of the similarly meticulous drawings (unattributed) which Goff reproduces of scenes such as Ladder Hill on St Helena were not also from Ward's sketch-book.

⁵ "The 91st Regiment occupied the old thatch-roofed barracks at Fort England..." (William Munro: 40).

notice" (ibid.: 82).

Something else I'Ons and Harriet Ward had in common was a love of riding. I'Ons's father had owned a riding school in London, "catering for the sons and daughters of noblemen only", and when I'Ons got to Grahamstown he joined the Grahamstown Mounted Volunteers (Redgrave and Bradlow: 6, 9). A descendant of I'Ons said the artist enjoyed "a good scramble on horseback",⁶ and so of course did Harriet Ward; every evening, even during the hostilities, she took a ride around the environs of Grahamstown (Five Years ii: 141). It does not seem far-fetched to imagine that they rode together after a hard day's work writing and painting.

One characteristic device of I'Ons's was to include a dog in his paintings whenever he could.⁷ This love of animals was shared by Harriet Ward; she frequently gives them a role; for example, in Jasper Lyle, Marmion the wolfhound graciously submits to the attentions of May's baby, Ellen, and accompanies Eleanor from the Cape to England; Zwartz, the benign black ox so beloved of Amayeka, provides the occasion for the reader's introduction to Amayeka's appealing character. Amayeka also has a pet meercat, and Ward lovingly describes its intelligent and playful behaviour. Animals are a lightly indicated signature for each of these artists.

Many middle- and upper-class amateurs in the nineteenth century enjoyed drawing and painting. Sir Harry Darell of the 7th Dragoon Guards managed to find time to paint large-scale

⁶ Recorded by Cosser (83) from a private conversation with a descendant in 1991. See also: "Douglas Galpin Snr, in a letter to J.J. Redgrave, recalls an anecdote testifying to I'Ons wanderlust: 'In painting his pictures, he had to get about...he lived on horseback. Also my mother frequently referred to his faithful little Bushman guide, tracker and batsman [sic]...and a Bushman keeps going!' (Galpin, 1959)" (Cosser: 85).

⁷ "I'Ons's fondness for dogs is apparent in many of his pieces" (Cosser: 90). Cosser mentions that the Africana Museum holds a picture of I'Ons with his beloved dog "Dash".

canvases, some of battles in which he had taken part; an example is "The Charge on the Gwanga, Cape of Good Hope, 8 June 1846", which hangs in the Kingwilliamstown Museum. Captain Bertie Gordon, hero of the wreck of the Abercrombie Robinson, has left an appealing little sketch at the back of his letter-book,⁸ which shows a covered wagon and six horses passing an unmistakably Eastern Cape homestead. Even Isabel Ward, then ten years old, produced a caricature of

John Bull, hat in hand, reading a treaty to a Kaffir. The Queen looks on smiling, and gently exhorting the Kaffir to listen, which he does with his finger on his nose. In the distance, Prince Albert bows to Kaffir children with knob-kurries in their hands, and while the Queen, Prince and John Bull so are civilly employed, the background is filled up with Kaffir boys driving off colonial cattle towards the kraals, where the women await them, and a Kaffir on a fine ox looks back on the scene in the foreground, sneering at John Bull's folly, and taking advantage of his abstraction in the treaty matter, to clear the ground of its herds. When I asked the child how she came to think of such a caricature, (for it was executed when she was quite alone, and entirely from her own idea,) she said that "she wanted to make a picture of what every one was talking about."

(Five Years i: 137)

The passion for representing things pictorially was wide-spread. In a letter to Philippart in April 1847, Ward wrote: "[I] visited a Bushman's Cave which was inhabited 20 years ago & from which I sketched a curious drawing done by the Bushmen of an 'Eiland Hunt'" (Brenthurst Letter 8). Even Jasper Lyle was a skilful artist: he "filled his portfolio with wild scenes from storms at sea or battle-pieces, roughly done, but full of spirit--there were also innumerable caricatures--so true as scarcely to be caricatures" (JL: 241).

In the following quotation from Harriet Martineau's Autobiography (written in 1855 and published posthumously in 1877), a number of contemporary ideas are made explicit and are useful in the context of the present discussion; for example, the prevalence of detailed accuracy in both writing and painting is

⁸ Archives of the Regimental Museum of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders: "Letters from Capt. B. Gordon 1843-1846".

appreciatively mentioned by Martineau (1802-76), as well as the role of Miss Mitford in this development, and current ideas on the place of drawing in the education of girls are outlined:

I have always regarded [Miss Mitford] as the originator of that new style of "graphic description" to which literature owes a great deal, however weary we may sometimes have felt of the excess into which the practice of detail has run. In my childhood, there was no such thing known in the works of the day, as "graphic description:" and most people delighted as much as I did in Mrs. Radcliffe's gorgeous or luscious generalities,--just as we admired in picture galleries landscapes all misty and glowing indefinitely with bright colours,--yellow sunrises and purple or crimson sunsets-- because we had no conception of detail like Miss Austen's in manners, and Miss Mitford's in scenery, or of Millais' and Wilkie's analogous life pictures, or Rosa Bonham's adventurous Hayfield at noontide [*sic*]. Miss Austen has claim to other and greater honours; but she and Miss Mitford deserve no small gratitude for rescuing us from the folly and bad taste of slovenly indefiniteness in delineation. School-girls are now taught to draw from objects: but in my time they merely copied their masters' vague and slovenly drawings: and the case was the same with writers and readers. (Martineau 1877 i: 418-9)

I'Ons, like Harriet Ward, is important for the record he has left of characters and scenes on the frontier. Lucy Alexander makes the point that he is "not startlingly original" but aims for a "painstaking verisimilitude" (Alexander: 10), much as Ward does. Alexander believes that "[t]his obsession with detail could be explained in terms of a need on the part of the isolated individual to assert his existence, through showing his environment explicitly to some imagined viewer far away" (ibid.: 10-11). This seems to me to be true of Ward as well. In some ways, each thinks of himself or herself as an "exile" (USM [March 1842]: 381), inhabiting a "land of banishment" (*Five Years* ii: 141), keeping a grasp on the familiar world by representing and so taming the unfamiliar.

Both Ward and I'Ons came to Africa imbued with the aesthetics of eighteenth-century Europe, and of England in particular. In the nineteenth-century this constituted a belief in what E.H.Gombrich calls

passive recording, in unbiassed observation of uninterpreted

facts... the belief in induction, the belief [that] ...the patient collection of one instance after the other will gradually build up into a correct image of nature, provided always that no observation is ever colored by subjective bias. (Gombrich: 320)

In our century there is no comfort in this inductivist theory; as Gombrich says, it has been proven to be a mirage: we acknowledge now that "[there] is no reality without interpretation" (ibid.: 363).

The very idea that it should be possible to observe without expectation, that you can make your mind an innocent blank on which nature will record its secrets, has come in for strong criticism. (ibid.: 321)

Another influence on both artists is that of the notion of the picturesque, both in art and in landscape, current in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century aesthetic theory. Salvator Rosa, Claude Lorraine and Nicolas Poussin are models for this way of looking at landscape, which became stylised in painting in the following fashion, as Kenneth Clark makes clear:

Claude's underlying scheme of composition...involved a dark coulisse on one side..., a middle plane with a large central feature, usually a group of trees, and finally two planes, one behind the other, the second being the luminous distance for which he has always been famous, ...and which he painted direct from nature. Much art was necessary to lead the eye from one plane to the next, and Claude employed bridges, rivers, cattle fording a stream and similar devices...[in order] to achieve an effect of recession even in pictures where every plane is parallel. (Clark: 62)

Clark calls this "the new Arcadian landscape" (57), and says that these apparently close imitations of nature "came to hold a more secure place in popular affection than any other form of art" (74).

We can see in Ward's description of the outspan at "Zwart Cops", on her first journey to Grahamstown, a strikingly close imitation of the Claudean landscape model:

The scene was certainly very beautiful. Imagine a vast plain of fair green meadow-land, intersected, and in fact divided into parterres, by tall thick bushes, which here and there grew in clumps and copses, giving the ground the appearance of a vast park laid out with a great deal of attention to taste,--an amphitheatre of hills and mountains rising one

behind another, till the summits in the distance blended with the clouds, gorgeously illuminated by the rays of the declining sun, whose glory was soon succeeded by the milder light of the "gentle moon," beside which the comet, in strange contrast, spread its long and fiery tail.

(Five Years i: 61-2)

In this almost textbook version of Claude's scheme of composition-- "the first plane of the foreground, a middle plane with a large central feature, usually a group of trees, and finally two planes, one behind the other", to quote Clark again (128)--one sees Ward following a number of traditions, not the least of which is the attempt to organise nature, if only by means of the eye, into something tasteful, resembling a work of art, in the style of English eighteenth-century landscape gardeners such as "Capability" Brown and Humphrey Repton.

It is sometimes difficult for a modern traveller to achieve the same vision of the Eastern Cape countryside, but it was not uncommon for this landscape to be compared with the great parks of the English landed gentry. This tendency can be discovered in Thomas Pringle's description of the Zuurveld and in his poems. In advocating settlement, Lord Charles Somerset describes Albany thus: "I know not how to give an idea of it, unless by saying that it resembles a succession of Parks from the Bosjeman's to the Great Fish River" (Bryer and Hunt: 10). The sense of dislocation is echoed at the beginning of the last chapter of E.M. Forster's A Passage to India, when Fielding looks at the Indian landscape: "The scene was as park-like as England, but did not cease being queer". How strangely Ward's choice of the word "parterre" ("level space in a garden occupied by flower-beds, ornamentally arranged" [SOED]) reverberates in this context, and how clear an indication it is of the educated, no longer "innocent" eye.

Gombrich's reminder that "Nature could never have become 'picturesque' for us unless we had acquired the habit of seeing it in pictorial terms" (266) is important here. Jean Hagstrum simply and usefully defines the picturesque as "like a picture"

or "capable of being represented in a picture" (Hagstrum: 157), and Ann Bermingham elaborates:

Applied to landscape, the term picturesque referred to its fitness to make a picture; applied to pictures, the term referred to the fidelity with which they copied the picturesque landscape. If the highest praise for nature was to say that it looked like a painting, the highest praise for a painting was to say that it resembled a painterly nature....[T]he "nature" exhibited by picturesque artists relied on a purely pictorial code that covered not only the subject matter but its treatment as well.

(Bermingham: 57)

Ward frequently uses the word "scene", and its overtones of artificiality and theatricality are illuminated by this comment of Barrell's:

The word "scene", applied to landscape, assumed also that what was being described lay opposite the observer, en face: and this sense came with it from its theatrical origin....A "scene", then, in the description of landscape, is something opposite you and enclosed by the limits of our vision in much the same way as a painting is enclosed within its frame....

(Barrell: 24)

Or, one might add, as a scene on the stage is framed by the curtains and the wings. J. Daniel Peck points out,

The term "scenery" comes from the Greek word for stage, a derivation suggestive of [James Fenimore] Cooper's [and, one notices, Ward's and I'Ons's] treatment of landscape. The early nineteenth-century [sic] was heavily influenced by the theater, and especially by its melodramatic effects.

(Peck: 57)

In all the accounts of travel in the Cape, particularly in Barrow's and Burchell's, the desire to pin down the alien topography by means of words may be seen as an attempt by the traveller at domesticating it, of rendering the unfamiliar less uncontrollable, of keeping it in its place so that it does not overwhelm him or her. This is just the enterprise Ward and I'Ons are engaged in.

Samuel Johnson, in defining the word "landscape" as "a region; the prospect of a country", highlights a remarkable fact:

[There] is no word in English which denotes a tract of land, of whatever extent, which is apprehended visually but not,

necessarily, pictorially. (Quoted by Barrell: 2)

Relevant to an understanding of Ward's perception of South African topography (and I'Ons's) is Barrell's summing-up of the way cultured people pursued the contemplation of landscape, so that it became in itself almost an art:

...it involved reconstructing the landscape in the imagination, according to principles of composition that had to be learned, and were indeed learned so thoroughly that in the later eighteenth century it became impossible for anyone with an aesthetic interest to look at the countryside without applying them, whether he [sic] knew he was doing so or not. (ibid.: 6)

J.M.Coetzee's essay on the picturesque and landscape focuses on the way in which the European eye at the end of the eighteenth century, in looking at the South African landscape, felt it necessary to shape and mediate what it saw until it conformed as far as possible to an aesthetically acceptable convention. As Coetzee points out, what is lacking to a marked degree in South African topography is the element of water, its reflective qualities so essential to the landscape artist. Coetzee amusingly highlights William Burchell's relief at finding the Gariep River, after having crossed wastes of dry country. Now at last he can give rein to description of a type his aesthetic training demands (Coetzee: 38). That Ward has a similar difficulty in accommodating the unfamiliar and intractable landscape to picturesque description is clear in this comment: "Amid such fair scenes [as those in the Eastern Cape], I have often regretted the want of water, which always adds life to a picture" (Five Years i: 190; my emphasis). The point of view about the need for water is of course very different from that of the Eastern Cape resident. Coetzee highlights Burchell's continual search for green in the landscape, and the fact that "the artist's entire palette must be modified and subdued" to accommodate the unfamiliar colours of Africa (Coetzee 1988: 42). The point of Coetzee's important study of landscape and the picturesque is that Europeans in the Cape found the task of relating aesthetically to the new country, let alone representing it aesthetically, almost impossible. He emphasises the

astonishment and anxiety elicited in trying to "read" the new landscape. This can be detected too in Ward's struggle to convey the nature of the scenery and what she feels about it to her readers.

One needs to bear in mind Barrell's caveat regarding the too easy assumption that a description in words can be like a picture; there is "the problem of how a visual arrangement can be translated into a structure of words" (Barrell: 15). It can be misleading to draw too close a comparison between the plastic and the written arts. However, I should like to suggest that the extraordinarily visual quality of Ward's topographical description in Five Years in Kaffirland and her search for the picturesque owe a great deal to contemporary aesthetic theory, and, towards the end of her five years, to the stimulation provided by the work of a fellow artist, Frederick I'Ons.

"A Scene fit for a Painter of the Wild and Picturesque"⁹

It is interesting to speculate on the extent to which these practitioners of the "Sister Arts", as Hagstrum calls literature and painting (Hagstrum, 1958), influenced one another. For example, in an undocumented comment, Redgrave and Bradlow state that "Harriet Ward has left a dramatic picture of Sandile, which appealed to I'Ons, for he quoted it verbatim in a letter to one of his English friends" (Redgrave and Bradlow: 25). While not verbatim, the quotation reproduced very closely follows the romantic passage in Five Years in Kaffirland in which "the restless young Gaika" contemplates submission to the authorities (Five Years ii: 173-4). Immediately before this passage, Ward describes the Mpondomise war-magician, Myeki, as he stirs a Macbethian decoction of herbs, including possibly the remains of Captain Bambrick, brought to him as war trophies. She writes:

⁹ JL: 244.

A clever painter has seized on this for a subject, which promises to make a fine picture. The demon look of the wizard, the curiosity depicted in the faces of the spectators, the terror of others who turn aside, or shrink away, with faces half-averted, are all well portrayed. Such a scene can only be imagined by people who are accustomed to the study of the Kaffir countenance. (Five Years ii: 173)

That this "clever painter" was I'Ons is borne out once again by the evidence of the order-book: "Umyeki's Incantation" was sold in July 1947 to a Mr Cundey, for thirty pounds (Redgrave and Bradlow: 28).¹⁰

It would seem, then, that Ward was on friendly enough terms with I'Ons to be privy to his "work-in-progress", and that there was a fruitful symbiosis at work. Both I'Ons and Ward see the possibilities inherent in the exploitation of the picturesque in the "wild" landscape and people confronting them on the frontier. One recognises in Ward's descriptions, many of them set-pieces and often significantly static, a painterly point of view. Her tendency in Five Years in Kaffirland is to search for the pictorial and the picturesque, and to convey them as an artist might. Her phenomenal world is reflected in artistic terms.

A close look at the Sandile scene will make this clear. This is not one of the occasions when Harriet Ward was "on the spot", but she is alert to its picturesque possibilities. She feels entitled to imagine it, because she is one of those "accustomed to the study of the Kaffir countenance" and the countryside. Following the eighteenth-century dictum that the painter's

¹⁰ The Albany Museum, Grahamstown, owns two of I'Ons's sepia sketches for paintings of this subject, which are now lost. One shows a large standing figure of the wizard with one leg thrust forward and his reed skirt fallen away to expose the knee. A dense circle of bystanders are gazing at the object he holds in his hand. The background is of rocks and trees. This sketch has a stranger, more mysterious atmosphere than the second. In the latter, the wizard has the aspect of a wise man rather than a fearful magician. He is seated, wearing his headdress of fish bladders, and his peaceful face contrasts with the rapt faces of the five men looking on, one of whom is seated with his back to the viewer, and is holding a bowl. A river forms the background and a thin dog looks on. This portrait is probably the same as that submitted under the title "Kaffir Weather Doctor" to the Illustrated London News of 17 October 1846: 244.

viewpoint should be on rising ground (Barrell: 11), she imagines the young chief sitting "moodily" on a mountain ridge in the Amatola Mountains, "surveying in silence the territory he has forfeited,--lands extending as far as the eye can reach". In the melancholy aura with which she surrounds the deposed chief are echoes of her hero Napoleon's similar situation. A favourite romantic subject of the time was the representation in words and paint of his lonely exile. His name is mentioned a page later in connection with Phato, who will not, as Buonaparte did, "throw himself on the generosity of the British nation..." (Five Years ii: 171).

One has a dramatic impression of a receding perspective, heightened by the emotion of pity at the extent of the loss.

Mountains and deep valleys, green pastures, and sheltering bush--the home of the savage, all threaded by the Tyumie stream--those waters, of which he once vowed "the white man should never drink,"--on its fertile banks, the tents of the English now stand in proud array. The echoes round that vast space give back the bugle call, the fife's shrill notes, the drum's dull rolling sound, where once was heard the hunter's shout, the jackal's cry, the peevish whine of the wolf, the mocking laugh of the hyena, and but lately the wild whoop of the Gaika warriors. Silently sits that young chief upon the mountain edge, but not alone--to him, at least, his people are true. (ibid.: 174)

By nice coincidence, John Ward drew a sketch of "The Passage of the Troops across the Tyumie, 18th September 1846" for Five Years in Kaffirland (i: 217) which provides a corollary to the description quoted above: the artist is seated, like Sandile, on high ground, and the eye of the viewer is drawn deeply into the picture, from the ox wagon in the foreground to the high mountains in the distance, by the elaborate curves of the Tyumie river (a tributary of the Keiskamma). To encourage this eye movement, there are even suggestions of coulisses, dark bushes on each side of the foreground. John Ward's sketch, peopled as it is by miniature figures of soldiers almost as far as the eye can see, celebrates in triumphant fashion the achievement of colonial occupation of the disputed land of the frontier. There is not a sign of a Xhosa, although soldiers in the foreground have their rifles raised threateningly or directed on to the dark

patches of bush.¹¹ This is indeed conquered territory, for Maqoma had proposed peace on 17 September 1846, and the Xhosa were ruined; the colonial forces had destroyed their stores of corn and burnt their kraals, and what few cattle they had left were starving (Peires 1981: 159). Half of the surviving Ngqika population were driven by desperation to enter the colony to look for work (ibid.: 160).

Ward's sympathetic depiction of the Xhosa in the Sandile scene shows her caught by the melancholy romanticism of the imagined moment.

[Sandile's] vassals watch him, and a proud sorrow is depicted on their countenances as they gaze on him, turning from time to time their fierce and scowling eyes on the British Commissioner.

Sir Peregrine Maitland rides slowly by, "his calm features totally unmoved". Continuing her use of the present tense to dramatic effect, Ward allows her muted pity and admiration to restrict her point of view to that of the Xhosa:

Apart, a young Gaika, [Anta]¹² (Sandilla's brother) speaks words of bitter scorn. Eye and hand sweep round the glorious territory, and at each pause in his vehement harangue, a low and solemn sound, like the distant roar of many waters, rolls through the circle of his auditors. No notice of what is passing is vouchsafed by the Amakosa Chief. At last, drawing his robe of tiger skin around his withered limb, he moves slowly and in spite of his lameness, with dignity, from the council-ground, and is soon lost in the "bush".
(Five Years ii: 175-6)

Perhaps conscious that she has allowed emotion enough rein, Ward pulls herself up: "All this, I say, presents a mournful image to the mind, and many a romance has been formed on poorer incidents" (ibid.: 176). The repeated use in this account of the word

¹¹ In the "Advertisement" to the June 1848 publication of Five Years in Kaffirland, Ward alludes to the "sketch of the Troops crossing the Tyumie stream, after the action in the Amatola mountains, illustrating the peculiar difficulties attending a war with Savages". Neither savages nor obvious difficulties --apart from the thick bush--are to be seen.

¹² Anta is erroneously called "Kauti" in the first edition; the error is corrected in the "Errata" section (359: sic).

"image" and the emphasis on depiction show a writer thinking in painter-like terms. One has an impression that she has exploited the scene for its dramatic and picturesque effects, but that much of the sympathy is genuine. However, she justifies the cruel conditions imposed upon the Xhosa by maintaining with unconscious (or guilty?) irony that "we...are justified in taking the land from the Kaffir, 'the land of his fathers,' the country is only his by might--no more his than ours, he having driven the aborigines from the dwelling-place God originally led them into" (ibid.: 176; my emphasis).

Ward's self-conscious description of the countryside in terms of painting and drawing is clear in an early comment in Five Years in Kaffirland: with welcome self-mockery she describes her relief at finding accommodation in the house of Mr Rolls, the Field-Cornet, rather than in a tent:

My companions laughed at my increased admiration of an encampment by moonlight that night, as I left it for a comfortable roof. "It certainly," said I, "is a very pretty sight at a distance". (ibid. i: 69)

Something she claims never to do is to "invent a moonlight" (Five Years i: 173) as some other writers do; the phrase though is another pointer to the fact that she is always alert to the pictorial nature of her account. It is sometimes, however, more difficult to accommodate some natural features to her artistic schema than others. For example, the outspan on the Quagga Flats is "not so beautifully picturesque as the spots we had hitherto selected, but still pretty well wooded and watered" (ibid. i: 76). As we have seen, scene-painting fails her altogether on her first view of Grahamstown. Whereas contemporary paintings show an attractive little settlement, to Ward it is "not worth describing....It is a great straggling place, irregularly built, and in a dirty and disorderly state" (ibid. i: 84). In contrast, Fort Peddie is prettier:

The houses which are scattered about the plain...give a picturesque air to the spot, and the thatched cottages and white chimneys rising above the few trees...make a tolerable picture to look at...

(ibid. i: 112; italics added)

One notices how neatly this remote outpost has been framed and domesticated by the European presence.

At one point, after describing a hunt, she shows how conscious she is of what she is doing: the scene is "such as one might fancy would be ably illustrated by Retzsch's¹³ wondrous pencil" (ibid. i: 91). The "pencil" ("artist's paintbrush" [COD]) in its eighteenth-century usage is also her tool in depicting the scenes around her.

In the topographical description of Glen Lion in Hardy and Hunter (in reality, Glen Thorn, the Pringle settlement in the Winterberg), the writer/artist can be seen to be at work, composing a picture while ostensibly reflecting a natural scene:

[B]y the time we reached the top of the ridge, the sun shone in all his glory, and "the valley lay smiling before me."

Northward, it opened out in vast and wooded plains, bounded by tremendous mountains; but just below the ridge on which we stood, it narrowed to a couple of miles. Here, on either side, rose sharp and serried cliffs, the natural fortifications of the settlement....A little farther on, the valley spread itself into verdant meads....Through the centre of this sweet vale wandered a clear stream, with green banks for its margin, on either side of which fields and homesteads, gardens and cattlefolds gave life and character to a picture rendered more complete by a miniature chapel, lately erected on a turfy slope on the right of the location. (HH: 300-301)

One notices the necessarily elevated position of the viewer, the coulisses--the cliffs on either side--the foreground, middle ground and far horizon. Instead of Poussin's ruined classical building in the middle plane, there are the tokens of settler occupation: fields, homesteads, gardens, cattle-folds and miniature chapel. The once wild country is accommodated to fit the mould of a stable, industrious and pious European existence. The anglicisation of the landscape is accomplished through the use of such eighteenth-century linguistic constructs as "sharp and serried cliffs", "verdant meads", "sweet vale", "clear stream". The result is formulaic rather than realistic. Ward, in

¹³ Frederick August Moritz Retzsch: German engraver (1779-1857), working in Classicist and Romantic styles.

using the vocabulary of poetry and landscape painting, is already at a remove from "reality". We are being given an unmistakably mediated view of the country, an at times uneasy accommodation of the new landscape to the conventions of European art. This is also an example of what Coetzee, talking of the poets Pringle and Dugmore, calls "a self-defeating process--self-defeating because in each particular in which Africa is identified to be non-European, it remains Europe, not Africa, that is named" (Coetzee 1988: 164).

I'Ons was famous for his genre paintings, and Ward offers a fascinating parallel to a painting of his in her description of a scene that must have been familiar to all soldiers approaching Grahamstown for the first time: a welcome by the military bands already in the town, accompanied by the lively dancing of Hottentot women. I'Ons's painting is known as "Near Fort England" (1839), and this description by art-historian, Marijke Cosser, is illuminating:

A work which shows I'Ons at his best when he combines poetic landscape with actual people and events, is the delightful Near Fort England, 1839.... A band of dancing Khoi women are "spot-lighted" on the foreground "stage", with a vast expanse of landscape behind them. Through a dark foreground coulisse on the left, members of the Cape Mounted Rifles--a Khoi band--is beginning to make its entrance on the "set". The women laugh and sing, their skirts seeming to sway to the "oom-pa's" of the band. Raised arms flaunt brightly coloured handkerchiefs and high-stepping feet increase a sense of movement and life. Some of the women's shawls are "caught" at the shoulder, hinting at the toga-like drapes of the Antique world. (The horizontal arrangement of the women also reminds one of a frieze on an Etruscan or Greek vase.) In the distance, a group of minute, but nevertheless visible soldiers surround a wagon on the right, while others unobtrusively "mark out" territory on horseback. Also on the right, the military headquarters of Fort England commands the scene, not unlike British castles with "commanding" views over their rolling estates. A lone tree "centre-stage" marks the spot where twenty years earlier, the Xhosa diviner Nxele ("Makane")...had promised his warriors that "the white man's bullets would turn to water".
(Cosser: 95)

This is how Ward sketches the scene:

[We] reached the hill above Graham's Town, a little before nine A.M. Here we were met by crowds of Hottentot women, some of them young, rather pretty, and decidedly graceful. They came bounding on to meet the drums and fifes, and with their red-handkerchief head-dresses, gay-coloured clothes, and glittering ornaments, formed a picturesque group, as they danced on in front of the battalion, to the great entertainment of the soldiers. At the very top of the hill, the band of the Cape Mounted Rifles awaited our approach; their appearance, in their plumed shakos and scarlet trousers, being very showy. A little further on, we were met by the band of the 91st...and that of the 75th: and in this gay order we entered Graham's Town, the bands relieving each other, and playing the liveliest airs. Here, a Hottentot woman tossed her arms aloft, and spun round to the tune of "Nix my dolly, pals," there, a driver snapped his fingers to "Rory O'More". These two tunes, and the "Sprig of shillelah," seemed their especial favourites; and if the dancers did not move with the stateliness of Taglioni, or the airy grace of Cerito, they certainly rivalled them in the activity of their limbs, and the steadiness of their heads; for they whirled round and round, like Dervishes in the Arabian Nights. The sun illuminated the town, lying within its sheltering circle of hill and mountain, the rabble shouted welcome, and all looked glad as they approached their destination.... (Five Years i: 82-3).

With attention to detail, she sketches in the background and notes light and colour.

Sculpture is another of the arts which informs Ward's descriptive pieces. Madame Vander Roey in Jasper Lyle is like a sculpted figure as she stands on a ridge watching the battle below her, "her long skirt falling far below her feet over the rocks, giving her the appearance of supernatural height, her head uncovered, and all her sable tresses streaming in the wind" (359). I'Ons is conjured again in a posed portrait of a Xhosa warrior in Hardy and Hunter:¹⁴

One of the finest objects in the world presented itself to our gaze.

It was a young lord of the desert, whose polished limbs, free from all drapery, were set off by a profusion of brass ornaments, and innumerable festoons of beads about

¹⁴ The Frederick I'Ons Retrospective Exhibition of 1990 showed a portrait of "Xhosa about to throw assegai" (Alexander: 25).

his head and throat. A shining girdle marked the contour of his waist, and his finely sculptured arms were encircled by rings of brass and ivory; feathery anklets gave an extraordinary lightness to his lower limbs, which though slight, were muscular; and his chest, glowing like copper, indicated by its great breadth extraordinary strength. With one foot advanced, the right arm, from which he had just cast the spear, raised high above his shoulder, his noble head thrown back, and his glowing orbs fixed in deadly enmity upon the serpent, the tall crane's feathers over his brow vibrating with the emotions of his frame, he offered one of the finest subjects for a sculptor's study that man can imagine. (102-103)

All the admiration suggested but suppressed in Five Years in Kaffirland is given full rein here, when ten years has blurred the earlier dominant emotions of fear and bitterness. The warrior is godlike, made more so by the repetition of "extraordinary". The exotic is seen as entirely beautiful. This is a new form of "Othering", one loaded with awe. The portrait is more striking if we compare it to one a few pages earlier, when it is Sandy Hunter who is described, in terms of pleasantly mundane ordinariness:

I thought him no bad representative of Young England in the wilderness, as he stood before me, his broad-flapping hat shading his honest face, his loosened shirt displaying a fine open chest already tanned by exposure on sea and shore, our rifle poised on his arm, and, in short, his whole well-knit frame and attitude indicating a determined and settled spirit. He was shorter and broader than I, but not stout; and as active as a cat. (HH: 98)

The letterpress (taken from Barrow's Travels in Southern Africa) in Daniell's Sketches Representing the Native Tribes... [1820]) describes a "female Hottentot" in terms as positive as those describing Ward's "young lord of the desert":

Some of the women, when young, are so well-formed that they might serve as models of perfection for the human figure. Every joint and limb is rounded and well-turned; the hands and feet remarkably small and delicate; and their gait is not deficient in easy and graceful movements.

(Daniell: 29)

In his chapter on "Reading the South African Landscape", Coetzee makes the useful point that poets (and, by implication, painters) carry a burden in their attempts to represent the South African landscape: "the burden of finding a home in Africa for

a consciousness formed in and by a language [and an art] whose history lies on another continent" (Coetzee 1988: 173). He goes on to say that

Landscape art is by and large a traveller's art intended for the consumption of vicarious travellers; it is closely connected with the imperial eye--the eye that by seeing names and dominates--and the imperial calling (ibid.: 174).

In this connection, it is interesting to compare the paintings of artists in Australia who were contemporary with Ward and I'Ons. John Glover (1767-1849), a British painter who retired to Tasmania in 1831, farmed and painted until his death in 1849. He employs the same Poussinesque style as I'Ons, but his depiction of the Tasmanian landscape is ideal and romantic rather than natural. "Mount Wellington with Orphan Asylum: Van Diemen's Land" (1837: National Gallery of Victoria) portrays a romantic wilderness barely touched by humanity; the asylum is very insignificant, almost overwhelmed by forest and mountain. Glover's eucalypts are painted to accommodate European eyes, and are a strange combination of European elm and serpentine arboreal form. I'Ons's trees are far more true to their South African models. In "The River Nile, Van Diemen's Land, from Mr Glover's Farm" (1857: National Gallery of Victoria), and in "Natives on the River Ouse, Van Diemen's Land" (1838: Art Gallery of New South Wales), the trees dwarf a few Aboriginal figures peacefully swimming in the water and camping. By this time, the extermination of the Tasmanian Aborigines was nearly complete, but nothing of this is reflected in the paintings. Glover seems to have been less skilful than I'Ons in portraying people; his indigenes are hardly more than stick figures, there for artistic contrast rather than the earnest desire for verisimilitude. The Austrian painter, Eugene von Guerard (1811-1901), arrived in Australia in 1852. His landscape, "Mr Clark's Selection, near Keilor" (1867: Art Gallery of Victoria), could have been an illustration for Harriet Ward's verbal picture of the Pringle homestead. It shows a beautifully ordered farm, with well-planned garden, neat fields, roads and plantings of trees, in a dominant relationship with a sparse and bushy landscape very like

that of the Eastern Cape: a picture of the "settler settled", to quote one of I'Ons's titles.

Frederick I'Ons and Harriet Ward believed that they were conveying the reality of the natural world in pictures and writing. However, in her novel Helen Charteris, Ward makes an interesting comment that has relevance here: she says of the great Cleaveland estate, "Nature had done much for the Cleaveland domain, and art had touched it with so skilful a hand as to show nature off to the best advantage" (HC 1853: 33). This is obviously what she and I'Ons are doing, touching nature with skilful hands so as to show it off to best advantage. In spite of all her protestations, she must have known that what she was doing was not simply copying reality, or holding a mirror up to nature. Such an analogy does remind us of the framing effect of the mirror, and the mirror arrangements used to help students of drawing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to achieve accurate representations of perspective. Young Harry Lorimer in Helen Charteris uses a "camera lucida" to sketch a plan for a new pinnacle on the cathedral tower; the COD defines this as "an instrument by which the rays of light from an object are reflected by a prism, and produce an image on paper placed beneath the instrument, which can be traced with a pencil". Another Victorian curiosity was the camera obscura, a device for projecting a scene on to a table or screen in order to copy it. The only example of a camera obscura in Africa, set up in 1882, can be seen at the Observatory Museum in Grahamstown. Ward mentions a "magic mirror" in "A South African Pic-Nic" (AM September 1846: 173); perhaps she means a magic lantern, a prototypical slide projector, which would allow her audience to experience the picnic scene apparently in all its reality. The writer's skill in conveying something seen into words to be interpreted represents a transformative power which the Victorians did not want to admit was at a remove from the reality they were struggling to convey.

CHAPTER SIX

"A Stranger in the Country of my Fathers":¹ Exile, Alienation and Dislocation in Helen Charteris

It becomes clear from a careful reading of Five Years in Kaffirland and Recollections of an Old Soldier that Harriet Ward's work betrays a complex psychology. The ambivalences noted in Five Years in Kaffirland which, I have suggested, were the result of her inability to find the means with which to express her dissatisfaction with the colonial and patriarchal situation, and with which to phrase her alternative view, become even more apparent in her novel Helen Charteris. The early need to speak, as her disembodied "voice from Cafferland" urgently proclaimed, in order that others should "hear the voice of the Truth" as only she could utter it (USM January 1844), grows in intensity. But always there is the consciousness that it is unacceptably immodest for a woman to exercise an authoritative voice, and so to continue making a woman's voice audible is a transgressive act, and necessarily accompanied by guilt and anxiety. Ward is constantly reminded of her condition as a female and in particular a non-conforming female.

In Helen Charteris, her first attempt at full-length fiction, Ward presents a safely conventional world to the reader: that of a slightly rebellious and foolish daughter brought to heel by a strict but caring mother. She is following the unimpeachable precepts of Mrs Sarah Stickney Ellis in this. Ward's 1848 preface (omitted in 1853) insists on the novel's "moral tendency" and reveals that it will illustrate the "beauty of that peculiar relationship which ought to exist between mothers and daughters". The conservative Mrs Ellis had made the point in publication after publication, as I have indicated, that

¹ Albany Poyntz [Catherine Gore], "My Creole Cousin" (Bentley's Miscellany June 1844: 570).

maintaining society at its best requires the stability by which women remain submissive and obedient to the males in their lives. Mothers should "kindly, yet firmly" (HC 1853: 22) extinguish "sassiness" and compel their daughters to conform. However, by simultaneously presenting a number of strong and non-conforming women in the same novel, Ward can insinuate her self-practising belief that women can have a more outgoing and active role in society, and that they should become involved in spheres other than the domestic, even politics (vidé Mrs Beaumont). It is reasonable to believe that, while Ward was overtly re-inforcing the power of mothers, she was covertly inviting the careful Victorian reader not to miss the implications of the novel's oblique critique of the restrictive effects of maternal power, and to conspire in an undermining of that same power. (See Vicinus's comment on literature as both an expression and a shaper of the culture and its conflicts [Vicinus 1977: xii], quoted in chapter two.)

In discussing the views of the psychoanalytical writers Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray on marginality and subversion in her essential handbook Sexual/Textual Politics, Toril Moi makes a point which illuminates for this study the difficulties experienced by Harriet Ward, and also her strategies for dealing with these difficulties:

If, as Cixous and Irigaray have shown, femininity is defined as lack, negativity, absence of meaning, irrationality, chaos, darkness--in short, as non-Being--Kristeva's emphasis on marginality allows us to view this repression of the "feminine" in terms of positionality rather than of essences. What is perceived as marginal at any given time depends on the position one occupies. A brief example will illustrate this shift from essence to position: if patriarchy sees women as occupying a marginal position within the symbolic order, then it can construe them as the limit or borderline of that order. From a phallogocentric point of view, women will then come to represent the necessary frontier between man and chaos; but because of their very marginality they will also always seem to recede into and merge with the chaos of the outside. Women seen as the limit of the symbolic order will in other words share in the disconcerting properties of all frontiers: they will be neither inside nor outside, neither known nor unknown. (Moi: 6-7)

One has a sense that Ward saw her position as neither inside nor outside the patriarchal society, but on the margins. Though she was aware of the degree of freedom of thought and movement that this gave her, she was also conscious of how close to chaos such a position is. When she found herself living on an actual frontier, her own marginal position would be thrown into sharp relief. In a spirit of identification, she started to consider the situation of the many marginalised people she encountered. In the novel which she wrote on the frontier, Helen Charteris, her concern was first with the submissive and passive position of Victorian women and found expression in her depiction of the taming of Helen herself; another concern is the rejection and marginalisation of the person of mixed race, symbolised in the suffering and inevitable death of Clara Villars the Creole. Repression demands an outlet, and protest is often contained in metaphor; this novel is a muted cry of protest against both patriarchy and colonialism, from someone who, as a woman, was experiencing cultural exclusion which made itself felt in the forms of lack, negativity, absence of meaning, irrationality, chaos and darkness. At the same time, positioned on a literal frontier or border, she was witnessing the effects of racial exclusiveness. Her two important novels show that she was conscious of the connections between herself and others on the margins.

1. "The unspoken in discourse"²

Again and again Harriet Ward's reader senses that she wants to express a complex response to a character or fellow human being, but has to use the confining idiom and value system available to her. The most dramatic example of the conflict inherent in such a position is her description of the appearance of Sandile as "something singularly wild and almost interesting". The colonial

² Kristeva 1986: 158.

line of thought insists that Sandile is a savage and an inferior, and, worse, one of a highly troublesome race that must be dealt with to ensure the smooth functioning of British imperialism; Ward's observation, intelligence and intuition tell her that this is not the last word on him as a person.

Foucault's statement that what is said and what is concealed are quite distinct and of considerable significance provides some guidance in the struggle to interpret what is said and what the speaker truly wishes to say: "The manifest discourse...is really no more than the repressive presence of what it does not say; and this 'not-said' is a hollow that undermines within all that is said" (Foucault 1972: 25).

The analysis of thought is always allegorical in relation to the discourse it employs. Its question is unfailingly: what was being said in what was said? The analysis of the discursive field is oriented in a quite different way; we must grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurrence; determine its conditions of existence, fix at least its limits, establish its correlations with other statements that may be connected to it, and show what other forms of statements it excludes. We do not seek below what is manifest the half silent murmur of another discourse; we must show why it could not be other than it was, in what respect it is exclusive of any other, how it assumes, in the midst of others and in relation to them, a place that no other could occupy. The question proper to such analysis might be formulated in this way: what is this specific existence that emerges from what is said and nowhere else? (ibid.: 27-8)

This seems to me to capture exactly what can be sensed as unspoken, the "not-said" in that speaking subject, Harriet Ward. I do however detect "the half silent murmur of another discourse", and hope to show that it is indeed there.

One can go some way towards a consideration of why women in particular might feel constrained within a discourse that has come to be seen as masculine in origin and restrictive in practice, and why some might be conscious of the counterflow of a parallel, subterranean and resistant discourse. As James Holt McGavran points out, "if one is a woman there is the enormous additional problem of having to speak or write in a society whose

forms--including literary forms--systematically threaten to violate or even annihilate female selfhood" (McGavran: 232). In support of this idea is Sara Mills's comment that "The writer/speaker assumes that she has choice, but the language system pre-exists her and determines what can be stated, mostly without the person's being aware of any restriction" (Mills 1995: 12). Language can thus be used to maintain the status quo, to reinforce social inequalities and stereotypes, and to produce a sense of powerlessness, particularly in women. (One has only to remember the insidiously marginalising effect on women detected by researchers such as Sara Mills with regard to the use of the generic pronoun "he" and the generic nouns "man" and "mankind" [Mills 1995: 87-91].) An intelligent woman would be aware of a sense of restriction, and would naturally react against it.

One device a woman can adopt so as to be taken seriously and thus to avoid marginality, according to Kristeva in About Chinese Women, is to assume "an ostensibly masculine, paternal identification, because it supports symbol and time, [and is] necessary in order to have a voice in the chapter of politics and history" (Kristeva 1986: 156). This is the way to gain entry to "social practice". The awareness that there is another form of discourse, beyond that ordained by the paternal dispensation, is then to be cherished.

But how can we do this? By listening; by recognizing the unspoken in all discourse, however Revolutionary, by emphasizing at each point whatever remains unsatisfied, repressed, new, eccentric, incomprehensible, that which disturbs the mutual understanding of the established powers.
(ibid.: 156)

Irigaray points the way for women to re-invent language on their own terms:

We have to renew the whole of language [language]. Above all, at the level of language we must not turn completely into men. I think it is important to have access to a certain rationality so as to be able to, say, "play chess" with men. To be able to say: your discourses...I've heard them. It cost me dearly, but I understand them. I have an answer to your arguments. But we cannot leave matters at that. To say that means that we have a leeway which is in excess of the system, that we can play on that excess to beat the system. To reintroduce the values of desire, pain,

joy, the body. Living values. Not discourses of mastery, which are in a way dead discourses, a dead grid imposed upon the living. (Irigaray 1992: 51)

Ward herself, as we have seen, began her writing career in the only way possible to her: by identifying with the male military world of her father and adopting its idiom. In this "striving for access to the word and time, [a woman] identifies with the father, [and] becomes a support for transcendence" (Kristeva 1986: 158). But as Harriet Ward's later work shows, having established herself in a male preserve and through male discourse, she searches for expression of her previously repressed, because "female", concerns. On the surface, in order not to repulse a conservative audience, these utterances are not too "revolutionary"; but a careful reading by those even slightly disaffected by the establishment (and not necessarily only women) would expose a kindred dissatisfaction. To quote Kristeva, "[W]hen she is inspired by that which the symbolic order represses, isn't a woman the most radical atheist, the most committed anarchist?" (Kristeva 1986: 158). Even a spark of consent in the depths of a like mind would be satisfaction for a writer intent on a healthy destabilising of normally uncontested norms.

A long way into the future lay the women's movement which would provide the model for the radically subversive conception of parler femme (Irigaray 1992: 77),³ but women's writing, says Irigaray, cannot be recuperated within a logic that maintains it still in "repression, censorship, nonrecognition" (ibid.: 126). She visualises a "feminine syntax", but acknowledges the almost insuperable difficulties in creating such a form of discourse:

There are more and more texts written by women in which another writing is beginning to assert itself, even if it is still often repressed by the dominant discourse. For my part, I tried to put that syntax into play in Speculum, but

³ Parler femme is defined by Sara Mills as "a form of writing which is potentially subversive of the status quo in language" (Mills 1995: 210).

not simply, to the extent that a single gesture obliged me to go back through the realm of the masculine imaginary. Thus I could not, I cannot install myself just like that, serenely and directly, in that other syntactic functioning-- and I do not see how any woman could.

(Irigaray 1992: 136)

If psycholinguists are struggling today to conceive of "woman's language" as a viable parallel to "man's language" (parler homme), how much greater were the problems for Victorian women writers, for whom the existence of any form of discourse other than the one they had to hand was unimaginable.

Kristeva's concepts of genotext and phenotext might be used to shed light on the ambiguities involved. She defines genotext as articulating the ephemeral, non-signifying structures of language; it is influenced by psychic and societal conditions; its world is the poetic and the symbolic; it is "language's underlying foundation" (Kristeva 1984: 87). It is thus separate from the phenotext, a rule-based structure of language which "serves to communicate, which linguistics describes in terms of 'competence' and 'performance'" (ibid.: 87). These categories, genotext and phenotext, are an indication to linguists of an approach to the definition of female discourse, as opposed to phallocentric discourse.

2. The Iron Padlock

Ward provides a startling revelation of her feelings about the injustices silently endured by women as a result of the expectations their gender compels. In August 1848, she published a short story called "Temper" (Bentley's Miscellany), probably written concurrently with or soon after Helen Charteris. Her first-person narrator is male, but what he is given to say reinforces my theory that she makes powerful use of a form of ventriloquism, in order to give vent to her strong feelings as a woman and on behalf of women. Her Victorian audience would have found such a stance perfectly acceptable, as there was a growing recognition, fostered by early feminists, that the position of

women needed transformation.

In her story, Ward imagines a deeply remorseful male consciousness, enabled through his guilt to see at last from a woman's point of view. The narrator has badly abused his long-suffering wife, both physically and mentally. He challenges to a duel Lethbridge, the man his jealous temper suspects of being his wife's lover, and deliberately mutilates him, shooting off his right hand. The narrator's wife leaves him and her children, turning for protection to Lethbridge, and the narrator hears no more of her until he reads an announcement in The Times of the death of a woman in poverty in a boarding house in London. She is identified only as "Florence". (Intriguingly, we learn later that her maiden name was Daveney, which Ward would choose again as that of a similarly abused wife in Jasper Lyle, Eleanor Daveney.) Remorse overcomes the narrator as he realises Florence is his wife, and he is driven to reflect on the unhappy situation of women. One of Ward's most graphic images is used here, its suggestion of physical suffering in the blend of the metaphorical and the actual conveying the torment a woman undergoes when society forces her to become mute: the narrator says "women must put an iron padlock on their lips" ("Temper": 158).

I was possessed of the rights of men [and so exempt from society's moral censure, says the narrator]. Men may seek to entertain themselves when and with whom they please, but women must not laugh beyond a certain pitch; women must not give decided opinions, even if founded on what is just and good; women must put an iron padlock on their lips, and all right-thinking women will admit that they cannot be too strict in their self surveillance. (ibid.: 158)

This muting process, a conscious act, is an act of self-mutilation. The influence of the mother is implicit here; older women connive at the subjection of each future generation of young women, by instilling in them conservative and patriarchal values. Melanie Klein discovered "the leading female anxiety situation" to be that in which women experience the mother as the "primal persecutor" (Klein: 48). The American poet and essayist Annie Gottlieb makes the point that "[e]ven in our dreams we still blame our mothers for the punitive choices our culture

forces upon us" (quoted Gilbert and Gubar: 52). In "Women-mothers, the silent substratum", while pleading for woman's emancipation from the authority of the father, Luce Irigaray looks at the inability of mothers to offer strong role models to their daughters:

So what is a mother? Someone who makes the stereotypical gestures she is told to make, who has no personal language and no identity. But how, as daughters, can we have a personal relationship with or construct a personal identity in relation to someone who is no more than a function?

(Irigaray 1992: 50)

And then, because the character speaking these words is a man, Ward allows herself to be more "outspoken" than ever before; having practised "self surveillance", she channels what she most strongly feels through a representative of the repressive patriarchy. The impact is impressive:

Truly, man is a glorious creature. We talk in England of the thralldom in which women of savage and heathen lands are held, and we shudder; but, verily, we men of England have our privileges. We may be faithless to our own wives, and drive them from us with a heavy blow; we may even rob other men of theirs,--coolly, deliberately rob them for our own selfish purposes,...we may shoot the husbands of our victims; and by good management, the help of a few hundred pounds, or the quibble of a clever, well-paid lawyer, be replaced in our original position.... This world is a merry place for man!

Nevertheless, the women are the gainers in the end; for how much remorse they are spared! how much anguish they spare others, by the conventional rules to which they are happily compelled by custom to adhere! The laws of God are alike for both sexes, and those who defy them most, will have the longest account against them at the Great Day! Then--then shall man and woman stand on equal ground, and be weighed in the same scale of justice! ("Temper": 159)

This passage links all women, including those of "savage and heathen lands", as sufferers from the slavery their gender imposes, and brands all men, even the "men of England", with all that country's sophisticated resources to hand, as savages. Only on the Day of Judgement, it seems, will women obtain redress, and only then can they hope for equality. It is a pessimistic vision, based on a deeply ingrained sense of grievance. One comes to recognise that for Ward, at least at this moment, the

"Other" is generic "Man".⁴

Dale Spender in the following comment identifies the damage done because women have been silenced by the "iron padlock on their lips":

The silence of women has been a cumulative process. Conceptually and materially excluded from the production of knowledge, their meanings and explanations have been systematically blocked and their invisibility has been compounded. (Spender 1985: 59)

It is only in the last decades, according to Spender, that by breaking their silence and taking discursive power upon themselves in order to "re-name" the world, women are mounting "a direct challenge to the patriarchal order" (Spender 1985: 60). Ward is handicapped by the iron padlock, but even here devises strategies to counter the handicap. At the very least, she, having found her voice, can use it and so demonstrate that women need not be silent, but by challenging authority can help to shape their cultures. Marina Warner has a theory about the subtle effect of fairy stories upon their hearers: they can smuggle a disturbing theme across the borders of consciousness without pushing the receivers' faces in it. They've been told to children and youths for centuries for this reason: they're stories about family strife and sexual danger, about intellectual curiosity and impatience with social hierarchy, but they remain in disguise, in the land of far away and long ago and once upon a time. The disguise means that certain themes can be tackled, which, stripped,

⁴ One remembers the words of the Princess to Daniel her son in Eliot's Daniel Deronda: "You are not a woman...you can never imagine what it is to have a man's force of genius in you, and yet to suffer the slavery of being a girl. To have a pattern cut out--'this is the Jewish woman; this is what you must be; this is what you are wanted for; a woman's heart must be of such a size and no larger, else it must be pressed small, like Chinese feet...' " (Chapter 51). This in turn has a link with Kristeva's work on the situation of Chinese women as symbolic of the oppression of all women: "voice stilled, body mute, always foreign to the social order....Who is speaking, then, before the peasants at Huxian? Whoever on this side is fed up with being a 'dead woman'--Jewish mother, Christian virgin, Beatrice beautiful because defunct, voice without body, body without voice, silent anguish choking on the rhythms of words, the tones of sounds, the colours of images, but without words, without sounds, without images..." (Kristeva 1991: 73).

might be censored out.

(Warner: 7).

It does not seem to me bizarre to believe that this covert approach is Ward's in her two major novels, and that she was not alone among the women writers of her time and of other times.

3. Fathers, Mothers and Daughters

In the first edition of the three-volume novel Helen Charteris, published anonymously in 1848, Harriet Ward dedicates her work to Maria Edgeworth, and supplies a preface. When the novel was re-issued as a Routledge reprint in 1853, revised and abridged and with the author identified, the dedication and the preface were omitted. The dedication reads:

These Volumes are (By her kind Permission) Dedicated to Miss Edgeworth with great admiration of her genius and appreciation of the benefits conferred on society by the masterly productions of her pen, by The Author. (HC 1848)⁵

In 1834, Edgeworth published her last novel, Helen, significantly the only major work on which her revered father, having died some years before, had no direct influence. The plot of Ward's novel shows close parallels with that of Helen, involving as it does, mothers and daughters, and the first name of Ward's heroine is obviously her compliment to Edgeworth. Helen is an epistolary novel; Helen Charteris begins as a work of journal entries and letters, devices soon abandoned as Ward discovers that she needs the flexibility of omniscience, while still maintaining the fiction of first-person narrative.

In Helen, nineteen-year-old Helen Stanley (orphaned and alone after the death of her guardian) is invited to Clarendon Park by her recently married best friend, Cecilia Davenant Clarendon. In Helen Charteris, the beautiful Creole girl, Clara

⁵ I have indicated in every quotation from Helen Charteris whether it is taken from the 1848 edition or the 1853 revision.

Villars, also an orphan, is invited to visit her best friend, Helen, and then to be guest of Lionel Cleaveland, a friend of her guardian, at Cleaveland Park. When Clara realises that she will never be acceptable to Cleaveland as a bride, because she is the granddaughter of a slave, she in desperation marries her guardian, Mr Ellersby, her late father's contemporary, and the stage is set for misunderstandings and suspicions of infidelity very similar to those which haunt Cecilia Clarendon. The "prolonged emotional crisis, the only situation of its kind in a novel by Maria Edgeworth" (Butler 1972: 474), which ends Helen, is faithfully imitated by Ward in her novel.

A further clue to Edgeworth's influence on Ward can be detected in this quotation from a letter sent to Lucy Edgeworth, on 6 January 1836, by Maria Edgeworth:

But the moral I draw from Helen is from that fine Lady Davenant's character that mothers talented mothers [sic] should take care not to make their children afraid of them so as to prevent them from telling the truth & trusting them with their faults & secrets at the time when youth most wants another's [sic] counsel & assistance. In short the moral of Lady Davenant's character is that talents [sic] should make themselves objects of Love not fear.

(ibid.: 476)

Ward's heroine Helen unwisely falls in love with Oxford student and apt quoter of romantic poetry, Henry Leycester, and does not confide her attachment to her mother. She subsequently suffers dearly for this, as she tries without guidance to cope with a worldly and manipulative man. She finds it impossible to confide even in Clara: "Had I yet been able to analyse my own feelings, I might have been tempted to lay my aching head on her bosom, and relieve my heart by pouring forth its little history of doubts and hopes and fears..." (HC 1853: 86).⁶ Helen feels

⁶ See Martha Vicinus's assertion that female friends are often mother substitutes: in Independent Women, she comments that schoolgirl friendships "taught girls intimacy and socialised them into the world of women. Indeed, Victorians found them an important means of reinforcing a girl's identity with her mother at a time when she would ordinarily be breaking away from her. Adolescent rebellion was to be

very guilty at not being truthful to her mother:

...how my heart beat with emotion at the idea that I was to a certain extent deceiving her!

Not by word or deed; but in those pure days of girlhood it seemed dreadful to me to have any concealment from her.

(HC 1853: 89)

After a misunderstanding in which Leycester finds Helen being comforted by Cleaveland, Helen brings herself to confide in Clara, who advises her to tell her mother everything, and Helen realises that "[n]either of us looked forward so much to my mother's advice as to making her a friend and confidant" (ibid.: 94). Ward has intuited the moral of Helen sensitively, and reinforces it in her own novel. The reader is reminded of the guilt experienced by young Victorian women should they conceal anything from their mothers.

Helen Charteris is sixteen years old when the story begins. Lionel Cleaveland comments approvingly on her refreshing ingenuousness, open-heartedness and naïveté, as typified by her bounding over hillocks of hay, with what she calls her "usual inattention to the set forms of society", to greet him (HC 1853: 30). She will suffer for all these by the end of the novel, and will relinquish both gaiety and naïveté while acquiring wisdom and learning to conform. Perhaps Ward could see no other solution, either within the confines of the society in which she was writing, or those delineated by the genre in which she was working, but the reader cannot fail to note and to regret the diminution in liveliness.

Sara Mills argues that the characters and roles for women and men in fiction (and in other arenas)

are informed by stereotypes of what is appropriate according to gender norms. This is extremely restricting on women in particular, since they are restricted to inactivity, sexual

circumvented by keeping a 'good' friendship within the family circle, ideally leading without conflict to a happy marriage" (quoted by Tess Cosslett: 5).

attractiveness, or self-deprecation.

(Mills 1995: 171)

Women characters in nineteenth-century literature often function as plot mechanisms; "that is, they bring about plot resolution or closure by marriage, by dying, or by leaving" (ibid.: 170). This idea is illuminating when one considers the way Helen Charteris concludes: the hapless Clary dies, and Helen makes an appropriate match.

If Recollections of an Old Soldier was Harriet Ward's tribute to her father, Helen Charteris must have been her tribute to her mother (still alive in 1845).⁷ Perhaps she felt some residual guilt caused by her whole-hearted devotion to her father and consequent neglect of her mother. In a sense, in her first novel, Ward recreates her mother as an ideal image of the supportive and loving maternal figure, and can compensate for any failings she may have condemned in her own mother; she can create the perfect daughter too, one who comes to understand "the beauty of that peculiar companionship, which ought to exist between mothers and daughters" (HC 1848: Preface), as Harriet Ward may not herself have done. It is the word "ought" which gives the reader pause; it seems to indicate a discrepancy between the ideal and what Ward has herself experienced, as a daughter, or as a mother herself.

The importance of a mother in a girl's life is strongly suggested. The motherless Louisa Cleaveland, with her "passion for sporting" (HC 1853: 52), has no patience with sewing, and "...from having no constant female companion, had got into sad unsettled habits" (ibid.: 80). Mrs Beaumont, who has lost her own child, is a loving and buoyant mother-substitute for Louisa and for Clary; the helpless situation of Clary invites motherly attention too from Mrs Charteris: "she claimed Clary, she said,

⁷ See Ward's letter to Sir John Philippart: "I was most happy to learn from my mother Mrs. Tidy that she had seen you and learned that you had known my brave and lamented father" (Brenthurst Letter 2: 16.12.1845).

by a sort of motherly right, until some decided arrangements were made relative to a home for her" (ibid.: 121).

Initially, Mrs Charteris appears to be a sad, ineffectual widow, a "martyr" to nervous headaches (HC 1853: 87) and constantly anxious about her only son, Charles. She is "drooping and fragile" (ibid.: 17), and useful only, it seems, as a source of lost articles, carried in her voluminous pockets. She sees it as her duty to insist on decorous behaviour from her daughters, and though Helen speaks appreciatively of this trait, it is notable that by the end of the novel, Helen's gay, spirited nature has become almost as subdued as her mother's. She is reprimanded for exercising her talent for mimicry in recounting a meeting with the Mackcrackins:

Had [my mother] been less gentle, less refined, I might have become a mere belle esprit [sic], admired, feared, but seldom truly loved; as it was, my gay sallies, while they were duly appreciated, were kept within bounds, and the slightest essay bordering on sarcasm was checked at once by my mother, kindly, yet firmly. (ibid.: 22)

A prospective husband, this suggests, will be deterred by a too vivacious and pert young woman. While homage is paid to the "angel in the house", the men of the novel, for whom all was designed, might have found the company of its three lively women, Mrs Beaumont, Mrs Mackcrackin and Louisa Cleaveland, far more entertaining, though these cared little for plain sewing. When Mrs Beaumont challenges her husband to a duel in metaphysics, he responds, indulgently, "Metaphysics! O wife, wife of mine! No wonder that my wristband wanted a button this morning!" (ibid.: 135). Mrs Beaumont, the archdeacon and Harriet Ward herself know how women should deploy their talents, and this is most certainly not to be confined to the domestic world. Whether she realises it or not, Ward is teaching by example here, and the effect is a subtle undermining of the accepted role of a dutiful wife. Mrs Mackcrackin, though a figure of fun because of her eccentric ways, seems a loving and effective example of a mother, because she believes in instilling boundless confidence into her daughters, inhibiting their behaviour not at all, and lavishing public praise on them as the upper- and middle-classes would

scorn to do: "Well, nothing will kill them girls, how they do dance!" (ibid.: 68). She is rewarded with her daughters' affectionate appreciation: "[they], more dutiful than all the fine ladies in the world, always felt that what mamma did must always be right, and made a point of following her example whenever they could" (ibid.: 195). (One must admittedly recognise a little of the tongue-in-cheek here.) Harriet Ward, as is obvious, made a point of not following her mother's example.

In contrast to Mrs Mackcrackin, Mrs Silverly, the new dean's wife, is an exceptionally unfeeling mother. Indolent, pampered and selfish, showing more affection for her spaniels than for human beings, she reclines in her sybaritic apartments while her daughter and the French governess languish in a school-room as comfortless as Fanny Price's.⁸ Wise before her years, Helen comments, "I could not fancy Mrs Silverly having a thought about the principles or habits of the governess under whose charge she was to place her daughter at an important age" (ibid.:122). Mrs Silverly languidly remarks that she thought of making her daughter attend the cathedral service to improve her ear for music (ibid.: 123). Little importance is placed on Miss Silverly's religious and moral upbringing, and she is led astray by the governess's own flirtations with soldiers on their afternoon walks; she elopes, and makes an unfortunate match (ibid.: 270), graphically demonstrating Mrs Silverley's inadequacy as a mother.

⁸ Cf. Edgeworth's Helen, who knew her mother hardly at all, but spent all day long with her governess: "she might as well have been in another house....'Bad' arrangement," said Mr Collingwood speaking to himself as he stood on the hearth. 'Bad arrangement which separates mother and daughter'" (23). At the end of the novel, Lady Davenant is reconciled with her once errant daughter: "Her only fault was mine--mine, my early neglect: it is repaired--I die in peace!" (322).

There could be a parallel to Helen Charteris's brief wandering from the path of duty: she was sent away from her mother to boarding school: in an awkwardly phrased sentence, Helen reports that her mother regretted that "her uncertain health had unfitted her for attending to my education at home, obliging her to send me to Kensington for the benefit of the masters" (HC 1848: 331).

Archdeacon Beaumont makes a pronouncement on mothers which seems to carry the moral support of the author:

Oh, if mothers knew the value of example rather than precept with their children,--if they knew how much more was done by accustoming them to right, than by warning them against evil,--how much future good is stored up by making home happy; in youth, what sin and sorrow might be saved to parents, and children, and kindred, in this world...!

(ibid.: 17)

That this is also Ward's point of view may be judged from her comments on the best way to convert the indigenous people of the Cape to Christianity: "It is by some deemed wiser to frighten the ignorant into serving God, than to lead them by gentle means to love Him, to honour and to put their whole trust in Him. What a mistake!" (Five Years i: 119). Ward's pedagogy seems sound, from a late-twentieth-century point of view.

As she realises that she is needed both by her own daughter and by Clary, Mrs Charteris grows in stature as a character. She is full of advice and active support for Helen's comfort when her daughter turns to her for help with the pain caused her by the duplicitous Leycester. When she is prostrated with grief at the news of her son's presumed loss at sea, Helen cares devotedly for her: "I felt as though I, who had served her so ill before, now owed her a heavy debt of love, a debt that it was a blessed privilege to pay" (ibid.: 249). There is something about the sense of weighty obligation in these words which might characterise what was expected of daughters towards mothers. Perhaps in writing this novel, Ward is paying an acknowledged debt too.

As the novel ends, with Helen married to Lionel Cleaveland and mistress of Cleaveland Park, Helen invokes the work's presiding spirit: "Ah! there is my mother's light step in the corridor. Come in, mother, come in and bless your happy child!" (HC 1853: 280).

The importance of the setting of the novel should not be missed. As Eva Figes says, the great house is a central image in

the courtship novel of the nineteenth century (Figes: 102). Ward, herself always accommodated as a "chartered vagabond" (ROS: 29), an officer's wife, in makeshift rented accommodation or the barracks, does not miss its significance either.⁹ Cleaveland Park is denied to Clary on account of her race, and she moves instead into Violet Bank, which is lent to Mr Ellersby by Lionel Cleaveland. Violet Bank becomes a symbol of false ownership and unhappy relationships, as the circumstances of Clary's marriage to her guardian bear out: "They were married. It is true Mr. Ellersby looked like the bride's father, instead of her husband; but his air of benevolence, his gentle voice, his tender, though subdued, and even grateful manner, proved that he felt thankfully happy in the choice he had made" (ibid.: 174). That this is not a suitable match is emphasised earlier: when Mr Ellersby meets Clary in England, the sound of his voice brings back the memory of her father so vividly that, as if in a dream, she imagines "she was again a little child sitting at [her father's] knee, with his hand resting on her head..." (ibid.: 134). A little later, before Ellersby makes his intention of marrying Clary known, she misinterprets what looks like fatherly kindness:

"'I wish, Clary,' said he, 'I could afford to keep a comfortable close carriage for you; but this is better suited to our means.'

"Our means!--Good man, he spoke as if I were his child." (ibid.: 141)

Both Clary and Ellersby die at Violet Bank, its name perhaps suggesting the funereal, while Helen becomes the legitimate inheritor of all that Cleaveland Park represents. The dutiful daughter, having seen her errors of judgement, is transformed by motherly precept and example, and receives her reward. "I think

⁹ A simple listing of the addresses in Ward's extant letters will be enough to underline the point: The Castle, Cape Town (1843); Graham's Town (1845); Fort Brown, near Graham's Town (1846); Frontier (1847); Lion Barracks, Portsea, Plymouth (1849); 14 Daniel Street, Bath (1855). In 1851, Richard Bentley addressed a letter to Harriet Ward at "Quai de la Flotille, No.6, bis Boulogne-sur-Mer"; in 1853 she received payment from him directed to her address at Moss Cottage, Wood Street, Woolwich. The preface to the Souvenir of the Emperor Napoleon is addressed from Dover (1851), that to Clarissa Harlowe from London in 1868.

now my happiness is without a drawback. Lionel tells me we have not earned our happiness without experience!" (ibid.: 280). It is interesting that, in a novel which stresses the characters' consciousness of class, the middle-class Helen should so easily and without remark find a husband from the upper class.

However, what this optimistic ending cannot obliterate from the reader's mind is the political riot which follows the election late in the events of the novel. In this election, Lionel loses the seat he gained at the beginning of the book. As the victorious radical crowd passes Cleaveland Park, waving its tricoloured banner and jeering at the occupants of the great house, the impetuous Charles fires a pistol-shot through the banner, and precipitates a riot. The angry "mob" storm the house, breaking windows and forcing open the door, and only the steady presence of the bishop seated in the hall can bring them to their senses, so that real damage is averted. The words used to describe the crowd--its "obnoxious tricolour", its "insolence", its "infuriated language"-- would seem to show Ward as unsympathetic to its cause. But the ill-feeling of the working-class crowd towards the Tory land-owning class is palpable, and there is an implicit warning that the centuries-old house may not be invulnerable to another assault. This is a prelude to the ambivalent messages conveyed in Jasper Lyle, where Ward offers the reader a miscreant and radical to recoil from and to condemn, while at the same time presenting him as a victim of society's prejudice and cruelty, and therefore to be pitied. She is already in Helen Charteris revealing some of the sympathy felt by her father for the rioters he had to control in Glasgow, and something of her disenchantment with the establishment. Her outspoken resentment of those she calls "the exclusives of W--shire" (HC 1853: 23)¹⁰ finds further release in the discomfiture and even violent destruction of the symbols of middle- and upper-

¹⁰ She refers in Jasper Lyle to Ormsby's family as being "among that class of English owls who fancy themselves eagles, especially in their own country" (427) and at another time, to "the yawning aristocracy" (428).

class patriarchal complacency. Her dissatisfaction with the English class system is clearly expressed on many occasions throughout her work. As early as in Recollections of an Old Soldier, she complains of the narrowness of English society: "to the stranger of his own country the untravelled Englishman openeth not his own door" (ROS: 204). She goes on to rail against "the 'exclusiveness' of English society....It is not the fault, but the misfortune of English society, that it is made up of conventionalisms" (ibid.: 206). English etiquette is "a frozen Rubicon" (ibid.: 206). Before leaving this topic, she makes a most powerful anti-establishment statement, which has a curious resonance to it when one considers it from the perspective of the possible radicalism of Jasper Lyle:

Within the last ten years...there has been a manifest improvement in English society, and...there is no longer the assumption of undue importance, which was formerly the bane of all cheerfulness and good-will. People, nowadays, travel more, and by being thus thrown among the intelligent and the enlightened, learn to appreciate attributes which no wealth can purchase, and without which rank itself loses half its power, and all its charm.

In a word, many people who, from being shut up for years in their own country residences once imagined themselves the eagles of the community in which they hold their state, have at length come to the wise conclusion that they are merely owls. (ROS: 206-7)

In Five Years in Kaffirland, her bias is revealed by her tart remark that "It is a great pity that little boys, whose papas' positions lead them to anticipate a place in the Upper or Lower House, or a seat in either Cabinet, do not learn geography" (Five Years i: 109). Her resentment of privilege based on class seems undeniable, and class obviously plays its part in the discreet disparagement inflicted by the privileged on Clary.

Nevertheless, it would undoubtedly be going too far to say that something extraordinarily reminiscent of Madame Defarge occurs towards the end of Helen Charteris, with a suggestion in the fury of the crowd of Delacroix's "Liberty Leading the People". However, in 1848, scenes of civic violence echoing the French Revolution were to be dreaded as Europe erupted in unrest. Ward is drawing on her memories of her father's involvement in

controlling the Anti-Corn Law riots of the 1830s here.

She does however introduce a touch of gothic horror, of the Grand Guignol, at the end of the novel. The heiress (herself, significantly, an orphan without guidance) who has married Helen's first love, Henry Leycester, is dragged to her death when her foot becomes entangled in the harness of a coach pulled by horses which are maddened by fear of the noisy crowd. The gruesome detail in which her mangled corpse in its finery is described is remarkable for its revelation of Ward in unaccustomedly violent mode herself, as though she were taking a certain satisfaction in authorial revenge on the wealthy and uncaring classes, and in particular on the young woman unwittingly responsible for much of Helen's anguish. The bouquet of flowers at the young Mrs Leycester's belt is all that remains unscathed: thus, remarks the author impressively, "we often see insignificant things escape, when those of importance are utterly destroyed" (ibid.: 269). One must note that Cleaveland's mansion is called "the House of Liberty" (HC 1853: 33), and early in the novel, Ward rehearses its connections with the revolutionary times of Cromwell, and remarking that the courtier in occupation at the time of Charles II was "dissipated".¹¹ Earlier threats to wealthy landowners are recalled:

There was a room off the entrance hall ...bearing the emblem of the rose, a type of secrecy, under which, in the time of Cromwell, many cavaliers had often assembled to discuss matters, which, had they been overheard, would have cost the lives and property of all.... (ibid.: 33)

Although the crowd were not directly responsible for this death, one has a sense of the political turmoil that dominated the 1840s, with Chartism the chief threat to the ruling classes. This preoccupation, which Harriet Ward shared with other writers of the time, including Kingsley, Disraeli and Mrs Gaskell, finds dramatic expression in her next novel, Jasper Lyle, where the

¹¹ One recalls the ambivalence of her feelings towards Cromwell in "The Burial of Oliver Cromwell" in the Forget-Me-Not Annual of 1843.

ambiguous hero is himself a Chartist leader, and the turbulence of the 1840s forms a background to the main action far away on the Eastern Cape frontier, when Ward would be involving herself in politics once again.

It may be that she has not resolved her thinking on those suffering under the "condition of England": her instinct is to support the oppressed, but her middle-class conservative education draws her back, in just the way that Mrs Gaskell and Carlyle reacted to the potential violence of the Chartists, deep though their sympathy with their cause was. Just as the "Chartists" come close to successful revolution in "the House of Liberty", the venerable Bishop calms them with conciliatory words, showing that their best interests lie with landowners such as Cleaveland. The line drawn between Ward's profoundly reactionary and her profoundly radical inclinations is very subtle; it is almost impossible to tell where her heart lies. One would agree with van Wyk Smith's judgement that "this very indeterminacy registers what is most fascinating in Ward's project: the transgressive psychopathology of her liminal discourse".¹²

4. "A Dark Skin in a Land of Fair Faces" (HC 1853: 100)

What is presumably the sub-plot of Helen Charteris, the story of the beautiful but doomed Creole woman, Clary Villars, has more interest for a post-colonial reader than the story of Helen and Leycester, with whom it is hard to become involved. In the revision that the book underwent for its re-publication in 1853, the sub-plot is somewhat reduced in importance. After being mentioned in the first three pages, Clary does not appear again until chapter six, whereas in the earlier edition's extensive

¹² A point made in correspondence regarding the novel.

description of life at the Manor-House School in Kensington, the reader is given an opportunity for insight into her character, and the difficulties she suffers as a result of her colour. One must speculate that five years after first publishing Helen Charteris, Ward decided that her public was more interested in Helen's love story and the world of the cathedral close than in Clary's tragic life and death.

There are a number of interesting parallels to Clary's situation, both fictional and non-fictional. For example, Becky Sharp's schoolmate was a Miss Swartz, a rich mulatto (Vanity Fair [1847-8]), and Mrs Gaskell mentions that one of Charlotte Brontë's close friends at school was a Mellany (Melaney) Hayne (Hain; Hane), "a West Indian... who had no remarkable talent except for music, which her brother's circumstances forbade her to cultivate" (Gaskell: 48). She must have been an orphan, because, while her brother paid for her elder sister to be at the school, Mellany was paid for by the Clergy Orphans' Society (Barker: 857). It would seem to have been quite common for schoolgirls of the time to be acquainted with girls from the West Indies.

Ward felt qualified for a number of reasons to portray a person of mixed race in her first novel. She was living in a country in which, like the Barbados of her mother's youth, inter-racial alliances and marriages were not uncommon. Her father and brothers had served in the West Indies. Colonel Tidy used to tell the story of a beautiful Creole girl who was in love with him and who painted his portrait:

We have a picture of him, taken by a young French Creole.-- And thereby hangs a romance! Not that I know all the particulars: he merely used to smile when we asked him about the artist: but the smile was never a gay one,--nay, it always had something serious about it.

There, however, he is, in his uniform, with a joyous countenance, and looking as if he had been speaking gaily while he stood before the artist. All that we could gather about the picture was, that it was painted by a pretty young French lady. There is her name, Aimée de Vivier, inscribed in the back-ground, on a tree: it seems she used to joke about putting herself in the shade. (ROS: 12-13)

Aimée was a Creole, a designation with a complication of meaning. According to the OED, "creole"

in the West Indies and other parts of America, Mauritius, etc., orig. a person born and naturalized in the country, but of European (usually Spanish or French) or of African Negro race: the name having no connotation of colour, and in its reference to origin being distinguished on the one hand from born in Europe (or Africa), and on the other hand from aboriginal.

Aimée would fit the definition given of its first use: "1832. Marryat N. Forster.. '[she] was a creole [sic]--that is, born in the West Indies, of French parents'" (OED). Harriet Ward calls Clara Villars a Creole, but the implication here is that she is of mixed blood; much is made of her being "the granddaughter of a slave". At much the same time, Mr Barrett (of Wimpole Street) was apparently determined that none of his children should marry because he feared that there was Creole blood in his veins, through his West Indian ancestry, and that a "throw-back" might occur,¹³ the same fear that haunts the characters of Millin's God's Stepchildren: "Down the future generations would run that black blood mingled with [their] father's" (Millin: 289).

It was not simply the suggestion of miscegenation that made visitors to England from the West Indies feel that they were regarded as inferiors. In June 1844, Albany Poyntz, alias Catherine Gore,¹⁴ wrote a story called "My Creole Cousin" for Bentley's Miscellany (570-80). It concerns the wryly amusing misfortunes of a man from the colonies and his faux pas in smart London society. He wears watered-silk trousers instead of cloth ones, eats an orange in public in the day-time, and is regarded as an "ourang-outang" (574) for eating another in a playhouse box.

¹³ See Julia Markus: Dared and Done: The Marriage of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning (London 1995). See Sarah Gertrude Millin on the children who will be born "with shame and sorrow in their blood" (Millin: 271), which is the "vengeance of the Lord for the sins of the fathers", the suffering of the children becoming the sacrifice paid for the sin (ibid.: 304).

¹⁴ Identified in Wellesley Index iv: 40.

"I [sic] was just the sort of Hottentot," Lady R. had observed, "who would have felt no scruple about appropriating the arm of one of her daughters, though Lord Alfred and the young Marquis of Walsingham were standing by, engaged in conversation with my cousins!" (ibid.: 574)

Eventually, he is driven by the ill-manners of all he meets to return home.

I am a stranger in England. In every other country in the world I call myself an Englishman; being born of parents in a British colony, speaking no other language (a strong evidence of English extraction), and possessing the usual reserve, awkwardness, loneliness and touch-me-if-you-dare-ishness of a true Briton. Be that as it may, I am, as I said at first, a stranger in the country of my fathers, in which I had the honour to make my appearance some twelve months ago. (570)

Disillusioned by the narrow social strictures, he leaves England with relief, uttering the ironic couplet:

"Give me again my hollow tree,
A crust of bread, and liberty!" (580)

In spite of the use of the word "Hottentot" in this story, there is no indication that the Creole cousin is other than European in race; his misfortunes are the result of an early desire on the part of the metropolitan elite to distinguish visitors from the colonies as socially inferior and primitive in behaviour.

Mary Louise Pratt notes the cultural complexity of Spanish American society, which has a bearing on the interpretation of the word "creole":

European-born Spaniards occupied the top of the social scale.... Below them stood the criollos (creoles), that is, persons born in America and claiming European (or white) ancestry. Below them stood the vast majority of the American populations, grouped according to various non-European ancestries: indios, negros (free and slave), mestizos, mulatos, zambos, and others--the categories multiplied, signalling degrees of Indian, European, and African ancestry. (Thus did Spain's obsession with pureza de sangre, the legacy of its contact with northern Africa play itself out in the Americas). (Pratt 1992: 112-3)

Helen Charteris uses the word "Creole" of her friend Clara to imply someone born in the West Indies, but of European blood; but as Clara reveals that she is the granddaughter of a slave, the problematic idea of a mixture of blood rather than pureza de

sangre comes into focus to dominate the sub-theme.

As far as slavery is concerned, Ward's attitude is somewhat ambivalent in Five Years in Kaffirland. She was annoyed at the problems caused by the emancipation of the slaves at the Cape; in her view, old and dependent slaves were in distress and had to turn to begging; others became troublemakers and joined with the Xhosa to harrass the settlers. She mocks the pseudo-philanthropists and "[e]lderly ladies, who abused their neighbours over their bohea, [and] rejoiced in the prospect of 'emancipation and cheap sugar;' and the people--the dear 'people'--[who] expected to get it for nothing" (Five Years i: 34-5). The only indication of what she might have felt about slavery before Helen Charteris is the brief statement: "Every one of good feeling revolted at the custom [of trading in slaves], and looked for the remedy" (Five Years i: 35).

She would seem far less ambivalent in Helen Charteris, where her sense of outrage at the marginalisation of those of mixed race by the English middle-and upper-classes, of which she is of course a member, is quite clear. In the 1848 version there appears an indirect indication of the narrator's own sympathy:

Clary's eyes, alone, resembled her mother's; but since I had listened to a recital of the Archdeacon's connected with the miseries of the slave-trade, I felt less astonishment at Clary's case than I had at first, when I had imagined it to be unheard of before.

"I knew," said the Archdeacon, "a young man of a complexion fairer than my own, who, in fact, bore no manifestations of his extraction, who was sent to Cambridge, and finished his education there by taking an honorable [sic] degree. His sister, a very handsome and interesting girl, was placed at a first-rate establishment for the education of young ladies near London. I afterwards met them both in unexceptionable society as well as at the house of their guardian. The young man had become a Templar, and was subsequently called to the bar. [On his father's death, he inherited a large fortune] arising from a great estate in Barbadoes, where...he could not reside, as the moment he and his sister touched that shore, they again became slaves. Yet their father had been legally married to their mother, who was a natural daughter of a man of rank, a high official appointment in the island, by a white slave, whose freedom he omitted to give her legally before his death."

(HC 1848: ii 101)

This strange story, with all its circumstantial detail, and based in Barbados, sounds as if it could have been one told by Harriet Ward's mother, née Pinder, daughter of the Chief Justice of Barbados. Idle speculation encourages one to wonder whether there is more to Ward's fascination with the concept of "a race of slaves" than she reveals.

In the first paragraph of Helen Charteris, Clary is referred to as a "poor Creole girl", and mention is made in the second of her "dark cheek". Even Helen, her best friend, cannot forget her un-English colour. When Helen leaves the Manor-house School, Clara is forced to stay behind, to await the wishes of the guardian appointed by her dead father. She is in despair because he is reported to have suffered grave financial losses and may even be dying. She pours out her heart to Helen in a letter:

I have told you my mother was a Creole, and so amiable and virtuous, that my father would never have repented his marriage but for the vexation it cost his widowed mother, whom he never saw afterwards. He sold his commission, and turning merchant remained in Jamaica. (HC 1853: 2)

Without provision for herself from her guardian, she will have to become an assistant at the school. Even the traditional occupation available to poor and unmarried women is denied her, for a startling reason:

I can never even hope to obtain the situation of a governess in a private family. My colour is against me. I smile sadly sometimes when I look in the glass, and think on your praise of my "Spanish style of beauty." Who would hire a Creole as a governess! How that word hire jars on my ear; nevertheless it is one in frequent use as regards governesses. (HC 1848: 15)

The youthful Helen makes no comment about the bigotry of the wealthy English classes here, but contents herself with an offer to Clary to spend Christmas with the Charteris family. A few pages later, Helen, alias Ward, rails against the "exclusives of W--shire" who laugh openly at Mrs MackCrackin's accent, and would be the class to disparage Clary. Helen shows that she aligns herself with people of sense and principle who deprecate such prejudice.

Another letter from Clary reveals that her guardian Mr Ellersby has recovered, and she will now not need to take up the menial post offered at the Manor-house School. As she writes the words, "I shall be free!", she is overcome by their irony; she can never be free but is bound by a chain, the secret of which she now tells Helen:

I never told you, Helen, that my mother was the daughter of a slave! Not that her mother was a slave at the period of my mother's birth. My grandmother had long been redeemed from ignominy, and married to her benefactor. My grandfather was looked upon as being out of his senses to have so committed himself. But his wife had been born on my grandfather's estate, brought up under his mother's eye, partially educated by her, and was remarkable for her sweetness of temper, her devotion to her patroness, and her steady principle. She made my grandfather's last years happy, and by her management and frugality, he was enabled to give my mother such a dowry [sic] as made her an object of consideration among many of the civilian bachelors of Jamaica. It was, however, her fate to attract the love of my father, then a young officer quartered on the island, and, in spite of the remonstrances of his brother officers, he married her, sold his commission, and joined his father-in-law in his mercantile pursuits. His relatives in England he of course abjured by this marriage. One source of grief to him was the death of his mother soon afterwards, without leaving him a word of remembrance or forgiveness.

(HC 1853: 26)

She mentions Mr Ellersby, who will play a major role in the story: he pitied Clary and reproached himself "with having been instrumental in furthering the marriage of my father with my mother, when the parents of the latter shrank from sanctioning her entrance into a family who must despise her" (ibid.: 27). There is genuine sympathy and insight in Ward's relaying of Clary's thoughts and feelings, particularly when the young woman recalls how her father shed tears when she gave way to a violent fit of passion: "Often, often, when some insolent reflection has been cast on my race, and I have been inclined to resent it even to striking down the offender, the memory of my father would arrest my uplifted hand, and drive back the angry word from my lip" (ibid.: 27).¹⁵ Clary appeals for Helen's continued support,

¹⁵ Clary's difficulties at school are reflected in the situation of Elmira in Sarah Gertrude Millin's novel God's Stepchildren, based on an experience of the author's as a child:

in spite of this news, "for there is none other in this world will love me--the grand-daughter of a slave!" (ibid.: 27).

As so often, Ward's authorial comment is absent, represented only obliquely through the words of her unacknowledged mouth-piece, Mrs Beaumont:

That is a girl in a thousand! I don't care who her grandmother was, or whether she ever had a grandmother at all. And, as to that grandmother being a slave, I should like to know,... when our final account is settled at the last great day, who will be most degraded in the eye of the Almighty, the captive or the captor! (original emphasis) (ibid.: 270)

This is a clear rejection of racism. Yet later Mrs Beaumont will comment that no one but Mr Ellersby with his experience of the West Indies could be expected to marry Clary, because she is a Creole. Helen's feelings are not made plain when she hears the usually sympathetic Lionel Cleaveland's racist remarks when he declares that he could not possibly contemplate marriage with "the daughter of a slave". (There is the question too of her brother Charles's sympathies; he writes from Madeira, "I have seen several slaves, who seem a happy race of people" [ibid.: 47].) Ward's inconsistencies of sympathy must relate to her own confused perceptions on race.

Helen expects to see Lionel Cleaveland's handsome lip "curled with disdain" (the normal reaction of the upper classes to such news?) when he reads Clary's confession that her mother was the daughter of a slave, but like Mrs Beaumont he shows only the "tenderest pity", and instantly decides to invite her to Cleaveland Park (after asking if she is "presentable"). Clary falls in love with him, but crucially overhears the conversation with Helen in which he gives his reasons for being unable to consider Clary as a wife; in their sexism and racism, we must accept them as indications of the feelings of the time, and

"I was twelve when there came to our school a girl, not dark enough to be forbidden the school, but too dark for the other girls to treat as an equal...". (Quoted, from Millin's preface to the 1951 edition of the novel, by Braun: 32).

implicitly of the author herself:

...she would be a graceful adornment to any man's house, and I might have had some terrible struggles with myself had I become attached to her. I admire Clara Villars beyond any woman I know; but her own words, Helen--how terrible!--one of a race of slaves!¹⁶ Poor Clary! Poor, poor Clary!
(ibid.: 99)

The 1848 version of the novel is far more blunt:

"I admire Clara Villars beyond any woman I know--you would not quarrel with me for saying so, Helen--but it would not do to let the future heirs of Cleaveland be taunted as having sprung from a race of slaves. Poor Clary! Poor, poor Clary!"
(HC 1848: 102)

Helen sees Clary in the doorway, "pale and transfixed"; and later finds her in despair, her hue "ghastly", her eyes fixed and tearless, "her lips white and rigid, her whole countenance ...as if turned to stone" (HC 1853: 100). In her distress, she shows an acceptance of the "coloniser's" view of her:

How terrible to be sent into the world with a curse upon one. Is it not a curse to be one of a race of slaves? A race of slaves! God is just and will avenge this unhappy race.
(ibid.: 100)

When she almost gives way to wild emotion, she shows her fear that her race has made her a "slave to my own passion", a significant linking. Insistently, Ward underlines her perception of the injustice of such rejection as Cleaveland has shown; and the reader is moved by Clary's own painful words:

What right has this dark skin in a land of fair faces? But it is my father's land. Am I not, then, a daughter of the soil? No, it rejects me. I will none of it, then. I will go back to the land whence I came!
(ibid.: 100)

The 1848 version reads:

still [sic] she was of that "despised race," and she felt her position more keenly, because she had been inadvertently reminded of it by one in whose eyes she could not bear to be degraded. The "iron had entered into her soul."...Pity was strangely combined with admiration. I, surrounded as I was by adventitious advantages, felt the superiority, not merely physical, but moral, of her who was a desolate orphan--"one of a race of slaves!" (HC 1848: 102)

¹⁶ Sarah Gertrude Millin's character Barry in God's Stepchildren would face the haunting truth: "There is black blood in me" (Millin: 292)".

Ward's empathy here is very powerful, and is most unusual for her time. Helen Charteris was perhaps the first attempt by a writer working in South Africa to consider in fiction the theme of miscegenation and the despair experienced by the woman colonised by both sex and race. Miscegenation is a theme that would become the "flood subject" for many writers, including Anna Howarth, Perceval Gibbon, Sarah Gertrude Millin, Alan Paton, and Nadine Gordimer.¹⁷

There are some indications here of Julia Kristeva's concept of the condition of female abjection. She sees it as the failure of a daughter to establish complete separation from the mother in order to reach self-identity. Abjection is an inability to discern whether one is subject or object, it "disturbs identity, system, order" (Kristeva 1982:4), it is a "drawing to the place where meaning collapses" (ibid.: 2):

There looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated. It beseeches, worries, fascinates desire, which, nevertheless, does not let itself be seduced. Apprehensive, desire turns aside; sickened, it rejects....Unflaggingly, like an inescapable boomerang, a vortex of summons and repulsion places the one haunted by it literally beside himself. (ibid: 1)

Kristeva maintains that there is nothing like the abjection of self "to show that all abjection is in fact recognition of the want on which any being, meaning, language, or desire is founded" (ibid.: 5). Abjection is "elaborated through a failure to recognize its kin; nothing is familiar, not even the shadow of a memory".

Here, Clary shows an aspect of the symptoms of abjection, namely, powerlessness and a sense of worthlessness, followed by a desire (in Clary quickly suppressed) to challenge the

¹⁷ I am indebted here to Professor van Wyk Smith for extending and developing my initial ideas, and for providing the link with future writers.

phallogocentric authority. Her mother's identity as "the daughter of a slave" overshadows any suggestion of happiness for Clary, as patriarchal English society has ordained such a state as unacceptable. Clary would reject her maternal ancestry if she could; she sees it as an object of disgust to those around her, and experiences a consequent self-disgust. There is an incident in the life of Ward's contemporary, George Sand (1804-76) which illuminates Clary's traumatic response: Sand's grandmother, with whom she lived, informed her when she was thirteen that

her mother was an immoral woman who had given birth to an illegitimate child (Sand's sister Sophie), who was not fit to live with them. Sand later wrote that the revelation gave her "a huge internal wound, a searing emptiness in place of my heart....I no longer loved myself. If my mother was contemptible, so then was the fruit of her womb". (Donna Dickenson: George Sand 129; quoted Johnson: 490)

It is a description of what Kristeva describes as "horror...its terror, and the ensuing fear of being rotten, drained, or blocked" (Kristeva 1982: 63) as a result of connection with something or someone deceased, despised or rejected.

But as the theory of abjection shows, that which disgusts one and which one wishes to expel is discovered to be the essential element of one's desire and one's identity.

[The abject] is the expression of a contradictory self-conception, one in which the subject is unable to reconcile its (imaginary, felt, fragmented) experience of itself with its idealized image. Abjection is the subject's and culture's revolt against the corporeality of subjectivity--its material dependence on others, its mortality and its sexual specificity. (Gross: 33)

Clary's life is damaged by her dependence on the mother who has doomed her to suffer for her mixed race and her gender; she recoils with a sense of horror and rejection from her ancestry. And yet, there is a sense of pride and affirmation of the same despised ancestry. It is fascinating to watch Ward sensitively intuiting Clary's traumatic realisation of the extent to which her colour and her sex are the cause of her utter rejection, by the white people who highlight her irreconcilable difference from them, by the patriarchal authority, even by the very soil of her "father's land", a rejection of any claim to blood kinship.

Kristeva sums up, in appropriately fractured discourse, the state of despair abjection causes: "A weight of meaninglessness, about which there is nothing insignificant, and which crushes me. On the edge of non-existence and hallucination, of a reality that, if I acknowledge it, annihilates me" (Kristeva 1982: 2).

It is this despair that strikes Clary. J.M.Coetzee analyses the "blood tragedy" in Millin's novel, God's Stepchildren, in these words, which seem applicable to Clary's state of mind here, and to her future: "The flaw in the blood of a half-caste is thus an instinct for death and chaos...it drives the half-caste himself to a withdrawal from life. Mixed blood is a harbinger of doom" (Coetzee 1988:152).

To maintain the reader's involvement, the author uses Helen as the vocaliser of her author's attitudes; Helen shows her appreciation of her friend's beauty and passionate (unEnglish?) nature, her sympathy with those enslaved, and her own awareness of skin colour in a passage omitted from the 1853 revision:

Altogether Clary had very much the air of a Spaniard, and though darker in complexion than many unhappy girls who in former years were sold as slaves in the West Indies, I have seen few English women whose skins could vie with the brilliancy of her cheek, beneath which the warm blood came and went, creating sun or shade, varying with every emotion of her soul, nay [sic] every impulse of her heart!

(HC 1848 i: 215-6)

Louisa, in comparison with Clary, differs from her as Day does from Night (HC 1853: 49-50); and Clary, in comparison with Helen's sister Fanny, is to Mrs Beaumont a glowing rose beside a fragile lily (ibid.: 89).

Clary does become acceptable to a small circle of sincere people who consider her "worthy of attention for her own sake" (ibid.: 60). But the author, as so often, forgets the narrator's role as a seventeen-year-old, and remarks cynically on the superficiality of this regard: "she found herself so courted and caressed...[that] she gradually began to feel that the world contained good and evil, the evil not predominating so much as

she would have discovered, had she been plain instead of handsome" (ibid.: 60; original emphasis). The irony is that Clary's beauty seals her unhappy fate by attracting the attention of Silverly.

Although "courted and caressed" like a beautiful animal, Clary is forced to realise that even these kindly friends would demur at allowing one of their sons to marry her. Marginalised by her "taint" of colour, as unacceptable to most of the narrow middle- and upper-class society of Worcestershire as her father, ostracised even by his mother, Clary is forced to marry, for shelter and support, a much older man, Ellersby, accustomed to life and relationships in the West Indies. Mrs Beaumont says, "What a husband for our intellectual Clary! Yet whom could she have married? the ways of Providence are inscrutable. Truly the sins of the fathers are visited on the children" (ibid.: 224). This idea is repeated by Helen in her last recorded thoughts of Clary (ibid.: 279). Now the love-match of Clary's grandfather and that of her father are viewed as "sins". Clearly, Ward's own thoughts on race are ambivalent. She deplores the injustices suffered, but cannot react sufficiently against the conditioning she has undergone in "the law of the father" (to quote Freud) to be able to see a solution. The conflict, detectable in repeated inconsistencies in the text, has to remain unresolved.

In alluding to Clary's passionate nature, Ward seems to be resorting to stereotypical thinking about the sensually passionate nature of dark-skinned people, the "Other" to the cool, controlled English. The sympathetic Harry Lorimer is moved to comment, when he first sees her, on Clary's beauty, betraying his unnerved sense of the exotic in her air of suppressed passion: "Who, in the name of all that's beautiful, is she?...What a pair of eyes! They have a narrow escape of being fierce" (ibid.: 55). If this is "Othering", it is admiring rather than derogatory.

However determined Clary is to be a faithful and

satisfactory wife, Ward shows that she is doomed because of the often unexpressed assumptions of the other characters about her appetites and possible moral vulnerability. The Machiavellian villain Silverly, dangerous in spite of his designation by Mrs Beaumont as an impertinent and fashionable "yahoo" (ibid.: 177), chooses Clary as the object of his seductive advances, even after her marriage. His motivation is clear from his percipient comments on first being told who she is:

"Pray tell me," said Mr. Silverly, approaching my chair, "if the young person who has just performed so admirably, is professional. I should say not!" and he examined Clary through his glass. "She wants the air of the profession."

"You mean the trick and the quackery," interposed Mrs Beaumont, who had heard the question. "Miss Villars is not professional."

"She is handsome--decidedly handsome," pursued the coxcomb, nothing daunted by Mrs. Beaumont's brusquerie. "Her eyes are superb. Is she a foreigner? English she decidedly is not."

"She is a West Indian," I replied....

"Ah, I see--I understand--shaded with dark blood--but she is divinely handsome. Is she rich?--these Creoles are occasionally heiresses." (ibid.: 118)

Perhaps Clary is devastated by his assault on her fidelity because of its subtle insinuation that, because she is a Creole, and therefore stereotypically hot-blooded because "dark-blooded", she may the more easily be persuaded into an adulterous relationship. His actions demean her too by implying the sexual nature of the relationship between slave-owner and female slave.¹⁸ Ward's sympathy for Clary's plight and the injustices she suffers is obvious. But again, understandably, she seems to have no solution, nor to be able to insist that all women have rights and should be judged by more balanced criteria than those based only on masculine decisions. Persecuted by Silverly's "degrading admiration" (HC 1848 ii: 187), Clara is estranged from her husband, who is easily persuaded by Silverly's attentions to

¹⁸ Any white male could assume such a role in relation to a black female: Frantz Fanon's comment has symbolic overtones in Black Skin, White Masks: "Let us not exaggerate. When a soldier of a conquering army went to bed with a young Malagasy girl, there was undoubtedly no tendency on his part to respect her entity as another person" (46).

her into believing that she is capable of infidelity. (Ward may be implying that this is the result of the conditioning he has received in the West Indies.) She dies in childbirth, as does her child, befitting the convention of the consequences of "the sins of the mothers". Perhaps this is the only way out of a difficult situation for Ward, but it does call to mind Marilyn Butler's comment that

Death in childbed is a convenient punishment for a female lapse from virtue, and is much invoked by the popular novelist....The Reverend R. Polwhele found Mary Wollstonecraft's own death singularly appropriate.
(Butler 1975:118 [f.n.])¹⁹

Helen and Clary are in many ways archetypal Victorian heroines playing their expected roles in the plot.

The conviction though remains, in spite of the contingencies of plot, that Ward is unable to define clearly, let alone utter, what she feels, as she wrestles with the complexities of racial and sexual prejudice. Something of her unresolved thinking on the question of slavery and race, an ambiguity which was to haunt generations of South African novelists, can be intuited from this description:

Clary had just taken her station at the pianoforte, and in her simple dress of maroon-coloured silk, with her black lace scarf, and her hair classically bound round the back of her head with a golden arrow,...she certainly presented a striking appearance. I thought of the words "sprung from a race of slaves," and could hardly reconcile them with the beautiful creature, standing up to give us all delight with the emanations of genius and cultivation. (ibid.: 117)

Are the characteristics of slaves then to be read as the reverse of all the positives in this description? One is reminded of Wylie Sypher's findings on the language of the abolitionists. In order to further the cause, they felt obliged to exalt selected "noble" negroes by contrasting them with the "ignoble"

¹⁹ Some light on Clary's death may be cast by Jeanne Rosenmayer Fahnestock's contention that, in the mid-Victorian treatment of conception and childbirth, the painfulness of a woman's childbirth, her death or the child's death, or the sterility of the marriage were shorthand ways of suggesting sexual incompatibility (Fahnestock: 264-5).

4. "She might pass for an Italian so well": Villars and Fanon:
A West Indian Dialectic

It is illuminating in reflecting on the sub-plot of Helen Charteris to turn to the work of the liberationist writer from the French Caribbean island of Martinique, Frantz Fanon (1925-1961). His works are seminal as documents of the neurosis of racism, and both Black Skin, White Masks (1952) and The Wretched of the Earth (1961) are a resonant echo of the anguished utterances of Clary Villars. Her plea for recognition and acceptance as a "person of colour", a descendant of slaves, is a prolepsis of Fanon's own.

What must strike the reader of Helen Charteris and Black Skin, White Masks are two descriptions, one an apparently trivial moment in the former and the other a significantly highlighted one in the latter work. While Helen is still at the Manor-House, Clary is accused (falsely? the matter is not resolved) of having over-turned a bottle of ink.

How her dark cheek is glowing! There is a dispute over an inkstand. The teacher accuses Clary of it. Clary denies it; Miss M-- doubts her word; I must go and stand by her. She will grow cool at my approach, and Miss M-- will not oppress her.
(HC 1848: 6)

Fanon discusses an incident from the work of his compatriot, Mayotte Capécia (Je suis Martiniquaise [1948]), which seems to symbolise the repressed rage and demand for recognition of identity of the black person: at the age of five, Mayotte "took the inkwell out of the desk and emptied it over [the white boy's] head". This, Fanon concludes, was "her own way of turning whites into blacks" (Fanon 1986: 45). Like Clary's, Mayotte's resistance is soon weakened by a sense of the hopelessness of trying to "blacken, to mystify her world" and she decides to "bleach" it instead, by becoming a laundress. Fanon goes on to quote Mayotte's reflections on her grandmother, who is unlike Clary's in having been, not black, but a white Canadian who had fallen in love with a "coloured man of Martinique" (ibid.: 46-7). Mayotte longs to be white, for what Fanon calls, in a phrase with

suggestions of Kristeva's thinking on the role of the mother in abjection, "a kind of lactification" (ibid.: 47), for this will ensure her acceptability in the eyes of the whites. Fanon names this an example of a "nauseating phenomenon". "It is always essential to avoid falling back into the pit of niggerhood, and every woman in the Antilles, whether in a casual flirtation or a serious affair, is determined to seek the least black of men" (ibid.: 47). This evidence of self-hatred is further expressed in Fanon's conversation with a woman from Martinique who is studying in France. The woman, "breathless with anger", "storms" at Fanon:

"If [Aimé] Césaire makes so much of accepting his race, it is because he really feels it as a curse. Do the whites boast like that about theirs? Every one of us has a white potential, but some try to ignore it and others simply reverse it. As far as I am concerned, I wouldn't marry a Negro for anything in the world". (ibid.: 48)

Fanon's psychoanalytical thinking is an echo of the cry of powerless men and women of colour, confronted with the immovable prejudice of the European, a prejudice identified with equally piercing clarity and with unmistakable empathy by Harriet Ward a hundred years earlier. Homi Bhabha intuits the nature of this struggle against psychological damage and powerlessness in Fanon:

The extremity of this colonial alienation of the person--this end of the "idea" of the individual--produces a restless urgency in Fanon's search for a conceptual form appropriate to the social antagonism of the colonial relation. The body of his work splits between a Hegelian-Marxist dialectic, a phenomenological affirmation of Self and Other and the psychoanalytic ambivalence of the Unconscious. In his desperate, doomed search for a dialectic of deliverance, Fanon explores the edge of these modes of thought: his Hegelianism restores hope to history; his existentialist evocation of the "I" restores the presence of the marginalized; his psychoanalytic framework illuminates the madness of racism, the pleasure of pain, the agonistic fantasy of political power.

(Bhabha 1994: 41)

As has already been noticed, many of Clary's acquaintances make "sense" of the anomalous Clary by comparing her to something more accommodating and less "Other" than she actually appears to

them to be. Her own identity is not enough, not "good" enough. She looks like a Spaniard; she could pass for an Italian "so well". This is redolent for a South Africa reader of the complex associations of "passing for white", which is in effect what Amayeka in Jasper Lyle is permitted to do by the Cape colonials who eventually accept her as "one of us". Comments about Clary are hedged about with qualifiers such as "though" and "yet": "She with her dark skin is yet one of Nature's gentlewomen" (HC 1848: 3). (Are there shades here of Rousseau's acceptably natural but unacceptably uncivilised "noble savage"?) Helen cannot reconcile Clary's beauty with her origins as "one of a race of slaves", and reviles the schoolgirls at the Manor-House who sneer at Clary (HC 1848: 3). (If Clary were not beautiful, would Helen join their ranks?) Dambudzo Marechera, the Zimbabwean writer, identifies the anguish felt by those reduced to objects in the European's eyes: "It was not enough to be black, proud and beautiful; little teeth of uneasiness gnawed at our self-confidence for there is no answer to a whiteman's [*sic*] sneer" (Marechera: 65). Even language loses its talismanic properties: "You can't even hide in yourself because your thoughts think of themselves in words you have been taught to read and write" (ibid.: 35). This is Caliban's dilemma, one in which he tries to turn the pain into triumph: "You taught me language; and my profit on't/Is, I know how to curse: the red plague rid you, /For learning me your language!".

Marechera states: "I had never particularly noticed that I was black-- and it was something of a shock suddenly to realize that my skin for the English was a natural label that read Mugger, Rapist, Amin, Inferior" (ibid.: 77). A similarly bitter realisation had come to Fanon: the occasion was one when he "had to meet the white man's eyes" (Fanon: 110). He becomes objectified by a little white girl's saying of him: "Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!":

I was responsible at the same time for my body, for my race, for my ancestors. I subjected myself to an objective examination, I discovered my blackness, my ethnic characteristics; and I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetichism, racial

defects, slave-ships, and above all else, above all: "Sho' good eatin'".....The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it's cold, the nigger is shivering because he is cold....

(Fanon: 112)

At the primal moment of hearing Lionel's shocked rejection of her as a possible wife and ultimately as a human being, Clary takes on the kind of racial burdens Fanon painfully loads on to himself: each is given an identity that cannot be thrown off but must be worn perpetually. "My blackness was there, dark and unarguable" (Fanon 1986: 117).

Clary starts to sicken, and her illness might be compared with that of another fictional black woman trapped within the identity and expectations imposed by colonial and patriarchal hegemony: Nyasha in the Zimbabwean writer Tsitsi Dangarembga's Nervous Conditions (1989). Dangarembga takes her title from a quotation from Jean Paul Sartre's introduction to Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth: "The condition of native is a nervous condition" (Epigraph).

Perhaps the most ironic aspect of Clary's suffering is the attempt by well-meaning friends to counter what Bhabha would claim to be the white person's phobic image of the black person (Bhabha 1994: 63); they offer to see her as different, no longer the Other, but one of themselves. She will be allowed to pass for white. The reality is that she knows this "generosity" is not within their power; the wish is a benevolent sham, and she gives up the attempt. There are roots here with the abolitionist thinking described by Wylie Sypher, noted above: by praising some black converts, the abolitionists were compelled to identify these as special examples of the black races, who had turned their backs on barbarism. In adopting this posture, the abolitionists consigned all other black people even further beyond the pale than they had been before.²¹

²¹ In this connection, see the discussion involving the reclamation of Amayeka in chapter seven of this dissertation.

There are pre-echoes in Ward of the theme which came to dominate South African fiction, based on what Sarah Gertrude Millin saw as the "tragedy" of miscegenation. As J.M.Coetzee has indicated in his essay on Millin, "Blood, Flaw, Taint, Degeneration", Millin's phobic tendencies towards the notion of "mixed blood" found a justification in the pseudo-science of degeneration which developed from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. The emphasis is on blood purity, or taint--the "flaw in the blood" (Millin: 286). Ward just escapes the era of this pseudo-science; like other writers in the South African context, her focus is on the suffering caused to those of mixed race by the perception that such a person belongs nowhere, has no true identity. She focuses too on the idea of a sinful crossing of boundaries, a sin that will be visited by the father upon succeeding generations. Like Plomer and Paton, for example, she pities the tragic personal consequences for individuals in a racist society.

In concluding this discussion of Helen Charteris, I should like to emphasise the importance of this novel in the tradition of South African literature. While Helen Charteris is "a domestic English novel", it was "written in Cafferland". Although the main plot is undeniably vapid, the sub-plot ensures that the novel is considerably more than a superficial and forgettable piece of fiction. Although it cannot be said to be a "South African novel", the importance to late twentieth-century critics in South Africa of its having been composed at all, let alone in the country which would come to represent above all others the misery of legal restrictions on inter-racial marriage or even alliance, cannot be underestimated. Ward was stationed in the country at a crucial time, when perceptions of race were beginning to harden, and as she looked at the people she saw around her, the sharp judgements she made on their attitudes towards one another can only throw light on our own conception of those attitudes. Throughout the novel, the reader is conscious of South Africa as a shadowy background; news of Charles's

fortunes in that country reaches the family periodically via letters, and at the end, when all is celebration, Charles returns with his San servant, a narrative move which brings the two countries significantly closer together, in much the same way as the ending of Jasper Lyle does, when Eleanor in London asks: "Is there any news from Kafirland?"

It is true that Ward does not take the theme of miscegenation in the novel very far. This was her first novel, and she could have had no idea of how successfully received it would be, or what her growing public would accept from her. In some ways, she was treading carefully, as I implied at the beginning of this chapter. The idea of depicting racial prejudice in practice at this time, as it is played out in a domestic English setting, is an intriguing one. Ward wanted to show how disquieting she found such prejudice (and I have no doubt from the rhetorical power of the words that she puts into Clary's mouth and into the mouths of others in the story that this is precisely what she does intend to show). The strategy that she adopted was one familiar to women and to women writers of the Victorian period: that of indirection and subterfuge. The fact that Clary's story forms the sub-plot is an indication of what she was doing: by indirections finding directions out. To indicate where her sympathies lie, she chose the venerable, outspoken and humane Mrs Beaumont as her spokesperson in matters of social class and of race. Writers have axes to grind, and Ward had more than most. Fiction is a way of grinding axes without deafening the auditor, and women had to choose their approaches with care. Her novel would no doubt have been effective in touching the emotions of most of her readers and opening their eyes to the plight of people of mixed race. Then, as far as the main plot is concerned, there were women readers in situations like Helen's who would have accepted her capitulation to society's insistence on woman's conformity with a certain schadenfreude. The novel would have functioned, as Vicinus suggests the genre as a whole could do, as a means of

managing emotional ambivalences and shaping attitudes (Vicinus 1977: xii).

CHAPTER SEVEN

"A deep treacherous undercurrent, like a bad heart masked by a smiling face...": The Transgressive in Jasper Lyle

It is clear after an examination of Helen Charteris that the woman who is concealed in the text and the writer who emerges from it is a much more subversive personality than has been previously realised. When we turn to Jasper Lyle, it becomes even clearer that Harriet Ward's work rests upon a subliminal base from which her projection of herself as exile and gendered "Other" is launched. By the time she came to write Jasper Lyle, her awareness of the extent of her marginalisation as a woman and an intellectual was acute; she needed to express her sense of indignation with the patriarchal hegemony. There is an undercurrent in this novel which could be identified as a deviant mode of discourse, in which her surface meaning is in conflict with her covert meaning. The result is a strangely fractured narrative point of view. Ward could not fail to be aware in this novel of the transgressive and subversive nature of what she was writing, as she articulates in a kind of code her resistance to the patriarchal and colonial powers. That the result can seem bewildering is understandable. The language in which the system could be challenged and deviant feelings expressed with clarity has still not yet evolved. The writing of the mid-nineteenth-century Cape frontier takes on a new perspective when considered in the light of Ward's apparent challenge to the establishment in Jasper Lyle.

There have been clues to Ward's initially subliminal resistance from the beginning of her work. Then, fairly controversial ideas were allowed across the threshold in Helen Charteris and Jasper Lyle. After the return to England, the buried or half-concealed impulses towards anger and violence subsided, when the writer, no longer the spokesperson on the frontier, sought another role, that of the wise and experienced

counsellor and reformer of abuses in an army she had allowed her character Jasper Lyle to denounce as "hired assassins". She had time now to turn to the cause of "my poor Sisterhood" (see her letter to Layard in 1855), the wives of soldiers forced with their children to share the appalling conditions of the barracks with the rank and file of the army.

Jasper Lyle is an extraordinary novel for its time, and an extraordinary novel for a woman to have written. Its setting and plot are very different from most of those in novels being written at the time, particularly those by women. Few other women writers (and few men) had attempted anything so challenging and controversial. Ward's novel has precedents in the works of James Fenimore Cooper, whose influence she acknowledges, and to whom she is most indebted in her portrayal of the romantic wildness of a frontier, and the conflictual encounter of the European and the indigene.¹

By now, Harriet Ward's public had certain expectations of her, as a soldier's wife and daughter, and as a rousing commentator on the Eastern Cape frontier and the last war there. They would have expected, and they got, a story of danger, war and excitement, with descriptions of unfamiliar scenery, exotic peoples and brave English men and women. It was a matter of honour with Ward that she "write from life". Everything she conveyed about the people and the terrain should be verifiable: "Would you had a map, dear reader, to trace the country I would fain describe" (JL: 191), because "romance and reality are much more nearly allied than untravelled folks imagine" (ibid.: 184).²

¹ See Appendix Three.

² One could compare Thomas Hardy's "response to readers interested in landscape, prehistoric antiquities, and especially old English architecture", in which he assures his public that "the description of these backgrounds [to the Wessex novels] has been done from the real--that is to say, has something real for its basis, however illusively treated" (from his General Preface to the Wessex Edition of 1912). James Muirhead, compiler of the 1890 Baedeker Handbook to Great Britain, complained to R.D. Blackmore about the discrepancy between real scenery and

The descriptions of landscape are particularly effective, as the following evocation of the Karroo illustrates:

There was something very grand and even affecting in the contemplation of such a scene; at least, so thought Frankfort, whose heart expanded under the impression produced by Nature in her state of lonely majesty. Here she was not lovely, but sublime; the infinity of space, the shadowless land, the unclouded sky--too dazzling for mortal eye to dwell upon--the awful silence, all seemed more fully to betoken the eternal presence of God, than in green places where shelter was at hand, and where, therefore, the solitude was not so apparent, so vast. (JL: 101)

In 1829, Cowper Rose had raised similarly Wordsworthian echoes of the sublime transposed to Southern Africa:

Amidst the eternal and noblest forms of nature, the lofty mountains that seemed to enclose us, the high grey cliffs that flung their cold shadows over half the valley, the silent shady river, darkened by the gloomy foliage on the banks, the hushed and dreamy stillness, save where the distant echo-like chime [Ward's bell-bird?] touched on the ear, were deeply impressive and the awed feelings were bowed down before the spirit of solitude, and the scene became religion, and the hollow surrounded by grey crags, where we rested, a temple of the desert. (Rose: 201-2)

As van Wyk Smith points out, there were a number of early nineteenth-century writers who "persistently invoked notions of the picturesque and the sublime to formulate the South African terrain", but that this portrayal metamorphoses into the notion of a problematic interior, "holding out redemptive and transcendent possibilities, only to turn into disillusion or disaster" (Van Wyk Smith 1990 [2]: 99-100). The landscape of Jasper Lyle is perceived as a blend of beauty and violence, and reflects Ward's early conviction, first expressed in Five Years in Kaffirland, that the landscape, lovely though it often was, was inimical to human beings. Ward expends a great deal of energy on extended descriptions of the countryside, to provide an impression of verisimilitude, and a sense that the place is

description in Lorna Doone. Blackmore's reply appeared in the handbook, and was a frank admission of poetic licence: "If I had dreamed that it would ever be more than a book of the moment, the descriptions of scenery, which I know as well as I do my own garden, would have been kept nearer to their fact. I romanced therein, not to mislead any other, but solely for the uses of my story". (Quoted by Hardyment: 82.) Ward scorned poetic licence.

indeed a wilderness, exotic and unfamiliar to readers in England. It becomes a fitting backdrop to dramatic, exciting and horrifying events, involving death and violence.

With her intriguing story of an anti-hero³ on the frontier during a Xhosa war, Ward achieved immediate success. The story is complicated: Jasper Lyle, unacknowledged legitimate son of the governor of the Cape, Sir John Manvers, is brought up by a foster mother; he escapes at the age of ten to the London underworld of pickpockets and thieves, is arrested and brought before a magistrate and handed back to the care of his foster mother. Eventually, he is found a commission in the army through his father's influence, and arrives at the Cape, where he attempts to charm an impressionable sixteen-year-old, Eleanor Daveney, who fancies herself in love with another officer. She is persuaded by her unsuspecting and foolish mother to marry Lyle, who violently abuses her when he finds she is not wealthy. Eleanor's misery is compounded when her little boy sickens and dies. Lyle returns to England, and becomes a Chartist leader before being arrested and sentenced to transportation to Australia. The convict ship is wrecked upon the coast of the Eastern Cape, and Lyle and a fellow convict, Gray, join a band of gun-runners supplying weapons to the Xhosa. They link up with the disaffected Boers, and during the war which ensues, Lyle is crucified by the Xhosa, and they and the Boers are defeated. Three weddings ensure a happy ending for readers reeling from the shocks inflicted by the author towards the end of the novel.

The plot indeed offered scope for Ward's considerable knowledge of the people, animals and terrain. She knew that she had been influential in providing knowledge of and creating an interest in the Eastern Cape, particularly during the War of the Axe; she had had one successful attempt at writing a novel, and

³ The term "anti-hero" may appear problematic; Lyle could be seen to be a villain pure and simple. But the way Ward projects him is too complicated to allow such an easy judgement. As I hope to show, he is not by any means the conventional villain of a romantic novel.

the Eighth Frontier War was about to begin, so all was propitious for her second novel. She must have approached Richard Bentley; volume 82 of his letterbook contains a copy of his reply, written to her in Portsmouth on 24 October 1849, proof that he saw something in the story that the public would respond to:

The new novel you name would no doubt command something. I will give you, supposing the book works out the plot you have sketched (& which I now return) the sum of [seventy-five pounds] on account of 500 copies, on sale of which you shall have [fifty pounds]. (BM MS. 46641: 67)

In fact, the novel was published by Routledge, in 1851, and judging from the Athenaeum review of 27 September 1851, was already by then in reprint, "intended doubtless to meet the demand for information about the present seat of war in Kafirland" (Athenaeum: 1020). The war was the Eighth Frontier War (1850-3).

The genesis of the plot of Jasper Lyle can be detected in Five Years in Kaffirland. Ward wrote:

The great object of this measure [the withdrawal of the traders from the Eastern Cape frontier] is to prevent, or rather check, the sale of gunpowder. It is by these means that the Kaffirs have been enabled for years to collect it, and it is still to be feared that there are many men among the "pale faces," wicked enough to traffic...in arms and ammunition. (Five Years ii: 197)

The story, then, on the surface, seems set to be a fairly predictable one. But the narrative intention of the author is not easily unravelled; Ward seems to be suggesting in the contradictions implicit in her portrayal of Lyle that an interesting undercurrent underlies her surface intention, and this can be linked to the anger at and frustration with both the patriarchal order and colonialism which are detectable in her earlier work. Gilbert and Gubar suggest that other women writers restricted by patriarchal and colonial conventions resorted to just such a strategy, and in doing so, achieved an alternative feminine "truth", epitomised by Emily Dickinson's "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant--":

In short, like the twentieth-century American poet H.D., who declared her artistic strategy by entitling one of her

novels Palimpsest, women from Jane Austen and Mary Shelley to Emily Bronte and Emily Dickinson produced literary works that are in some sense palimpsestic, works whose surface designs conceal or obscure deeper, less accessible (and less socially acceptable) levels of meaning. Thus these authors managed the difficult task of achieving true female literary authority by simultaneously conforming to and subverting patriarchal literary standards. (Gilbert and Gubar: 73)

Although more ambivalent than I am in her response to Gilbert and Gubar's conclusions, Laura E. Donaldson concurs on this point:

In the woman's text-palimpsest, a surface design created by the conventions of "male genre" covers over an invisible, and often subversive, inscription of an alternative "female" sensibility. Reading consequently becomes an activity of salvaging the authentic, yet submerged, female literary voice....[H]iding the female voice enables it to survive the crushing weight of an overtly hostile literary tradition.

(Donaldson: 18-19)

In support of Gilbert and Gubar's insistence that the modern reader needs to be sensitive to the coded nuances in women's texts, one could invoke Julia Kristeva's authority: she says it is possible to summon the "truth situated outside time"

[b]y listening, by recognising the unspoken in all discourse, however Revolutionary, by emphasizing at each point whatever remains unsatisfied, repressed, raw, eccentric, incomprehensible, that which disturbs the mutual understanding of the established powers.

(Kristeva 1990: 156)

It is because "so many of the lost or concealed truths of female culture have recently been retrieved by feminist scholars [that] women readers in particular have lately become aware that nineteenth-century literary women felt they had something to hide" (Gilbert and Gubar: 75). Some may have felt they also had something they would like heard said. It is that which is unspoken in Ward's Jasper Lyle and yet that which makes itself heard, much that remains "unsatisfied, repressed, raw, eccentric, incomprehensible" that makes this work a fascinating discovery for the post-colonial critic, and confirms the view that as a writer Harriet Ward is far more complex and challenging than has hitherto been thought.

I have chosen as sub-title for this chapter a quotation from Hardy and Hunter. The narrator is describing a scene in which

Sandy Hunter is in difficulties after trying to swim a loch. Paul Hardy speaks of the "deep treacherous undercurrent, like a bad heart masked by a smiling face [which] was at work, and drew the boy down with a force he was, in his exhausted state, unable to resist" (HH: 39). This seems to me to be relevant both to Harriet Ward's consciousness of her own transgressive desires, and to the anti-hero of her novel, Jasper Lyle, who is outwardly so amiable, and yet conceals treacherous designs on those he knows and the country to which he belongs. The phrase "like a bad heart masked by a smiling face" crystallises the anxiety concomitant with running counter to conventional behaviour. Gilbert and Gubar show that women writers often projected their rebellious impulses "not into their heroines but into mad or monstrous women (who are suitably punished in the course of the novel or poem)", and that by so doing they dramatised their own "self-division, their desire both to accept the strictures of patriarchal society and to reject them" (Gilbert and Gubar: 78). Ward projects her rebellious desires into the renegade Chartist, who, while "suitably" punished at the end of the novel, is also a representation of martyrdom with which she identifies.

In her new novel, Ward had a chance once again to investigate love between people of different races. Although she played down the story of Clary in her revised version of Helen Charteris, the topic obviously still drew her attention, and she had heard talk of just such a possibility, though one destined not to develop, while she was in the Eastern Cape. This was the true story of Amakeya, the daughter of a chief, who offered herself to a British colonel in an attempt to save her father. Out of this grew the tale of the love between the Xhosa maiden Amayeka and the young Englishman Martin Gray. Life and art are in this case significantly different. Into the plot of Jasper Lyle Ward wove details of her experience of settler life in the Eastern Cape, and anecdotes of the Khoi and San people she had known, as well as what she regarded as definitive portrayals of Xhosa "manners and customs". The reviewer of the novel in the

Athenaeum of September 1851 identifies something of a problem in his irritated criticism that her wish

to introduce everything which she knows, to paint all that she has seen from every point of view, to crowd in every possible kind of adventure, to leave nothing undescribed and nothing unsaid, has made her book like an escaped nightmare-confused, tumultuous, and disagreeable.⁴

Her readers obviously were satisfied with this wealth of realistic detail and "truth to nature", to judge by the number of times the novel was re-issued. She brings to life the superficial nature of the social round centred on the governor of the Cape and his lady at Newlands, with its balls and rides through the oak forests. The Daveney homestead in the Eastern Cape, Glen Thorn recreated with careful attention to its simple but elegant comforts, forms a pleasant contrast, and the Eastern Cape landscape has an unforgettable presence of its own, and is closely integrated into the dramatic action. It is a story packed with incident, and the enthusiasm of the author is obvious as she tears herself away from one group of characters in order not to neglect those in another part of the action. That the novel should have had all the ingredients for popularity then, and yet still hold our attention now says something for the skill of the writer.

1. "The Mephistopheles of the Wilderness" (JL: 349)

In presenting the complex character of Jasper Lyle,⁵ Ward seems to be grappling with the problem of a Judas figure, preordained like the original Judas to be a doomed participant in the

⁴ For a fuller discussion of the reception of Jasper Lyle, see Appendix Four.

⁵ There is a precedent for making heroes of criminals. Bulwer Lytton and Harrison Ainsworth wrote romantic novels in this style, but "the moral taste of the mid-Victorians soon put an end to the villain as hero" (Wellesley Index 3: 6). Ostensibly, Ward's criminal is just that, and only surreptitiously the hero.

eventual release and happiness of others, rather than an independent agent. The first intimation of an ambivalently interventionary power is expressed by Sir John Manvers when he realises his son Jasper is about to disgrace him publicly:

I am a mark for bad men's scorn and good men's pity.
Good men! What constitutes a good man? Is he one whom the devil has not been permitted to tempt?--permitted to tempt, mark that!
 (JL: 375; original emphasis)

Ward makes sure the reader ponders this question, and not just as it concerns the self-regarding Sir John Manvers, but also his son, who at times in the novel can be seen to be a sacrificial victim.

Van Wyk Smith makes the point that Ward seems to be an author in conflict with herself:

What is astonishing is that Ward's authorial stance makes it quite clear that she condemns [Lyle's political radicalism], yet the reader strongly senses that, like Milton, she is of "Satan's party".
 (Van Wyk Smith 1990 [1]: 11)

Too many of the signals she gives run counter to the broader picture of irredeemable villainy she insists on the reader's accepting about Lyle's character. If what she is doing is unconscious, and she is writing better than she knew, to quote van Wyk Smith again (12), that in itself is worthy of note; her indication that Lyle is in fact a martyr to the establishment shows her sense of justice asserting itself in spite of all the conditioning a Victorian sensibility has received with regard to acceptable notions of behaviour and belief. If on the other hand we could imagine that she were aware of the subversive nature of her discourse, how fascinating would be her surreptitious use of her protagonist to express her own doubts about contemporary social conditions, politics, religion and the army, doubts too inflammatory to be made in her own voice. I think the evidence is strong enough for us to make this judgement.

For example, what could be more subversive than these words expressed in soliloquy as Lyle contemplates his path just after the shipwreck?

I have work before me, I know; but what would life be like without any difficulties! What a stupid life would Adam and Eve have led without sin! A true woman, Eve; disobedience gave the flavour to the fruit! Well, I have no objection to difficulties, and although I don't abide by the trash that gives chapter and verse about first causes, I know I have not been planted on this continent again for nothing.

(JL: 49)

At a stroke, Ward's character seems to be welcoming sin and disobedience (especially female disobedience), and insisting on predestination: Lyle is to have some mediating role "on this continent". At this stage, she has not revealed the villainous side to his nature, and so the reader is entitled to assume that she is showing some sympathy with Lyle's views, and that they may even be her own. When she is not seeing Lyle as a pawn in the hand of some greater power, as Judas was, she comes close to portraying him as Christlike; there are suggestions of suffering in our first sighting of him, which are bound to influence our reaction to his words quoted above. Strong resonances, from Messianic Isaiah to the New Testament crucifixion and resurrection, crowd the following extract; it is hard to believe they are coincidental:

His condition was forlorn enough; his clothes hung in shreds upon him, his hair was matted with brine, his body was sorely bruised, his hands and feet lacerated; but it must be confessed, that, in spite of the horrors he had witnessed, his spirits rose fresh and buoyant, as he remembered he was at liberty; though houseless, naked, cold, hungry, and bleeding, it was not in his nature to despair.

(JL: 48)

Almost everything Ward allows the reader to know about Lyle at this stage is positive. He is in "the prime of life, highly favoured in personal appearance, with the spirit of intelligence lighting his clear grey eye, and with the stamp of the better class upon his frame and countenance" (ibid.: 50). One cannot fail to note the string of qualifiers in the following description:

In his own estimation Lee was an ill-used, unfortunate man; and, as to the latter, truth to tell, his reasons for thinking so were not altogether fallacious.

He is a felon; but the circumstances which have brought him to his present condition have met with extenuation from some....

(ibid.: 54)

Who are these who would extenuate him? God? The author herself? The reader is being prepared by these qualifications for an equivocal view of Lyle; Ward's earlier villain, Clary's tormentor Silverly, had nothing to extenuate him, and neither does such a stock example of villainy as Cooper's Magua in Last of the Mohicans. Lyle is a villain with a difference. He tells the fearful deserter and convict, Martin Gray,

I had rather fall into the hands of God than those of man: here is space enough even for my free spirit, and with a little caution, and patience, and perseverance, I will take you into safe quarters for life! (ibid.:57)

Ironically, the words of a messiah, one might think, but the reader cannot ignore the strong overtones of Lucifer, too. Lyle is to be projected as a startling composite of both the Messiah and Lucifer.

The image we are given of Lyle foreshadows that of Nietzsche's Übermensch: he is supremely accomplished but Machiavellian in his amorality. Ward uses the word "mastermind" to describe him (ibid.: 189), and speaks of his psychological shrewdness "which stands bad men in stead of knowledge" (ibid.: 190).

We see him through Eleanor's dazzled eyes: he is "handsome, original, and clever" (ibid.: 238), with a "peculiar kind of cleverness, too, in his conversation...that of educated ability" (ibid.: 239 [original emphasis]). (Eventually, Sir John Manvers' second wife had persuaded her husband to send Jasper to Westminster School.) Eleanor discovered that he had "a lurking talent for sarcasm, not ill-natured, but irresistibly amusing" (ibid.: 239). "He had the talent of adapting himself to the habits and tasks of all classes and both sexes" (ibid.: 240). In accompanying commandos into the disputed border area, Lyle was a man of "comprehensive mind and dauntless courage"; he gladly undertook "the most difficult and dangerous services"; and he was "ever ready for the severer duties of the field". The soldiers adored him...[for his] spirit and efficiency....[and he] shared the privations of those he commanded, he was ever first in a

foray, and he was such an excellent sportsman, that his return with a foraging party was always welcomed by the hungry wanderers in the bush" (ibid.: 257).

This many-talented man was a skilful artist, and could also recite poetry, notably Byron's poetic drama "Cain: A Mystery".⁶ It seems likely that there is a reason for Ward's choice here; her readers, ever alert to allusion, would have recognised something of a coded message in this reference to Byron's audacious poem, and it provides a vital clue to our understanding of what Ward is aiming at. In Margaret Drabble's summary of the plot of "Cain" one can identify a close similarity between the difficulties of Cain and those of Lyle:

Cain, revolting against the heavy toil imposed upon him because of another's fault and bewildered how to reconcile the world he knows with the goodness of an omnipotent God, becomes a willing pupil of Lucifer and questions him about the problems of existence. Lucifer's teaching, exposing the ways of God to man, confirms Cain in his revolt.

(OCEL: 157)

Cain says, "That which I am, I am; I did not seek/ For life, nor did I make myself..." (III.509-10). Another speech Lyle might have used to impress his audience, because its sentiments echoed his own, is that made by Cain at the altar in defiance of God:

If a shrine without victim,
And altar without gore, may win thy favour,
Look on it! and for him who dresses it,
He is--such as thou mad'st him; and seeks nothing
Which must be won by kneeling: if he's evil,
Strike him! thou art omnipotent, and may'st,--
For what can he oppose? If he be good,
Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt! since all
Rests upon thee; and good and evil seem
To have no power in themselves, save in thy will;
And whether that be good or ill I know not,
Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
Omnipotence, but merely to endure
Its mandate; which thus far I have endured. (III.266-79)

⁶ The other work from which Lyle can quote is "Thalaba the Destroyer" by Robert Southey, published in 1801. Thalaba, a young Moslem, is appointed to destroy a race of magicians, which he does, sacrificing his life in doing so.

"Cain" was published in 1822, when Harriet Ward was fourteen, but the scandal the poetic drama caused, being condemned as blasphemous for its exaltation of Lucifer as an heroic figure opposing God in the manner of Milton's Satan,⁷ probably made its mark on a bookish girl.⁸ The challenge that Cain and Lucifer hurl at God is also Jasper Lyle's, as is the contorted sense of self-justification. "Byron strongly denied that the views of either Cain or Lucifer represented his own" (OCEL: 157). Unlike the notorious Byron, it was patently unnecessary for Harriet Ward, respectable writer, wife and mother, to make such a denial.

Perhaps the daring allusion to "Cain" is what brings about a reverse turn, before her character gets completely out of hand. This "deeply-designing man", this "clever, experienced, silver-tongued man", this "artful man" (ibid.: 243, 248, 256) ingratiates himself with Eleanor's family, and like many another youthful heroine of the time, she yields to parental persuasion and marries him. When, like Ward's own father, Mr Daveney loses all his savings in the failure of an Indian bank, and Lyle discovers Eleanor is not the heiress he supposed, his metamorphosis is horrifying; he openly admits the wedding documents were forgeries, and has insane fits, in which he rages like a wild beast. On one occasion he swings Eleanor by her hair. There are suggestions that the marriage is bigamous. Ward is at pains to show Lyle as irredeemably debased and beyond the pale of human society. How does one explain this ambivalence? The pattern of incompatible or contradictory messages, which is

⁷ I am indebted to Jerome J. McGann's text of "Cain" and the notes which accompany it in the Oxford Authors edition of Byron (Oxford: 1991).

⁸ Ward's is exactly the "highly sophisticated allusive style of a person who loves books" which R.H. Super sees as characteristic of Anthony Trollope (Super: 71). Here is a random and by no means conclusive list of writers to whom she alludes in the course of her writing: Shakespeare, Jeremy Taylor, Diderot, Rousseau, Isaac Newton, Samuel Johnson, Pope, Sterne, Hook, Defoe, Richardson, Charles Lamb, Wordsworth, Byron, Scott, Cobbett, Victor Hugo, Longfellow, Cooper, Bulwer Lytton, Captain Marryat, Maria Edgeworth, Mrs Opie, Miss Mitford, Mrs Hemans, Mrs Barbauld, Bourienne (Napoleon's biographer).

traceable throughout the novel, and indeed throughout Ward's oeuvre as a whole, makes itself felt here. The rifts and fissures indicate that she is negotiating a passage between expressing what she needs to from her deepest feelings, and maintaining an orthodox and thus acceptable persona as a popular Victorian woman novelist.

Having worked at discrediting Lyle, she proceeds to put into the mouth of this vicious criminal and renegade words that should persuade all that his insight into the sufferings of humanity is greater than that of any other character in the story. Lyle presents the frontier convincingly from the position of the aggrieved Xhosa:

...when I went back to my land, I spoke in council. I said you were under the feet of the English here; that you were not permitted to sit still in green places in your own territory; that you only wanted grazing-ground and patches of land to grow corn in; but that instead of rewarding you for refusing to help the Boers against the English, we have suffered your cattle and your land to be taken from you.

(JL: 289)

The reader is almost persuaded that the conclusion that Lyle proceeds to draw is the natural and just one:

Up, then, Amakosas, and at this roaring, ravaging lion.... Drive these greedy white men to the sea...divide this glorious country between you [and the Boers].... (289)

On 18 January 1846, a missionary, Henry Calderwood, had written a letter to Dr John Philip at the Cape, begging him to inform the government that the situation on the border was absolutely critical. What he says throws light on how closely Harriet Ward was reproducing in her novel the situation of the time.

[U]nless the government determine to understand the caffre question better than they now appear to do, it is almost certain that the Caffres will be destroyed, and our missions too, but not before a terrible blow shall have been inflicted on the colony....The feeling is deep and bitter in the extreme....The feelings of the nation seem now against all white men....The government had no just power to send engineers to survey ground for a post in Caffreland....Amongst all the vexatious questions between the Colonial government and the Caffres, the most vexatious is...the land question. The Caffres are so sensitive on this point that they cannot and will not consider any question calmly when that is mixed up with it....the land

question is a powerful engine by which the war party can work upon the feelings of the more peaceably inclined....The...mind of the nation is in a perfect fever on the land question....The Caffres can understand what it is to be punished for stealing and murder--but no argument will ever convince them that it is either just or reasonable to take their land from them...seeing, as they say, so much has been taken from them already....

(Quoted in Mostert: 862-3)

Before the war of 1846, according to Noel Mostert, the Xhosa did indeed enlist help from the Boers, after asking them "whether they did not see that the government was determined to annihilate the Boers". If they did not actively want to help, they were asked, why did they not stand aside so that the Xhosa might drive the English into the sea? (ibid.: 877-8)

Other cruelly abused classes of people are the focus of Lyle's discussion with Gray soon after this: the workers of the manufacturing towns of England and the "rightful owners" of the Cape frontier, the "Bushmen":

[I was condemned] to transportation as a traitor, because I took the side of justice and the oppressed. It is more manly to fight for the weak than for the strong. Talk of might against right in this country--I should like to know who are the rightful owners of it--why, those little nations, the Bushmen. As for justice, she may well be painted blind, for the strongest arm turns the scale....We left the Government in England riding rough-shod over the poor starving devils, and when the worms began to turn, the law, as they called it, crushed them with its iron heel. The lion of England is a mighty fine fellow to boast of, but wherever he stalks, he leaves the traces of his bloody paws.
(295)

This is powerful and convincing anti-imperialist and anti-establishment rhetoric, expressed in a credibly masculine turn of phrase. Ward appears in a hurry to deflate it, however, with words such as "specious reasoning" (290) and "sophistry" (296). Even the British army is attacked; Lyle calls soldiers "hired assassins" (295). (Had Ward's father been alive, it would have been difficult for her to write these words, even placed as they are in the mouth of a fictional and ostensibly villainous character, let alone to have conceived of them. They would have seemed profoundly treacherous, and like the sight of the

tricolour in English hands, would have caused him to grow white to the lips (ROS: 214). But in the genre in which she is working, it becomes possible to formulate and express the transgressive without catastrophic consequences, though possibly with a sense of liberation.

Lyle distinguishes himself as a true friend to the working class from "those who sat safely at their desks in dusty offices, and made promises which gained them popularity at the time, but which they never intended to perform" (295-6), which would seem to be a reference to the Chartist leaders James Ward disparages in the article discussed in the next section of this chapter: "They were the traitors and deserters; they have pocketed the price of blood, and are at work again...deluding the people into the assemblies...only to bring the troops upon them" (296). Gray may be ignoring this rhetoric, but the reader must be affected by the conviction behind the words: "I am one of those who have been banished by my country for taking part with the ill-used, the poor, and the weak" (300).

The authenticity and sincerity of Ward's development of Lyle's character is fascinating. What drives her to create such a character? One would speculate that she is motivated by a deep and hidden conviction, or perhaps an unconscious suspicion, that the Chartists have a legitimate grievance with regard to the ill-treatment of the working classes in England, even though by supporting such a political stance she would be in radical revolt against the conservative principles of her father. She could hardly fail to feel that this was "a deep treacherous undercurrent" (HH: 39) in herself. Perhaps her sympathy is based on acquaintance with renegade Chartists in Grahamstown or among the men or officers of John Ward's regiment. Her work shows a natural tendency too to side with the "ill-used, the poor, and the weak", as witness her concern for the intolerable conditions the wives of the soldiers in the ranks suffered when they travelled with the regiment.

If one had not been detecting through all Ward's work a subterranean tendency towards rebellion and opposition to the patriarchal establishment, one would be bewildered by what Ward is doing in Jasper Lyle. She appears to leave the reader floundering, unable to know what to believe of her character Jasper Lyle, what to fathom of her authorial intentions, what to make of the ruptures in the narrative. The reader's reliance on an omniscient controlling power in the novel is undermined. With almost post-structuralist skill, Ward is demonstrating in dramatic microcosm the view current at the time that the world had become an insecure and treacherous place. Matthew Arnold's words written in 1880 are relevant to the perception of thinking people in the mid-nineteenth century that all had become unstable:

There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve.

(Quoted in Gilmour: 3)

The first half of the century was a period of deep insecurity, as previously unquestioned beliefs and institutions came under examination. The 1840s in particular were dominated by the threat of social revolution, as the working classes vehemently expressed their dissatisfaction with parliament and their desire for more political power. These words from J.A. Froude's Carlyle's Life in London (1884) are a vivid reminder of the sense in the 1840s that the world was on the edge of chaos:

It was an era of new ideas, of swift if silent spiritual revolution....All were agreed to have done with compromise and conventionalities....All round us, the intellectual lightships had broken from their moorings....The present generation which has grown up in an open spiritual ocean and has learnt to swim for itself will never know what it was to find the lights all drifting, the compasses all awry, and nothing left to steer by but the stars.

(K.A. Tillotson: 125)

Ward's desperate wrestling with her representative of the age, Jasper Lyle, is a type of the vertiginous circling of the abyss experienced on a grand scale by most contemporary writers, readers and thinkers.

2. Chartism

A "condition-of-England" phenomenon, to quote Thomas Carlyle's phrase,⁹ which raised conflicting responses in the breasts of writers in the 1840s was that of Chartism. This movement took its name from the People's Charter in 1838, by which the working classes expressed their discontent with the failed attempts to reform the parliamentary system from which they were excluded. Their demands included universal male suffrage, annual parliaments, and no property qualifications for members of parliament. Although the middle- and upper-classes were in a state of fairly continuous alarm for the next ten years, there were few really violent outbreaks, and the army easily kept under control any meetings which threatened to become dangerous. But many labourers were out of work and the air of discontent in the "hungry forties" was palpable.

Thomas Carlyle's important work, Chartism (1840), was a key document of the time. While declaring that "Chartism means the bitter discontent grown fierce and mad, the wrong condition therefore or the wrong disposition, of the Working Classes of England", he recognised it as "the cry of pent-up millions suffering under a diseased condition of society" (Carlyle: 2-3), and imagined hunger preying on the labourer, causing his "discontent, his real misery" (ibid.: 13). "[A]nd if Chartism numbered by the million and half, taking nothing but its iron-hooped Petition, breaks out into brickbats, cheap pikes, and even into the sputterings of conflagration, such very general feeling cannot be considered unnatural" (ibid.: 1). While wary of the disruption it threatened, he presented a balanced and often sympathetic viewpoint. "To say that it is mad, incendiary, nefarious, is no answer" (ibid.: 3). "What will execration; nay at bottom, what will condemnation and banishment to Botany Bay do for it?" (ibid.: 3) "Delirious Chartism will not have raged entirely to no purpose...if it have forced all thinking men of

⁹ The first chapter of Chartism is called: "Condition-of-England Question" (Carlyle: 1).

the community to think of this vital matter, too apt to be overlooked otherwise" (ibid.: 3).

It is impossible to know whether Ward were familiar with Carlyle's Chartism. It is quite likely. Everything he says in the same work on the Irish question would have found an echo with her own feelings on the matter. "The 'Sanspotatoe' is of the very same stuff as the superfinest Lord Lieutenant" (ibid.:25). "Figure thyself, O high-minded, clear-headed, clean-burnished reader, clapt by enchantment into the torn coat and waste hunger-lair of that same root-devouring brother man!--" (ibid.: 25-6). "We English pay, even now, the bitter smart of long centuries of injustice to our neighbour Island" (ibid.: 27). "England is guilty towards Ireland, and reaps at last, in full increase, the fruit of fifteen generations of wrong-doing" (ibid.: 27-8). Ward follows Carlyle in seeing emigration as a solution to Ireland's problems.

Judging by her irritation with class discrimination, clearly discernible in all her work, Ward would have responded positively to much in The People's Charter. This was published in London in May 1838, the work of Chartist William Lovett (1800-1877). Here are two of its clauses:

2. That all men are born equally free, and have certain natural and inalienable rights....
4. That all hereditary distinctions of birth are unnatural, and opposed to the equal rights of man; and therefore ought to be abolished. (Lovett: 1967 [1877]: 59)

Ward may even have adapted Lovett's phrase "hawks and owls of society" to express her own scorn of of upper-class families such as Ormsby's: "they were among that class of English owls who fancy themselves eagles, especially in their own country" (JL: 427). What Lovett wrote is as follows:

For, while a large portion of the hawks and owls of society were seeking to perpetuate that state of mental darkness most favourable to the securing of their prey, another portion, with more cunning, were for admitting a sufficient amount of mental glimmer to cause the multitude to walk quietly and contentedly in paths their wisdom had prescribed for them. (Lovett 1967 [1877]: 111)

What can be accepted, in spite of the many imponderables here, is that Ward on occasion shared radical views with some of the most radical thinkers of her day.

By the time Harriet Ward came to write Jasper Lyle, three important novels with Chartism as their theme had been published: Disraeli's Sybil (1845), Mrs Gaskell's Mary Barton (1848) and Charles Kingsley's Alton Locke (1850). John Sutherland identifies an early work of fiction focussing on Chartism: "Harriet Martineau's story 'A Manchester Strike' in her Illustrations of Political Economy (1835) is arguably the first true example of the genre" (LCVF: 592). Being a champion of the artisan class, she looked forward to democracy as welcome and inevitable, as this letter to Richard Monckton Milnes shows in 1842:

Are you prepared, if you live to be old, to part with a good many of your social privileges? It is coming to that, depend upon it. We are not far from such a bouleversement as will throw every man of you on his manliness....The smuggest of you will be shaken out of your nests and happy those who can fly, and not flutter or droop, in such a tempest as is driving up. We may get over this year quietly; but not thirty years,--not twenty,--in my belief.
(Quoted in Pichanick: 151)¹⁰

Writers were seen by the working classes to be powerful propagandists for the cause, and by the middle classes to be weapons against this cause: in her Autobiography, Martineau remembers that when Louis-Philippe fled in 1848, "the wife of a cabinet minister asked me 'to use my power over the working classes to bring them to reason,' etc., etc." (ii: 297). Disraeli's novel Sybil was designed to encourage reform within the Tory party and involves a Chartist riot. There is no doubt,

¹⁰ One of Martineau's Illustrations of Political Economy was a bestseller, a work called Life in the Wilds (1834). It tells the story of the survival of a party of English settlers in South Africa, after they have been left destitute by a clan of "Bushmen", "a race of men, more fierce than wild beasts and full of cunning" (3). As Martineau had never visited South Africa, there is not much authentic detail to this sober tale of a settlement re-establishing itself. But Ward may have known of it; it bears similarities to Hardy and Hunter.

as Kathleen Tillotson remarks, "that the novel gains something in prestige, is redeemed from mere entertainment, when it reflects upon the urgent preoccupations of its time" (K.A.Tillotson: 123), a conviction that would have motivated Ward.

But sympathetic as Disraeli, Gaskell and Kingsley were, they were also very nervous of potential violence and consequently of showing too much support for the working class. Raymond Williams rightly singles out Mary Barton as the most moving response in literature to the industrial suffering of the 1840s, but suggests that in the end Mrs Gaskell was unable to come to terms with such violence as John Barton's act of murder. "The fear that the working people might take matters into their own hands was widespread and characteristic" (Williams: 145). With Disraeli, Gaskell and Kingsley, and their middle- and upper-class readers. "[r]ecognition of evil was balanced by fear of becoming involved. Sympathy was transformed, not into action, but into withdrawal" (ibid.: 163). Perhaps something of the complexity of these emotions will help to cast light on the confusion the reader is left with at the end of Jasper Lyle.

1848 began with rioting in England and on the Continent, but it soon became clear that England had escaped the revolutions of Europe. Chartism died a failure after a final peaceful procession on 10 April 1848. When Jasper Lyle appeared, the movement was a spent force, but the issues it had raised were still highly topical. In the early thirties, Harriet Ward's father had been stationed in Glasgow as riots threatened (ROS: 210-15).¹¹ As a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, Colonel Tidy "grew white to the lips" as he beheld the subjects of the King of England bearing the flag of republican France among them, as a symbol of English

¹¹ Carlyle's words in Chartism (1840) indicate where his sympathies lie: "'Glasgow Thuggery,' 'Glasgow Thugs;' it is a witty nickname" (Carlyle: 3). The COD defines "thug" as "Member of association (suppressed by British, 1830-40) of professional robbers, and murderers, strangling their victims, in India; (transf.) cut-throat, ruffian, rough".

liberty" (ibid.: 214). Though he led his troops with a sense of fair play at this time, his anti-republican feeling must have left its mark on his daughter. (Her character Charles sends a ball through the tricolour in Helen Charteris, an action Colonel Tidy would no doubt have cheered.) Her allegiance at the time of writing Recollections of an Old Soldier is evident from the tone of the following account:

But even in the difficult days to which I refer, when the voice of Reform was making itself heard, being pressed out, so to speak, from crowded thoroughfares and noisome lanes of manufacturing towns, [Colonel Tidy] managed to keep on excellent terms with the civil authorities at Glasgow, while at the same time he did his duty as a soldier.

(ibid.: 210).

She conveys a sense of the tension felt at the time, and her attitude to the Chartists at this stage is hardly sympathetic, reflecting as it does her father's convictions:

These monster meetings were particularly distasteful to Colonel Tidy. From one end of the Green to the other, the stream of people poured on, and although, considering their numbers, great order was preserved, it was well known that a feather would have turned the scale. The tragedy at Bristol proved how necessary it was to have men of great firmness of purpose in command of the military departments in manufacturing towns; but it was still more difficult to combine the determination of a resolute spirit with that suavity of manner which, in refusing concessions either to the secretly disaffected, or to the Authorities who dared not openly oppose them, satisfied them that the refusal proceeded from a sense of duty, apart from personal considerations of political partyism. (ibid.: 213)

What is extraordinary is that years later her attitude to the rebels appears to have undergone radical transformation. One must surmise that her experience on the frontier had made her identify more strongly with the rejected and the marginalised.

This is the background to the strange act of ventriloquism Ward seems to be essaying as Lyle utters his stirring radical speeches. Ward's consciousness of England's escape from violent political change is apparent in this sentence: it had been, she says, "a time when other nations were shaken to their centre by the thunders of republican eloquence" (JL: 391). On the same page as the review of Five Years in Kaffirland in the Cape Town

Mirror, there is an item of "News of the Week": "Several of the Chartist leaders--among them Fussell, Williams and Vernon--have been found guilty under the Sedition Act, and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment" (26.9.1848: 26). This might have caught Ward's eye. Another item that might have played its part in the plot of Jasper Lyle was an article in Bentley's Miscellany of July 1848, identified by the Wellesley Index as being by James Ward. Harriet Ward is likely to have seen this, probably after having checked that her own article, "Temper", had not yet appeared in Bentley's Miscellany. (It would do so the following month.) Although James Ward's article is called "How I became a Chartist", it is obviously fiction, and the writer is using the vehicle to indict certain of the Chartist leaders for abusing the working class for their own gain. The superior, middle-class Tory tone can be gauged from the following:

The mind of a mechanic-chartist [sic] is a psychological curiosity--hard, unbendable, cramped, and crotchety--narrow in its views, strong in its prejudices, violent in expression, and weak in judgment....But let us do justice to the mechanical class, many of whom are excellent men, of good, honest intentions, and sincerely believe that they are performing a sacred duty to their fellow men and to themselves in following and advocating the principles of Chartism. (103)

This is an outsider's point of view, very different from the feeling inherent in Carlyle's views, or the sympathetic involvement and face-to-face encounter of Mrs Gaskell with those suffering real hardship in the slums of England's industrial cities, or from Lyle's depiction of the working classes as "the oppressed" (JL: 295) and "the ill-used, the poor, and the weak" (ibid.: 300). James Ward's disparaging attitude is reflected in the view of the Chartists held by almost all the characters of Jasper Lyle, and shared by the characters of Helen Charteris. Harriet Ward's own stance seems to be camouflaged. The industrial situation was not one she had ever experienced on-the-spot. For once, like Maria Edgeworth, she was probably forced to glean information at second-hand, perhaps from disaffected English renegades in Grahamstown itself. What is interesting is the symbolic connection between "chartered vagabonds" (Ward's name for soldiers and their wives [ROS: 29]), the name Charteris, and

Chartism itself. There is perhaps a covert reference in the name Charteris to a declaration of rights, an allowed but restricted liberty, a restrained form of freedom. The words are based on the Old French word chartre, which is in turn derived from the Latin cartula or c(h)arta and the Greek chartes, meaning a sheet of paper, the concealed weapon that was to hand for Harriet Ward, when she had begun to identify with the "Other" on the frontier.

James Ward begins his description of how "he" became a Chartist in a clubbable style: "You ask me, my dear fellow, 'How I became a Chartist?'" (101). He then goes on to paint the indolent lifestyle, lacking in excitement, which causes him "mechanically" to follow a crowd flocking into a theatre. Only now do the parallels with Jasper Lyle's own history become clear:

...I wanted excitement--a change--anything, in short, that held out the prospect of a new career; and my education, and my facility of expressing myself in public...hurried me into chartism [sic].... It also opened a new vein in my character...I allude to my excessive vanity and love of exhibition, at any and almost every cost of character. It is my cardinal sin, that same vanity. (103)

Like Lyle, the narrator makes a strongly radical speech and becomes a popular character.

My speech was listened to with the greatest attention; its violent language was applauded to the echo, and I was earnestly solicited...to become one of them....The Chartists, for a time, were delighted with me as one of their leaders, from the facility I had of speech-making, and the practical knowledge of business I had picked up in my profession. It was also flattering to their notions that one of the class above them should fall in with their views, and chime in with their sentiments and ideas. (103)

The narrator is arrested and condemned, and seems to be writing from Sydney, Australia. He maintains that

the most energetic and unscrupulous of the [Chartist leaders] had been disappointed men; some through sheer misfortune, more through incapacity, but most of all through indolence and inattention to their respective pursuits in life. They were all bruised and broken reeds, whose folly had exposed them, like myself, to the rude winds of adversity....In short, I am convinced that, when a man is fit for no useful occupation--or, in other words, is regularly used-up, he will then do for a Chartist; and...the majority of their leaders...were precisely in that condition. They only lived upon the misfortunes of others; having been victimised themselves, either by their own

imprudence or incapacity. A bad harvest, denoting scarcity of food, or, in other words, destitution to millions, was a god-send for them; as they knew by that means the masses would become excited from want of employment, and therefore easily persuaded to part with their pence, under the vain illusion that some remedy might be obtained for their ever-recurring grievances. (105-6)

The article ends by insisting that the Chartists have no case for social reform, and that "subordination in rank is essential to the existence of society; that the theory of universal equality in wealth and condition is directly opposed to reason and experience" (106). One senses that this view, though that of Harriet Ward's Tory connections, is not one that she subscribes to, and that having read James Ward's dismissal of the legitimacy of the Chartist cause, she is determined to show it as unjust. (Incidentally, it would be interesting to explore whether James Ward were a connection of Harriet Ward's, and that she had yet another reason for reacting to his conservative views.)

3. Redemption and the Wilderness

One can see how Harriet Ward's fertile imagination might begin to work on her own story with this account of James Ward's before her of how a misguided man of privilege and education could abuse his position for selfish and ego-flattering purposes. However, in her story of Jasper Lyle, there is a subtlety and complexity of character not to be found in James Ward's. Lyle has outstanding abilities but unlike James Ward's hero, is offered as genuinely wicked. Although the crime of gun-running provides him with a livelihood, it has a more important motive. The fomenting of war between the English and the Xhosa and the Boers seems to be part of a desire for a bitter revenge on the establishment which has betrayed him by denying him his birthright and making a decent life impossible for him. (There are echoes of Ward's own resentment that she as a woman had been denied her birthright, as she expresses it in Recollections of an Old Soldier.)

Ward's development of Lyle's character has a sound and surprisingly modern psychological and sociological basis. Sir John Manvers refuses to recognise the part he has played in what his son has become, the "first causes" for which he is responsible. Deprived of the love of father and mother, and of the familial stability which would have encouraged his personality, with all its potential, to develop normally, Lyle is attracted to the underworld, where self and self-preservation are all-important. His intelligence helps him to manipulate the system, while a deep and hidden cynicism reinforces his conviction that he and others are unlovable and essentially worthless. A cruel God has victimised him, and his revenge is to prey upon others. One remembers the anguish of Satan, circling paradise and forever excluded from it, able to assuage his pain only by tormenting others.

In this delineation of a complex and suffering character, there is clearly authorial identification and extenuation. The death Lyle undergoes by torture and crucifixion at the hands of the Xhosa is emblematic of his life. The unanswerable question hovers: why does a loving God allow the originally innocent to suffer? In Cain's mouth, the problem becomes heretical:

...good and evil seem
 To have no power in themselves, save in thy will;
 And whether that be good or ill I know not,
 Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
 Omnipotence, but merely to endure
 Its mandate. ('Cain': III. 274-9)

Zoonah, Lyle's chief torturer, translates the question into Manichaeian terms: "You know not even whether he [God] is black or white" (114), that is, evil or good.

If Harriet Ward were conscious of what she was doing, this novel must be seen as astonishing for its time. Her oblique advocacy of the rights of the Xhosa and the Boers through Lyle's impassioned speeches cannot easily be brushed aside as merely the calculated and manipulatory utterances of a self-serving criminal. If one spells out a case, even as devil's advocate, one

must expect that case to be seriously considered, if only briefly. The possibility must be faced that serious consideration may convince one's hearer of the merits of the case. Would the writer risk this if her heart were not already partly in what she seems to be advocating? Clearly, received beliefs are being challenged here.

Ward calls the crucifixion scene a "tragic drama" (JL: 417), and though the act occurs offstage, it is the climax of the novel, and is one of the most disturbing descriptions in early South African literature. No longer is Lyle the agent, but, as Ward makes plain in the repeated use of the word, he is the victim of violence. The emphasis is not on authorial vengeance exacted on an evil character, but on the author's compassion and understanding of the way that character's life has evolved. (Ward deals far more summarily with the hardly villainous young Mrs. Leycester in Helen Charteris.) Even Zoonah and the other Xhosa, warriors and women, eerily silent and dancing at the death, are seen as tools in God's ambivalent plan, rather than agents on their own behalf. Zoonah has played a part in casting doubt on the benevolence of God when he questions May, the Christian convert: "'You say that Umtiko [Tiko: God] is good,' said Zoonah; 'how do you know?' " (113). "'Sin means pleasing one's self'" (113). (One is reminded of Laura's teasing statement in Helen Charteris: "'What a pity it is, my dear Archdeacon, that the sins of this world are so pleasant! You are old now, and have had your day; but confess that, when you were younger, you were much more ready and happy to do wrong than right'" [HC 1853: 53]). Zoonah sees a harsh God: "'The invisible God you talk of says, 'Obey me, and do nothing that pleases yourself.' The visible man says, 'Enjoy earth, and all that belongs to it, and be happy'" (113). These thoughts had obviously crossed the author's mind too.

Ward starts to prepare us for Lyle's redemption some time before the end of the novel. Nurse Watson, his foster mother,

sees that he is not bad-hearted, "though without firm principles" (382). We feel the injustice in his father's allowing the world to believe that Lyle is illegitimate: "the father tacitly stamped the brand of illegitimacy on the brow of his first-born" (386) and we are invited to remember the mark God places upon Cain's forehead to separate him from every other human being. Early in the novel, the narrator makes the point that "in a word, Lee [Lyle] knew himself to be a marked man" (88). The ten-year-old boy in the dock is movingly described looking "half-wonderingly" at the magistrate's face (388). The child's remoteness from normal loving human relations is indicated with a powerful touch of realism: he "drew his curly locks against his large speaking eyes, and strove to shut out the sight of [his step-mother] who stood before him as an angel of compassion" (388). Lyle's fate as an outcast is stressed even when he is at Westminster: "he never forgot, that [after a fight], though victory was his, there were few to cheer him, while the vanquished boy [Clarence Fairfax] was surrounded by friends" (242). In highlighting Lyle's sensitivity, Ward has moved far from a simplistic portrayal of villainy and insists instead on victimhood.

Although it is Sir John's remorse that is under discussion in the statement, "the thief on the cross was justified and pardoned at the last moment" (392), the seed is sown for its later application to Lyle. Ward is intent on showing where the guilt truly lies: with Manvers and the society he represents: "All the sophistry in the world could not veil the sin he had committed against the helpless, unoffending infant, the legacy of his ill-starred Mary" (392). The connotations of the words "sin", "unoffending" and "ill-starred" cannot be ignored in the interests of an inclination to delineate Lyle as villain and nothing more. By way of contrast, one remembers once more the irredeemably wicked Magua in Cooper's Last of the Mohicans, an unmistakably clear-cut depiction of villainy.

When Lyle escapes after his arrest, once the Boers and the Xhosa are beaten by the British soldiers, he is driven by a spasm

of remorse to think of the convict Gray and to see his own wife, Eleanor, and with that the process of his redemption begins. "There are moments in the lives of evil men over which good angels hold their sway" (410). As he looks into the startled face of his wife, "[he] felt as if he could have said something kind, but did not know how" (411). This sharply visualised scene is enacted twice, once from Eleanor's point of view and once from Lyle's. It obviously has profound significance as an attempt at penitence and a request for forgiveness.

It is as though Lyle has become the scapegoat for the sins of all the occupants of the disputed territory of the frontier. As if to reinforce the Biblical image of the goat symbolically driven into the desert, when Lyle is captured by the Xhosa, he is "in search of freedom in the beautiful [but treacherous] desert" (416). The details of his crucifixion are emphatic: his arms are "stretched out, and fastened to two wide-spreading branches of the noble tree [an oak]...there were the marks of heavy blows upon the fine athletic limbs...and the body was transpierced by assegais....[T]he victim, for the first time in his life, called upon God to have mercy on him, the sinner" (416).

The language is exalted and becomes progressively more Biblical and more ironical in its cadence:

And Zoonah was there--Zoonah, who, in early youth, had been fostered and kindly trained by white men, and taught what God was, and how all the beautiful and pleasant gifts of the earth came from God--and Zoonah mocked him, and cried aloud--

"Is your God black or white?" (416)

As I have pointed out, Ward calls the scene a "tragic drama", hardly the way to describe the death of a miscreant who deserves his fate, and she reminds us of the torn veil of the temple in declaring that the crucifixion oak was riven by lightning some time afterwards, thus finding a final telling parallel between Lyle's death and Christ's.

With Lyle's death, then, the way is cleared for hope and new life for the other characters. However, it is not the characters that hold our attention at the end, but the troubled Eden that is the Cape frontier itself. The mood is optimistic:

And then, as exciting intelligence from Southern Africa was filling the papers of the day, [Eleanor] asked, "Is their any news from Kafirland?" (431)

In the end, in spite of the harrowing crucifixion scene, and the sympathy evoked for Lyle, a wronged and rejected child, and a victim of the class system through his low-born mother, of the social system which could expose a child to the criminal life of the city streets, and of the intolerance and rashness of the colonial decision-makers,¹² a sense of propriety demands a violent death for so outrageous and dissident a rebel. And yet, the novel, with its powerful rhetoric, conveys the impression that Ward underwent some satisfaction in being able to speak with an insurgent's voice through Lyle, in being able to put forward her recognition, half-acknowledged in Five Years in Kaffirland, of the injustice of the British occupation of the disputed areas of the frontier, and her dissatisfaction with the government in power. The character Ward has created (named Jasper, with the word's meanings of "a precious stone", "a fine hard porcelain") moves beyond its origins in her fascination with Byronic romantic energy, and becomes in some sense an alter ego. There is regret at the waste of so much potential, talent, charm, skill and intelligence, due to the "sins of the father" having been visited on the child. There are echoes here of the wasted life of a similarly burdened human being, Clary. All Ward can do for her hero-villain is to give him a barbaric but sublime and memorable finale, and by doing so, she leaves the reader with many unanswered questions.

Next to this richly challenging, powerful and penetrating story, most of the novels set in South Africa which follow seem

¹² Lyle is killed by the Ngqikas ("Gaikas"), enemies of his ally Mhala, who see and kill a white man at a time of strong anti-white feeling.

facile and superficial, particularly the many "boy's own" hunting yarns, for example, those by Captain Marryat and R.M. Ballantyne. As Malvern van Wyk Smith has made clear, Ward is the first to engage with the complexities inherent in the colonial situation in Southern Africa; she is the first to touch on "the drama of domicile and the redemptive powers of a wilderness-eden that would only become explicit in later fiction" (van Wyk Smith 1990 [1]: 12).

Though this novel was her most successful work, she never again produced anything so unusual or controversial. Her next two novels are mild and moral, and could never quicken the pulse of the sweet young thing for whom they were intended. Her next adventure story is indeed a "boy's own story", set in a tame and domesticated Eastern Cape, the industrious emigrant's paradise rather than a redemptive one. While it is very different from those in the genre written by males, with its regretful attitude towards the slaughter that hunting occasions, and its emphasis on domestic detail, she certainly did not attempt to break any new ground here. On the contrary, almost every incident in Hardy and Hunter is a re-cycling of something she has previously described. Though it would have served as a useful and realistic guide to the intending emigrants Ward saw as its market, it is fairly mundane. In writing the conventional and moralistic Hester Fleming and also possibly the now lost Lizzy Dorian in the same series,¹³ she is starting to "padlock her lips", and practice "self surveillance" once more, and this process is continued in Hardy and Hunter. The preface to Hester Fleming includes these thought-provoking words:

¹³ Judging from Hester Fleming, J. H. Jackson published uplifting works, suitable for the Sabbath. In the end-pages of Hester Fleming are advertisements for books by the same publisher with titles such as Redeeming Love, Married Life and Importunate Prayer, mostly by reverends. Daniel, Bishop of Calcutta, contributed The Christian's Struggle Against Sin and Satan and A Pastoral Address to Female Servants. Mary Howard Ballantyne wrote Rhodes Chambers, A Sunday School Boy, and the only other woman writer mentioned is Maria Manley of St Stephen's Vicarage, Saltash, who wrote Edith Montague; or, Where is your treasure?

But, above all, I desire to offer a few sisterly hints to my own sex on the real nature of their position with regard to the other. A woman's influence from first to last, is a guide and prop of man's existence. (vi)

This may be an oblique reference to Mrs Ellis, or a backward glance to her earlier belief that women could and should guide the course of political events.

If Lizzy Dorian were based on "Married Soldiers in the Army", as I have suggested, it would be an exposé of the difficulties suffered by the wives of soldiers in the army; this interest and her concern with emigration, and with jobbery in the services are the relatively uncontroversial and predictable causes she now takes up. One can only speculate about what guided her decision to "come into the fold", as she shows her heroines Helen Charteris and Amayeka also choosing to do. It is likely to be the recognition that there is really no other choice for herself or for her heroines; submission to patriarchal order is in the end and despite resistance inevitable. It should be clear that she strongly identifies with the sexual/racial transgressive "Other", which provides the archetypes for Clary, Amayeka, and Jasper Lyle.

4. Speaking for the Marginalised: Amakeya and Amayeka

Of great interest to the modern reader of Jasper Lyle is the love story of the daughter of the Xhosa chief Doda, Amayeka, and the convict and deserter Martin Gray. Ward introduces into South African fiction a theme which was to dominate the genre: that of transracial love, a theme she has already explored to haunting effect in Helen Charteris. At the same time, she gives expression to a different "voice from Cafferland", one almost never heard, that of the female indigene. One would agree with Crais that in creating their negative stereotypes of the African as a character

and body which demanded domination, the settler élite were creating a predominantly masculine "gendered image" of the Xhosa:

The colonial perception of the sexual division of labour reinforced what amounted to a masculinization of the African character. In doing so African women came to occupy a position of victimized passivity in colonial discourse.

(Crais: 244, n. to 138)

Ward is the first writer ever to consider it worthwhile to imagine the thoughts of a South African indigenous woman; and the sensitivity with which she does this, together with the degree of interiority she achieves, is remarkable. To be able to do so is witness to her facility in overcoming the tendency towards "Othering". As Jenny de Reuck says,

There is not, and never can be, a "pure" indigenous voice, unmediated by the discursive and material practices of the imperialist conquerors. Recovering a lost tradition of women's voice(s) on those sites where they may once have been inscribed is a significant item on the agenda of western feminism.

(de Reuck 1995: 38)

The disinterment of Harriet Ward's mediation of one hitherto lost voice holds interest for the post-colonial critic. (And not to be forgotten is Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's caution that the first-world feminist intent on defending third-world women and their rights needs to avoid presumption and condescension: "Can the subaltern speak? What must the elite do to watch out for the continuing construction of the subaltern? The question of 'woman' seems most problematic in this context. Clearly, if you are poor, black and female you get it in three ways" [Spivak: 90].)

Once again, of course, there are conflicting signals in Ward's depiction of the "Other"; as can be seen from her attempts to portray the Xhosa in Five Years in Kaffirland, and Clary in Helen Charteris, the discourses available to her, particularly in the colonial situation, are problematic; she can be seen to be struggling to find a new mode to convey what she experiences. One senses that she is looking for a bridge that will somehow overcome the alienation that colonial discursive usage characteristically maintains. Instead of the (masculine) colonial strategy of forcing a distance between settler and Xhosa

by means of artificial borders and frontiers, Ward's sympathetic approach, as a woman, to the plight of Xhosa women, has the converse effect of attempting to remove barriers and reconcile rather than estrange. This she is successful in achieving with the depiction of the real-life Amakeya, but her treatment of the partly "white" Amayeka is less so.

Dorothy Driver, in discussing the representation of self in Lady Anne Barnard's Cape Journals, notices "Barnard's occasional propensity not just to recognise but also to inhabit the position of the 'other'....[T]his departure often appears to have been made possible by way of gender; that is, through the writer's awareness of the social construction of the self which comes through an awareness of her social construction as 'woman'....Her writing thus registers the awkward fit between women writing, current stereotypes of femininity, and women's cultural situation" (Driver 1995: 48-50). A number of other writers on colonialism have argued that nineteenth-century women from Europe, feeling themselves to be marginalised, were therefore especially sympathetic to the men and women they encountered in the colonial world who were even more marginalised than they. Catherine Barnes Stevenson is one such writer. Sara Mills agrees that "[i]t is true that the way women and Africans were discussed is similar: simple, childlike, deceitful, passive, not capable of intellectual thought, and more closely allied to nature" (Mills: 92). (How much truer this is of the way African women were perceived.) Mills points out, however, the fallacy in an argument such as Stevenson's:

What Stevenson's analysis ignores is precisely the difference in power relations between the western women travellers and the people amongst whom they travelled. This analysis also lacks a way of explaining why it was that although some women travellers expressed some affiliation with the other nation, many did not, and also those that did express affiliation, at other points in their text expressed a belief that the colonised nations were in fact inferior to western nations. (ibid.: 92)

While one must acknowledge the necessity of such a caveat, it seems to me that Harriet Ward, having to some extent found her own voice, identifies with those never heard, and welcomes the

opportunity to give these a voice and to show that these, like her early self, are by no means wordless or thoughtless, though assumed to be such. If this seems insufferably patronising and typically colonial on Ward's part, viewed from the perspective of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Laura E. Donaldson and others, I think in the circumstances it was an impulse that was courageous, innovative and benevolent in intention. Ward's motives seem different from those of Aphra Behn and white feminist critics, castigated by Ros Ballaster:

Behn's white female narrator has the twentieth-century white feminist critic's fascination with the black woman as embodying material otherness. She inspects and puts on show the black woman's suffering but ultimately refuses to "comprehend" it. Here, then, the figure of the black woman becomes purely iconic, the mute bearer of female suffering on to whom the white female subject can project her own hysteria and be left at liberty to write. In our own project of "self-fashioning", those white feminist critics concerned to comprehend the mutual articulations of gender and race must beware of constructing their own "other" in the black woman, suppressing the conflict between racial interests within the politics of gender. (Ballaster: 293-4)

Ward seems to achieve a degree of empathy these writers do not, and there is no suggestion of constructing an "Other"; on the contrary.¹⁴

It is instructive to watch the way in which Ward's narrative technique progresses from the factual account she gives of Maqoma's daughter Amakeya in Five Years in Kaffirland, through a semi-fictionalised version as short story in a periodical, to the fully-imagined fiction of the romance in Jasper Lyle. Her imagination seems to catch fire as she ponders the true story of the Xhosa maiden who is willing to offer herself to a British colonel in exchange for her father's freedom and his return to his own lands, instead of the fate of banishment to Algoa Bay as decreed by the authorities at the end of the Seventh Frontier War. She sees Amakeya as an example of "filial devotion" (Five Years ii: 269), a subject shown on many occasions to be close to her heart, and a chord of fellow feeling is struck. The first

¹⁴ A brief discussion of Behn's Oroonoko will follow.

mention of Amakeya is however rather caustic, with a notable lack of female solidarity. Extraordinarily, though, she shows little tendency to make use of "Othering":

Macomo's eldest daughter is the belle of [Fort Hare] camp; she is one of nature's coquettes, and attitudinizes, exhibits her teeth, affects bashfulness and mirth, as suits the taste of her admirers, and is as great an adept in the art of mute flirtation as any beauty at Almack's, or Ascot.
(ibid. ii: 106)

But one hundred and sixty pages and some months later, as is the nature of journal writing, Harriet Ward has a different view; the initially annoyingly enchanting young woman is now accorded some stature:

[A]s a last trial, [Maqoma's] daughter, Amakeya, the beauty of Kaffirland, made her way to the tent of Colonel Campbell, 91st Regiment, who, totally unprepared for her appearance, was yet more astonished at the sacrifice she offered, if her father's sentence of banishment might be rescinded.

I have elsewhere mentioned Amakeya as the belle of the camp at Fort Hare, and no doubt she had been sufficiently reminded of her charms to make her sensible of the value of them. She made her strange offer in all the consciousness and pride of beauty; and with her finely-moulded arms folded before her, she spoke without hesitation, for she was guided by motives worthy a lofty cause [sic]-motives, how desecrated! how degraded! Poor Amakeya! (ibid.: 278-9)

In spite of these last words, Ward's affiliation is indicated by the simplicity and sincerity of the direct speech she reports for Amakeya, with its suggestion of the language of the Old Testament:

"If her father might remain on his own lands," she said, "she would be the sacrifice and guarantee for his future good faith towards the white man. She would leave her own people, and follow Colonel Campbell; his home should be hers; she would forsake all, and dwell with him. This was her last word, her final decision, and she would abide by it."
(ibid.: 279)

Her acknowledgement of the significance of Amakeya's sacrifice is driven home in an important statement, lest the reader should suspect that the standards of behaviour in Xhosa women are inferior to those of English women:

It may here be observed, that the young girls of Kaffirland are brought up with strict notions of female propriety; to forfeit their reputation, is to entail on themselves severe punishment, and on their families perpetual disgrace.

(ibid.: 279-80)

(Barrow had commented in 1801, "A Kaffer woman is chaste and extremely modest" [Barrow 1801: 1: 206].) Ward shows that she is capable of according human dignity, the right to privacy, and equality to indigenous people, all of which are foreign to commentators on Amakeya's actions such as Napier and Buck Adams, as I shall show.

While appreciating the humanity of Ward's treatment of Amakeya's offer, one should not forget the nobility of the gesture itself. In recording it in the terms she uses, Ward is helping to illuminate European thinking on the nature of the Xhosa woman, and this is a step towards the overcoming of "Othering". It is what she attempted to do for the marginalised Creole woman in Helen Charteris.

Amakeya's motives were not unappreciated by her hearer, but the proposal was, of course, rejected, with every consideration for her position, and the circumstances by which she had been actuated; and she departed with her father on his journey. (ibid.: 280)

At this stage, the last view Ward gives the reader of Amakeya is an external one, but no less sympathetic for that:

We may fancy Amakeya taking a last look at the green places wherein her childhood had been passed, and finally sitting down among a strange people, in sight of the "great waters." A new and wondrous spectacle to that mountain-girl must have been that mighty and pathless sea. (ibid.: 280)

It is salutary to compare Ward's tone with the jocularly manly tone used by her contemporaries. In his Excursions in Southern Africa (1849), E. Elers Napier is laboriously sarcastic about Maqoma's wives,

the dazzling charms of the royal princesses [and] the conquests achieved in camp by the captivating "Miss" Macomo--the number of hearts she seared with her piercing glances, or the proofs of affection she could show, duly embodied in "nazelabs," [baselas--gifts?] and safely secured in the shape of drams, tobacco, and sixpences....

(Napier 1849: 161)

In a note, he adds:

Amahkaia, the eldest daughter of the Chief, was as complete a flirt, and as thorough a coquette, as ever issued from the most fashionable "seminary for young ladies." An officer of rank used to be much bantered on the subject of "Miss Macomo;" but he constantly avowed the attachment to be purely "Platonic." The Amakosa princess has been immortalized by the author of "Five Years in Kaffirland," in an interesting article which appeared in the "New Monthly Magazine" for January, 1849. (ibid.: 161)

Buck Adams writes:

[T]here was quite a lark in the Camp. A young Kaffir girl made her way into the tent of the General's Aide de Camp during his absence and the lady prepared to take up her quarters for an indefinite period. When the owner of the tent returned he had some considerable difficulty in persuading her to vacate his quarters. She said she was willing to do anything for him, even become his wife, if he would only give them (her people) peace. At sunset, much to their surprise, they (she and her friends) were all turned out of Camp. (Adams: 246-7)

Each of these is what one might call the hearty masculine bravado typical of soldiers in camp. But what each of the above also demonstrates is an "Othering" not apparent in Ward's description. (Napier, however, seems to have enjoyed viewing all [young] women purely as sexual objects, as is shown in his account in Wild Sports in Europe, Asia, and Africa [1844] of a "nymph" involved in rushing about in her nightdress accusing her fellow travellers of setting fire to her bed, to the vast entertainment of Napier and others [Napier 1844: 81]).

In January 1849, six months after Five Years in Kaffirland was published, the romantic short story "'Amakeya: A Tale of Kaffirland'. By Mrs. Ward, Author of Five Years in Kaffir Land [sic]" appeared in the New Monthly Magazine. The scene is set in the idyllic eastern Cape valley of the Tyume, and the point of view is that of the happy inhabitants of Maqoma's kraal. From the garrison nearby can be heard the fifes and drums of the military band. The point of view slips awkwardly away from that of the Xhosa in "marauding Kaffir", in this sentence, but the lapse is only momentary:

The women of [Maqoma's] "great place" ask him no questions as he dismounts, but they hear him mutter the words "the

Umlunghi [white people] are children," they see his sardonic smile, and they know that for the present the threats of the Umlunghi against the marauding Kaffir have ended in nothing.

("Amakeya": 16)

Amakeya lies in wait for Glencairn (Campbell in disguise) on his return from a hunting trip, and plants an assegai in his path as a warning that war is imminent. Confused, he holds out his hand and she kisses it "without any violent demonstration of feeling", shakes her head and disappears with a sigh of "My friend, my friend!" The war is described, this time from the British perspective, including the cameo description of the wizard Myeki, already quoted:

He is muttering his incantations....Now the fire shoots up and now he holds over it a skull containing a foaming decoction made from the right hand, the head, and some bones of an officer lately shot by the Gaikas. (ibid.: 18)

When the war is over, Maqoma's request for clemency cannot be acceded to by Glencairn, and so Amakeya makes her heroic offer. Ward summons her considerable descriptive powers:

Night time in Kaffirland:--the mountains fling their broad shadows down upon the undulating ground, encircling the British camp; the Tyumie waters glance and ripple in the clear moonlight, and the echoes of the bugle-call answer each other from the wooded kloofs and caves; a few lights only shone from the white tents, the distant picquets exchanged the watchword of the night, beacon lights began to twinkle along the mountain-ridges, and the bark of a dog, the distant and fiendish laugh of the hyena, the sharp cry of the plover, and the neighing of a trooper's horse, were sufficient to disturb the silence that otherwise reigned round the bivouac of the English soldiery.

(ibid.: 19)

The next paragraph is what obviously caught the imagination of the mid-nineteenth-century reading public, as became clear from the imitations which followed:

Colonel Glencairn sat busily engaged in his tent writing; so busy that he heard not a slight stir without, the sentry's challenge of "Who comes there?" nor observed that no answer was returned. The canvass [sic] fluttered; he looked up, and saw it was put aside by a sable arm, beautifully moulded, and ornamented with bracelets of many kinds: and Amakeya, stepping over the slight barrier between her and Colonel Glencairn, stood before him. But for her armlets and bangles of polished brass, her head-dress seamed with beads of bright blue and white, her many

necklaces of various colours, that dusky form might have been but a shadow between the officer and the white walls of the tent. For a few moments she stood silent, with her arms folded across her bodice (sic), as if wanting courage to address him she came to visit. "Lifting up her voice" at last, she spoke. (ibid.: 20)

The "slight barrier between her and Colonel Glencairn" is nicely symbolic. In remembering Ward's critical comments about the needs created in the Xhosa for the products of British "manufactories", one might wonder whether there is a suggestion that the brass bangles and beads are a subtle symbol of the effects of colonial oppression. Significant in the description is Ward's fascination with the "finely moulded arm":¹⁵ she uses the term exclusively for people of colour, or those associated with the exotic; she comments on "exquisite contour" of the limbs of the abakweta youths, the Xhosa initiates in Jasper Lyle (96). Clara Villars is described as having a mantilla wrapped around her "finely moulded shoulders" (HC 1853: 85). In Jane Eyre (1847), Blanche in fancy-dress as an "Israelitish princess of the patriarchal days" has her "beautifully-moulded arms bare" (v.II: ch. III). Conrad will conjure up a scene as dramatic and strange as Ward's at the end of Heart of Darkness (1902), where another dark woman will proudly offer herself for a noble purpose to a white man:

She walked with measured steps...treading the earth proudly, with a slight jingle and flash of barbarous ornaments. She carried her head high....Her face had a tragic and fierce aspect of wild sorrow and of dumb pain mingled with some struggling half-shaped resolve....Suddenly she opened her bared arms and threw them up rigid above her head....
(Conrad: 100-101)

Right at the end of the novel, Marlow remembers the bare brown arms of Kurtz's Congo woman (ibid.: 120). Conrad's "savage woman", seen from a male point of view, is unfathomable; Ward's

¹⁵ My thanks are due to the examiner who pointed out that "Arms and shoulders were in fact fetishistically eroticized in Ward's day as legs were to be a century later". My point is that Ward does not employ the term "finely moulded" for her "white" women characters or allow them a display of erotic power.

Amakeya is human and accessible to understanding and appreciation.¹⁶

So great an impression did Ward's account of Amakeya make on contemporary readers that two poems about Amakeya were written which closely echo many of Ward's words and phrases. One is a ballad by W.R.Thomson published in 1858.¹⁷ Ward's influence is obvious in the following stanza, though Thomson chooses to emphasise the sensual:

But proudly stepped the maiden forth,
And conscious of her charms,
She folded o'er her swelling breast
Her beauteous ebon arms.

Major D.B.Hook includes a poem in his With Sword and Statute (1907) called "Macoma's Daughter". It is bathetic verse, and may be his own:¹⁸

She was known as the Belle of Kaffirland, and she'd even
lunched at mess
With the knightly soldiers, and hand-maidens around her,
in courtesy no less.
She knew her charms and their value, and was sensible of her
duty,
And she'd come in conscious innocence in her wealth of
native beauty.

Hook too is susceptible to the image of Amakeya's "finely moulded arms", and calls her a "mountain girl", Ward's exact phrasing.

In Ward's version of the story in the New Monthly Magazine, the young woman's proposal to the colonel is elevated to almost Biblical significance. Amakeya's words parallel those of Ruth to Naomi in the Old Testament: she offers to forsake all and

¹⁶ See Said on Conrad's inability to overcome the need to see the colonised being as anything other than "Other": "As a creature of his time, Conrad could not grant the natives their freedom, despite his severe critique of the imperialism that enslaved them" (Said: 34).

¹⁷ I am indebted for information on this poem to a paper by Professor F.G.Butler entitled "The Ballad of Amakeya" (Butler: 193-205).

¹⁸ F.G.Butler suggests that Hook is probably himself the author.

follow Glencairn (Campbell), if he will restore her father's lands:

I will be the pledge of his good faith. Thy people shall be my people, and I will sit by thy side, and beneath thy dwelling-place, and abide with thee all my life. Let my father go, and I will serve thee truly. ("Amayeka": 20)

Here, as often when Ward purports to convey Xhosa speech in English, she is making use of the convention based on abolitionist discourse; the language of slaves, and the manner of discussing their plight was conceived of in romantic biblical style. Thomas Pringle too resorted to this idiom.¹⁹ In a footnote in "Amakeya", Ward comments on "the language of the Kaffirs, [which] in its simplicity, bears a strong resemblance to that of the Bible" (19). In adopting this style of discourse, she implicitly accords a sense of credibility and dignity to those whose speech she purports to convey. It helps to put into perspective the limits of Ward's racism and colonial thinking if one compares her presentation of the indigene with that of her contemporary, R.M. Ballantyne. The following quotation, an example of "Othering" at its most extreme and offensive, comes from The Gorilla Hunters (1862?):

"Come, Mak; cheer up!" cried Peterkin. "If the worst comes to the worst, you can, at any rate, fight for your bride."

"Fight!" exclaimed the negro, displaying his white teeth like a mastiff, rolling his eyes and clenching his fists convulsively. Then in a calmer tone he continued, "Ay, me can fight. Me could kill all de guards an' take Okandaga by de hand, an' run troo de bushes for eber. But guards no die widout hollerin' and yellin' like de gorilla; an nigger mans can run fasterer dan womans. No, no, dat am dumpossobable." (The Gorilla Hunters: ch.6)

Ballantyne's depiction of Mak as comic and ignorant (because he cannot speak English properly) is part of a more or less

¹⁹ I am indebted to Professor van Wyk Smith for having pointed this out to me. See too van Wyk Smith's comments on the "grammar of disablement and dependency" which was the dominant discourse of evangelical philanthropy in "Writing the African Diaspora in the Eighteenth Century" (1991). It is important to remember, as he suggested to me in discussion on this point, that there is a "long tale of 'Orientalism', of seeing the 'Noble Other' in a timeless, anachronistic past".

conscious strategy to reinforce in the colonial reader a sense of the African as a ludicrous figure, hardly more than an animal, and to continue the inculcation of a conviction of British superiority.

In "Amakeya", Ward emphasises again the young woman's conception of morality, which exactly corresponds to that of the Victorian Englishwoman:

[t]he girls of Kaffirland are early taught the strictest lessons of female propriety, and the sacrifice offered by Amakeya was greater than persons unacquainted with her ideas of right, would readily suppose. ("Amakeya": 20)

There is once again no prurience, and the relationship is credibly visualised; both actors in the drama behave with dignity and humanity:

What passed further between herself and her astonished auditor was honorable [sic] to both....He did not misconstrue the motives of the poor Kaffir girl, he took no advantage of the position in which she had...placed herself; so, gently,...he persuaded her to return to her father.... (ibid.: 20)

Unusually for the time, Ward projects herself into Amakeya's thoughts:

Ah, that mighty sea! and those waggons with white wings floating on the strange element. She had heard among the T'Slambie tribes beyond the Great Fish River, that when one of these sea waggons should make its way into the mouth of the Buffalo river, Kaffirland should die; she had believed it then, how fully she believes it now! To her Kaffirland is dead already: her eyes are on the wide waters, but her thoughts are wandering in the valley and through the mimosa bushes of bright green, gazing down upon the little drift. ...Bewildered and sorrowful she drew the folds of her heavy mantle round her and retired from the sight of the ships, the unquiet, irregular, and busy town and its uncaring people--Glencairn was lost to her, and Kaffirland was dead! (ibid.: 21)

There is in these lines a convincing empathy between narrator and subject, detectable in the atmosphere of loss and grief.

With her thrifty habit of making thorough use of a good story, Ward weaves features of Amakeya's history into her novel, Jasper Lyle. However, the Xhosa heroine, Amayeka, is

significantly different from the real-life heroine. She is, like Clary, of mixed race. This crucial distinction marks again the concern Ward felt for women marginalised by their race. In choosing another such heroine, she indicates the potential for empathy and identification she has come to see in such a character.

In her new treatment of the Amakeya theme, there are more opportunities for interiority, and once again the character has all the narrator's approval. The reader's first sight of the appealing maiden Amayeka is through the consciousness of a large black ox called Zwartz: "he bent his head in loving recognition of Amayeka, whose sweet voice welcomed her favourite" (ibid.: 84). "Zwartz lay like a guardian in the centre of his female friends; they petted and talked to him at times, calling him all manner of endearing names, but Amayeka was his best friend..." (89). The watching presence is Martin Gray, who starts to fall in love with Amayeka.

Ward introduces her in what looks like a classic example of stereotypical "Othering": she is seen as a wild untameable creature:

I know not a more perfect model of obedience and endurance than a Kaffir woman. With the white man, she is never thoroughly tamed. You may take her under your care in childhood--you may accustom her to English habits, dress, and religion; but once let her taste her freedom, and she is like a bird on the wing again. (ibid.: 84)

In "tastes her freedom" and "like a bird on the wing again", one senses a kind of envy of such a freedom. The depicted wildness seems entirely desirable, and Ward perhaps is drawing silent comparisons between the lives of Xhosa and of English women.

Ward often shows sympathy for the hardships endured by Xhosa women in the course of Five Years in Kaffirland (see for example Five Years ii: 27-8; ibid.: 217), and she shows that the sought-after freedom is short-lived:

True, however, to the instincts of her nature, she bows to the thralldom of her race, wields the pickaxe and the hoe,

and submits cheerfully to her occupation of "hewer of wood and drawer of water," yields obedience to her task-masters...and sits meekly silent when bartered for by a lover, who, as a husband, makes her one of many slaves.
(ibid.: 84-5)

The tone here sounds ironic, and Ward may be seeing a bitter parallel between Xhosa women and women in general. What makes this likely is her strongly expressed anger in "Temper": "We talk in England of the thralldom in which the women of savage and heathen lands are held" ("Temper": 159), where the implication is that English women suffer just as much as the oppressed women in "savage" lands, though their thralldom may be less physical than mental. (In speaking of Xhosa men in Five Years in Kaffirland, Ward wrote: "Nothing can be greater proof of their savage state than their treatment of their women" (Five Years i: 179). The implication is that all who ill-treat women are savages, be they the legislators of the lives of British army wives or the narrator of "Temper".)

Unable to resist some "information" on ethnographic "manners and customs" (Barrow 1804: ii:2, and Pratt 1992: 64), Ward says that the fifteen-year-old Amayeka is in the "prime of a Kafir maiden's life"; an interesting point when one remembers Ward's preoccupation with youthful and nubile heroines: Helen Charteris, married at eighteen, Eleanor Daveney involved in serious courtship at sixteen and married soon afterwards, and Isabel Ward, married at seventeen. Perhaps fifteen to eighteen is the prime of a Victorian maiden's life, as well?

In describing "Female Hottentots", Barrow had written "Some of the women, when young, are so well formed that they might serve as models of perfection for the human figure....This beautiful symmetry is however of short duration, and gradually degenerates into...deformation" (Barrow 1801: i:168). Perhaps this is what influenced Ward's views here. Barrow's description of Xhosa girls (one of whom is beautifully illustrated by Daniell in Plate 34 of Sketches Representing the Native Tribes...), may well have influenced Ward in her visualisation of Amayeka and her

friends: "Good humour, animation, and a cheerful turn of mind beamed conspicuously in their countenances. They appeared to us to be modest without reserve, extremely curious without being troublesome; lively but not impudent; and sportive without the least shadow of lasciviousness" (Barrow 1801: i: 168).

Amayeka, summoned from her mission school at Caledon after six years, throws off "her European habits in every sense, retaining only the language, which she spoke with the grace so peculiar to her nation when educated" (ibid.: 85). There is unmistakeable ambiguity in the reference to her "European habits": clothing seems to be of understandable concern to Ward, as we have seen from her repeated reference to her own cumbrous riding habit, and from her predisposition towards the freedom cross-dressing can allow a woman. How much greater the freedom to be able to discard clothing altogether. In throwing off European clothing and conventions of behaviour, Amayeka removes herself from European influence; the revelation that she is of mixed blood would further marginalise her in the eyes of the European settlers: we learn later that

a true Kafir she was not. Through her veins ran the blood of white forefathers; her ancestress was one of those unfortunates who had been stranded at the Umbeesam River when the Grosvenor was wrecked. (ibid.: 193)

Ward twice mentions the real-life descendant of General Campbell, wrecked with his daughters in the Grosvenor (1782), in Five Years in Kaffirland:

Nonnebe, the latter a female descendant of General Campbell, who with his family was wrecked in the last century off the East Coast of Africa, in the Grosvenor East Indiaman. Nonnebe's mother was the daughter of a Miss Campbell, one of the General's unhappy daughters, who had been seized and retained by a Kaffir Chief as his "great wife."²⁰

(Five Years i: 262-3).

In the second volume of the same work she repeats the belief that "the unfortunate ladies were allotted as wives to the Kaffir

²⁰ Ian Glenn refers to this recollection of Ward's as "inaccurate" (Glenn: 9). The subject needs further investigation.

chiefs" (ibid. ii: 54). (There does not seem to have been any connection with Colonel Campbell of the 91st Regiment.)

To her lineage Amayeka owed her soft, though short and wavy hair, her complexion of fairer hue than is usual among the Amakosa race, her delicately chiselled outline of feature, and her falling shoulders. Her limbs I have described as exquisitely moulded, and the voice musically sweet.

(JL: 193)

By implication then, Xhosa women are seen to be deficient in soft, wavy hair, delicate features, falling shoulders, and so on. Amayeka is "redeemed" by being partly white, and with this implication Ward has moved a step towards "Othering" the Xhosa again.

In his discussion of the parameters of the abolitionist literature of the eighteenth century, Guinea's Captive Kings, Wylie Sypher concludes that anti-slavery's heroes and heroines were always exceptional negroes and usually of royal blood. This seems to be the mode of thinking Ward is employing in providing her heroine with an ancestry that is partly white. Amayeka is also, of course, the daughter of a chief, Doda (a fictionalised chief Magoma). In contrast with Clary, Amayeka is seen to be at an advantage in having "mixed" blood; she is raised above the status of a "true Kafir". A feature of abolitionist writing was that the black hero or heroine was conceived of as not completely "black": Aphra Behn's hero Oroonoko is, says Sypher, "the forefather of those Negroes used by anti-slavery writers to convince their readers that the Negro was not really negroid" (Sypher: 110). He was not black, but "perfect Ebony, or polished Jett", his nose was not "African and flat" but "rising and Roman" and so on (Behn 1930: 154). Even more relevant to our understanding of Amayeka is Oroonoko's consort Imoinda, a "comely Nubian maid", "this fair Queen of Night" (ibid.:155), whom Sypher identifies as a type represented throughout the eighteenth century:

The dramatic Imoinda is not a Negress, but, more acceptably, a white, since she is the only daughter of a strange European resident at the court of Oroonoko's father.

(Sypher: 121)

And yet confusingly Behn describes her thus: "[S]he was Female to the noble Male, the beautiful Black Venus to our young Mars..." (Behn 1688: 23). Perhaps, like Ward with Amayeka, Behn is suggesting that Imoinda is not quite so "Other", by virtue of her white ancestry. Ward distinguishes Amayeka's habits as "those of the wild tribe to which she belonged, but tender-hearted, with something of the English attitude of gratitude, unknown among the Kafirs" (JL: 193-4). Ward's generalisation about the ingratitude of all the Xhosa maintains the distance of the "Other", while exalting the virtues of the coloniser. Such conditioning was unavoidable.

Amayeka's fame at Fort Hare looks back to Imoinda's sexual attractiveness: "I have seen a hundred White Men sighing after her, and making a thousand Vows at her Feet, all in vain and unsuccessful" (Behn 1688: 23). Amayeka's "whiteness" must be minimal: she has after all shed her European education, apparently with the narrator's implicit approval, and opted for an entirely Xhosa identity. However, in falling in love with the redeemed soldier-convict Gray, she forgets "kindred, tribe, allegiance...in her passion for her white lover" (ibid.: 194). In her "distinct and sweetly-toned English" she cries "'You love me, Martin, you love me!'" and teaches him the Xhosa version of amo, amas, amat: "'Ukutanda, diyatanda, diyatandiva, diyakutanda...'" (ibid.: 195). On her marriage to Gray, she is shunned by the more conservative settlers. However, her humility, neatness and industriousness soon overcome their opposition. As the grave and neatly dressed "dusky wife" of Gray, she is the perfect angel in the house, distinguishable only by her never-to-be-forgotten colour from all pious and modest Victorian wives. Ward probably felt obliged to bring Amayeka into the colonial fold; given the anti-Xhosa feeling at the end of the Seventh Frontier War, it was probably unthinkable that Gray should join Doda's kraal. One misses though that earlier picture of the liberated bird, glorying in her release from the restraints of the mission school; having sketched such a picture, Ward must surely have been conscious of something valuable lost too. One

is reminded again of Clary, the would-be transgressive Creole, tamed by marriage and childbearing. The inescapable truth is that Amayeka, Clary and Helen Charteris herself are to be seen as "commodities" in Luce Irigaray's sense. In "The Bodily Encounter with the Mother", she maintains that "Commodities can only speak the language [langage] of those who produce-exchange-consume them" (Irigaray 1992:91).²¹ Irigaray sees that sisterly solidarity of the kind Ward is attempting with her powerless female characters is imperative "if we are not to remain the servants of the phallic cult, objects to be used by and exchanged between men, rival objects on the market, the situation in which we have always been placed" (ibid.: 1992: 44-5). Clary in particular is a damaged commodity in the eyes of the British patriarchy: if women are defined by men's gaze, a woman of colour is even more narrowly focused on and confined within that gaze.

Before their value as marriageable commodities has overwhelmed them, Amayeka and her companions lead an idyllic life as they wait for the gun-runner Brennard to bring his supplies; notwithstanding the dubious nature of their anticipated task, they are completely innocent and "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden age", though Ward provides a piquantly African slant to their lifestyle:

Their food was parched corn and strips of biltongue (meat dried in the sun), supplied by a cleft in the rock, where they had long ago established a simple larder. Apples from the banks of the Kei and Gonube rivers, varied their repast occasionally, and a large light basket of sour milk,²² brought to them from a distant kraal was a delicious

²¹ Compare Kristeva: "To exchange goods and women in the social network...is to form a sort of secondary linguistic system with respect to language, and on the basis of this system to install a communications circuit with subjects, meaning, and signification" (Kristeva 1989: 4).

²² Barrow mentions these "baskets...made from a species of cyperus....The workmanship was exceedingly clever and neat, and the texture so close that they were capable of containing the thinnest fluid". Of "beehive shape", they were never washed, so that the milk immediately coagulated. To this food Barrow ascribes "the general healthy appearance and vigor" of the Xhosa (Barrow 1801 [1]: 170).

addition. They were very merry; they laughed, sang, sometimes hymns, taught them by Amayeka; they danced, ate their frugal meals, and slept soundly, pillowed on flowery turf, with heaven's own canopy of blue and gold above them. (ibid.: 85)

A feature of abolitionist literature is that "the African appears ...as a thoroughly noble figure, idealised out of all semblance of reality, and living in a pastoral Africa--a pseudo-African in a pseudo-Africa" (Sypher: 9). Though there may be something of this tradition lurking in Ward's visualisation of this appealing scene, what gives the trope vitality is her focus on realistic detail and her sympathetic insight into how young girls as a group behave.

From a post-colonial and feminist point of view, something disappointing happens when Ward sets to work on a real-life character, whose motivation and actions are historically interesting and commendable in themselves, and transforms her into someone rendered exceptional by her ancestry and acceptable by her meek deference to colonial morality. The lively Amakeya/Amayeka is vitiated in this process, and Ward seems sadly to lose something of her own spirited defiance of convention. A good "Other" is one who yields to European conditioning, as does Amayeka, together with the San May and his wife Fitje and baby Ellen, who are taken to England "as honest and rare specimens of what Christianity had done for South Africa" (JL: 430). It seems these will always be "Other". (Ward says she can never call Amayeka "Mrs Gray"; one wonders why not; if anyone has passed all tests and made the sacrifice of foregoing her known and loved world it is she.). But one finds it hard to believe that Harriet Ward's personally cherished ideal of womanhood is her character Eleanor Daveney, described at the end of the novel as "the sweetest and gentlest and most lovely-mannered lady [people] had ever seen" (ibid.: 430).

In the end, it seems, like George Eliot after her, Ward lacks the desire to create a heroine as bold, vigorous and unconventional as herself. "Eliot's insistence on the need to

repress individual desires in the face of social duty finally eliminates the efficacy of her [strong woman] characters' independence of spirit" (BGWL: 25). "One key problem has been the obduracy with which [Eliot] encloses her heroines within the confines of ordinary possibility, confines from which the author had, by means of her writing, escaped" (Gillian Beer: 3). "She [Eliot] never permitted to any of the women in her fiction such radical acts as she herself took..." (ibid.: 23). Jenny Uglow makes the point that we see in George Eliot's life many more opportunities than she gives to the heroines in her novels. Florence Nightingale attacked the portrayal of Dorothea in Middlemarch as a "frustrated St Theresa, pointing out that Eliot could see women around her (like Octavia Hill) who were managing to make their philanthropic ideals 'very real indeed'" (Uglow: 68). Ward's own life seems to have been a triumph in a male-dominated sphere. Did she imagine such success to be beyond the reach of ordinary women? Or did she feel frustrated at what was still being denied her?

One must ask what choice there was for either her heroines or Ward herself. In what happens to the former, Ward must have seen a reflection of her own situation: however conscious of difference and injustice and alienation, the transgressive woman has no real place in the patriarchal system. For survival, she is forced to capitulate. There is no discourse, no escape, that can resolve the needs of an unconventional woman at this time, and the result must be submission or ostracism, the latter unthinkable for an officer's wife. And in spite of all the oblique references to the illegitimacy of the British presence on the Cape frontier, strongly felt as a woman's point of view, so powerful is the male colonial authority that the protests remain unheard, and the writer has not the discursive resources to hand to be more direct. The father's world cannot be challenged directly, and so the protest is in effect silenced, but remains a challenge to the reader who can decode it. As Vicinus suggests, Victorian readers were quite capable of such decoding. Perhaps Ward is forced to accept, as de Beauvoir

maintained: "[Man] is the Subject, he is the Absolute--she [Woman] is the Other" (de Beauvoir: 16). As with the woman Florence in "Temper" and with Clary in Helen Charteris, one solution to failure to overcome the restrictions of patriarchy is death. In effect, Ward allowed her transgressive resistance to die, as there was no hope of radical change. Some expression of anger had been achieved, but there could be no satisfactory outcome. There was no precedent for a transformative release from domination and suppression; blacks, women, Afrikaners must acknowledge and accept subordination to patriarchy and colonialism. But Ward has ensured that their appeals for justice had at least been heard.

5. "Unfortunate white Africans": the Afrikaners

The Afrikaners are another group of marginalised people in Jasper Lyle with whom Ward identifies. She describes them sympathetically as "unfortunate white Africans" (JL: 308) with legitimate grievances against the British government, an unpopular stance to have adopted at this time:

What had they--these poor, unhappy white Africans--gained by passive endurance of ill? In England, men were already standing up for a fresh Charter on their own ground--but what did the Boers want? Only space to feed their cattle, permission to exercise their own laws, without interfering with the English--and this was not to be granted. Would they submit like dogs? At any rate, was it not worthwhile to try for freedom? (ibid.: 309)

This is of course also the reasoning that Jasper Lyle uses to show his allegiance to the Xhosa. Ward emphasises the piety, resolution, heroism and sober principles of the Afrikaners. She particularly honours the strength of the women, who were "foremost in urging men to up-saddle and trek" (ibid.: 311). From this group comes a second heroine of "mixed" race, Madame Vander Roey [sic], wife of the Afrikaner leader, and she takes on an allegorical significance for Ward; she becomes a symbol of the transgressive, passionate, vengeful female, and is also the racial/sexual "Other":

She was not what might be termed a true specimen of the Boeress in Southern Africa, but was, in colonial parlance, an Africander, of French extraction, her father belonging to the race who established themselves at the Cape after the revocation of the edict of Nantes; and her mother, although the wife of a Boer, had a slight touch of dark blood in her veins. To these circumstances, which, in the eyes of the community to which she belonged, were objectionable, she owed her raven hair, drawn back from the temples and bound round her head in classic fashion.

(ibid.: 298-9)

Her features, limbs (including "the elbow of a beautiful arm") and dress are itemised in what Mills would see as a method of "Othering": one does not describe people as "full individuals, but as composed of separate parts of the body" (Mills 1991: 89-90). But all comes together in a rather startling overall picture of Madame Vander Roey as an almost piratical figure,

a showy dame...with a pistol in her belt, her arms folded across the orange handkerchief, her head thrown back, and her eyes bent eagerly on Lyle. (ibid.: 299)²³

She addresses Lyle directly and authoritatively, and the reader is conscious of all the passion and spirit lacking in Eleanor, and suppressed in Ward herself. The venerable "Boer", her father, is shown to be a paragon of wisdom, courtesy and hospitality, and Ward's approval of the group is unqualified.

Ward's fellow feeling for Madame Vander Roey as a woman and as a soldier's wife whose husband is in the thick of battle is at its highest during the battle with the British. Madame Vander Roey has the heroic stance of a classical heroine, a kind of Winged Victory, in "bold relief between the rocks and sky" (360) or once again a "Liberty Leading the People" of Delacroix:

her long skirt [fell] far below her feet over the rocks, giving her the appearance of supernatural height, her head uncovered, and all her sable tresses streaming in the wind. (ibid.: 359)

²³ One is reminded of Sylvia Plath's "Lady Lazarus":
 Herr God, Herr Lucifer
 Beware
 Beware....
 I eat men like air.

Ward shows, however, how "that woman's heart was beating" and how she grows faint at the sight of the corpses on the field of battle below. She becomes symbolic of all stoically suffering Afrikaner women in the last view we have of her, when she learns that her husband has been killed:

"Did they take him prisoner?"

"No," replied Madame Vanbloem; "he died of his wounds among his own people."

"It is well!" said the widow, and turning her face from the light, she never spoke again. (ibid.: 362)

The strength of the Boer women is attested to in this anecdote recounted by Noel Mostert:

While trying to negotiate a peaceful transition of Natal from Boer to British control, the British representative found himself besieged by Boer women, who, when they saw the resistance of their husbands weakening, declared that they would walk out of Natal barefoot across the Drakensberg, to die in freedom, as death was less fearful to them than loss of liberty. Like Xhosa women, Boer women were a force that could never be ignored, active and demanding handmaidens to history. (Mostert: 819-20)

Gilbert and Gubar comment on a phenomenon by which women writers

over and over again ...project what seems to be the energy of their own despair into passionate, even melodramatic characters who act out the subversive impulses every woman inevitably feels when she contemplates the "deep-rooted" evils of patriarchy. (Gilbert and Gubar: 77)

This seems aptly to sum up the strength of feeling Ward displays for Madame Vander Roey, who refuses to capitulate to the establishment and colonial power.

Ward saw the need to voice the cause of the Afrikaners on the frontier, and she powerfully fulfils this desire. The Afrikaners were seldom listened to by the British officials as we see reflected in the incident when Sir John Manvers refuses to interrupt a social occasion to listen to Vander Roey's urgent appeal. The brilliantly visualised description, with its pathos enhanced by the focus on the suffering of Vander Roey's horse, symbolic of his own, is evidence of the narrator's strong support

for the Afrikaner cause, and her anger at the arrogance and insensitivity of the colonial government.

"The man who 'had not time to see me' was receiving guests in a large lighted room. The windows were open and I stood in the garden, grinding my teeth with rage. I strode out of the light into the darkness; my horse stood patiently at the great gates of that fine house. He hung his head; he was worn with riding--he had a sorry look--the sentry, standing under the lamp, was laughing at his miserable plight" (ibid.: 309).

This novel, through all its many editions right up to 1879, long after Harriet Ward was dead, continued to project the voice of this marginalised group and others. Jasper Lyle is a subtle incitement to the reader to condemn British imperialism and racism, the causes of the South African War of 1899-1902. At the time of that war, there were English people who were under as little illusion about the justice of Britain's treatment of colonial people as Ward was. The writer Alice M. Buckton (1867-1944),²⁴ for example, never visited South Africa, but "British anxiety about the war was such that she felt able to represent sympathetically the point of view of a Boer woman" (BGWL: 282). Olive Schreiner and Emily Hobhouse would be as outspoken in their support of the Boer cause as Ward had been fifty years earlier. Once again, in this pioneering novel, Harriet Ward was in advance of her time.

Jasper Lyle is a novel which deserves a prominent place in the catalogue of South African novels; the themes it initiates, and the ambivalence with which those themes are handled, are signposts to much of importance in the history of South African fiction.

²⁴ Alice M. Buckton's poem "The Burden of Engela: A Ballad Epic" (1904) is discussed in detail in Drummer Hodge: The Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 (van Wyk Smith 1978: 246-9).

CONCLUSION

It has been my wish in presenting the work of Harriet Ward that she should be recognised as the significant figure she is in South African letters and in the post-colonial critical debate.

In reviewing Margaret Daymond's re-publication of My Chief and I by Frances Colenso (originally published in 1880), Stephen Gray writes: "Honours for having produced the earliest South African novel of consequence must go from [Olive Schreiner in] the Eastern Cape to Pietermaritzburg, where another missionary daughter... beat her to it" (Gray 1995: 98). Harriet Ward in fact produced the first novel of consequence thirty-two years before Schreiner and twenty-nine years before Colenso, in 1851. The world of South African English letters, Gray continues, is small and underexplored; even less well-explored, one might add, is the work of women who wrote about South Africa, from a point of view always distinct from the men writing at the time. Harriet Ward should be permitted to take her place in the continuum of women writers from Lady Anne Barnard to Olive Schreiner to Sarah Gertrude Millin and to Nadine Gordimer.

Margaret Daymond's introduction to My Chief and I provides details of Frances Colenso's life and writing which cast a revealing light on Harriet Ward's situation. Like Frances Colenso, Ward very often was "pleading for justice for a wronged people" (Daymond 1995: 13); as with Ward, "for a young woman to intervene in international politics and to take on the role of champion-at-arms is unusual even today" (ibid.: 13). Daymond makes the point that My Chief and I [is] the first known instance of a woman in South Africa using fiction directly to influence public opinion (ibid.: 13). Ward too wrote fiction which was intended to shape public opinion, just as Olive Schreiner, Sarah Gertrude Millin, and Nadine Gordimer were to do. Interestingly, Ward was one of the very few nineteenth-century British women who managed to break into the male preserve of non-fictional, historico-political writing (ibid.: 13), and without having to disguise the fact that she was a woman. One would think this

achievement alone helped to undermine the belief that women are incapable of "the power of rational judgment demanded for the writing of history and for intervention in national affairs" (ibid.: 14). It is Ward who could claim to have "inaugurated the interventionist tradition of fiction for which South African writers, from Olive Schreiner to Bessie Head and Nadine Gordimer, are now so internationally celebrated", a tradition spiritedly pursued by Frances Colenso (ibid.: 15).

Daymond writes of Frances Colenso's achievement: "It is an important testimony to a woman's struggle to find her own voice, to speak with a measure of independence, within the attitudes and customs which circumscribed her life" (ibid.: 14). How aptly these words could be applied to another pioneering woman on the sub-continent, nearly thirty years earlier.

No doubt there are others like her, largely unknown, waiting to be re-discovered; the process of recovery has begun with the re-publication of works by Frances Colenso and Catherine Barter.¹ It would be poetic justice if after one hundred and fifty years Ward were to become even half as well-known as she was in her prime.

The value of art (and in particular literature), as de Reuck makes clear, is that while it cannot effect social change, it encourages "the greater self-awareness and imaginative capacity [which] can create the conditions for change" (de Reuck 1990: 33). On a sub-continent where women are still largely voiceless, it is important that those who have made a significant contribution to the interrogation of patriarchal power should be recognised and celebrated.

¹ Besides having edited My Chief and I by Frances Colenso, M.J. Daymond is working on the "Natal Novels of Charlotte Moor" (see her paper --not yet published--read at AUETSA 1995). In 1995 Patricia L. Merrett published an edition of Alone Among the Zulus (1867) by Catherine Barter (d.1895).

APPENDIX ONE

Chronology of Works Published by Harriet Ward

The place of publication in every case is London.

1840

June, July, August, September, October: "Recollections of an Old Soldier. By his Daughter." United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine.

1841

February, April, June, August, November: "Sketches from Military Life. By the Authoress of 'Recollections of an Old Soldier.'" Parts I, II, [III, IV, V]. United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine.

1842

"Friar's Valley. A Legend of St Helena. By Mrs. Ward, Authoress of 'Recollections of an Old Soldier,' etc." Forget-me-not Annual for 1842.

"The Spirit's Visits; or, A Record of the Dead. By Mrs. Ward"... Heath's Book of Beauty for 1842.

March: "The Young Officer's Death-bed. 'An Ower [sic] True Tale.' By the Authoress of 'Recollections of an Old Soldier,' etc. Whom the gods love, die young." United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine.

May: "A County Dinner-Party. By Mrs. Ward." Ainsworth's Magazine.

June: "The Yeomanry Ball; and an incident on the Clyde. By Mrs. Ward." Ainsworth's Magazine.

1843

"The Burial of Oliver Cromwell. A Tradition of 1658. By Mrs. Ward." Forget-me-not Annual for 1843.

February: "An Introduction to Mr. O'Connell in 1842. By Mrs. Ward." Ainsworth's Magazine.

February: "Wreck of the Abercrombie Robinson and Waterloo. By Mrs. Ward." United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

1844

January: "A Voice from Cafferland. Being an Abstract of the Political History of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope from the year 1805 to the Present Time. Written on the Spot." United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

May, July, October, December: "Notices from Kafirland. Written on the Spot." United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

1845

January: "The Social Wrongs of the Soldier." United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal. [No proof, except internal evidence, that this is Ward's.]

1846

July: "The Alarm! A Frontier Story from South Africa." [Signed "H.W."] [A poem] United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

September: "A South African Pic-nic. By Mrs Ward." Ainsworth's Magazine.

September: "The Female Prisoner of War. Founded on an Actual Circumstance in the Year 1800." United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal. [No evidence to associate this with Ward, except characteristic style and subject matter.]

October: "The Resurrection of the Bell; or, the Good Effects of a Royal Visit. By Mrs. Ward." New Monthly Magazine and Humorist.

October: "Selling Out. A Sketch from Military Life." [Anonymous, but see Brenthurst Letter 3: Dec.-Jan. 1845-6: "I now send you a Military Story called 'Selling Out'".] United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

November, December: "The Present War in Kafirland. Written on the Spot." Parts I and II. United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

1847

January, February, March May, June, July, August, September, October: "The Present War in Kafirland." Parts III-XI. United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

"Annie Maxwell, the Girl Who Wished to Better Herself. By Mrs. Ward." Cape of Good Hope Literary Magazine.

1848

March: "The Present War in Kafirland. Written on the Spot. Part the Second." [See pages 5-6 of this thesis.] United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

April: "The Present War in Kafirland.--1847. Written on the Spot. Part the Second [sic]." United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

May: "The Present War in Kafirland. Written on the Spot. Part the Second [sic]."

June: Five Years in Kaffirland; with Sketches of the Late War in that Country, to the conclusion of Peace. Written on the Spot. By Harriet Ward. In Two Volumes.

August: "Temper. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

October: Helen Charteris. A Novel. Richard Bentley.

November: "The Emigrant Party; or, Our Last Treck in Southern Africa. By Mrs. Ward, Authoress of 'Five Years in Kafirland,' etc." Bentley's Miscellany.

1849

Recollections of an Old Soldier. A Biographical Sketch of the Late Colonel Tidy, C.B., 24th Regt. With Anecdotes of his Contemporaries [sic]. By Mrs. Ward, Authoress of "Five Years in Kafirland," etc. etc. Richard Bentley.

Past and Future Emigration; or, The Book of the Cape. Edited by the Author of "Five Years in Kafirland." Thomas Cautley Newby.

January: "Amakeya: A Tale of Kaffirland. By Mrs. Ward, Author of 'Five Years in Kaffir Land.'" New Monthly Magazine.

January: "The Happy Valley; or, The Emigrant's Home. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

January: "Coquet Side. A Sketch from the North Countrie. By Mrs. Ward, Author of 'Five Years in Kafirland,' etc." Bentley's Miscellany.

June: "Leaves From Admiral Lord Minorca's Note-Book. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

August: "'Our little Soldier.' A Sketch from Life. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

October: "Portsmouth and Its Environs. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

December: "Caer Peris.--Porchester Castle. Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

1850

October: "Emma, the Sailor Girl. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

September, October: "Married Soldiers in the Army. By Mrs. Ward." Chapters I and II. United Service Magazine and Naval and Military Journal.

1851

January: Souvenir of the Emperor Napoleon. Consisting of Six Drawings made in the Island of Saint Helena, Representing the Various Spots Rendered Generally Interesting from their Association with the History of Napoleon. Drawn from Nature by Lieutenant F.R. Stack, and Lithographed by Charles Haghe, Esq. with Descriptive Letterpress, by Mrs. Ward.
E. Gambart & Co., Paul and Dominic Colnaghi & Co., and Goupil & Co.

The Book of the Cape; or, Past and Future Emigration. By E. Napier, edited by Mrs. Ward. Thomas Cautley Newby.

March: The Cape and the Kaffirs: A Diary of Five Years' Residence in Kaffirland; with a Chapter of Advice to Emigrants, based on the Latest Returns, and the Most Recent Information Regarding the Colony. By Harriet Ward.
3rd Edition with a Frontispiece, and a Map of the Seat of War. Henry G. Bohn.

Jasper Lyle: A Tale of Kafirland. By Mrs. Ward, Author of 'Five Years in Kafirland,' etc. Complete Edition, with an Illustration by J. Gilbert, Esq. George Routledge & Co.

July: "The Price of a Coronet. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

December: "The Tryst of Friends. Suggested by Meeting Old Friends in the Forest of Soignies, near Brussels. By Mrs. Ward." [A poem] Bentley's Miscellany.

1852

Jasper Lyle: A Tale of Kafirland. George Routledge & Co.
 (Reissue of 1851 edition.)

1853

Helen Charteris. A Novel. By Mrs. Ward, Author of "Jasper Lyle."
 Routledge & Co. (A re-issue of 1848 edition. Another re-issue by the Railway Library in this year.)

"A Sketch from Boulogne-sur-Mer. By Mrs. Ward." The Keepsake Annual for 1853.

August: "Camps and Bivouacs, at Home and Abroad. By Mrs. Ward." Bentley's Miscellany.

September: "Camps and Manoeuvres." Bentley's Miscellany.

[Identified by Wellesley Index as by Mrs Ward.]

1854

"Letty Bloomfield. By Mrs. Ward." The Keepsake Annual for 1854.

Hester Fleming. The Good Seed and its Certain Fruit. By Mrs. Ward. John Henry Jackson.

Lizzy Dorian. The Soldier's Wife. A Tale. By Mrs. Ward. John Henry Jackson.

1855

"The Red Nun. By Mrs. Ward." The Keepsake Annual for 1855.

1856

"The Valentine. A Sketch. By Mrs. Ward." The Keepsake Annual for 1856.

1857

"Too Late: A Tale of the War. By Mrs. Ward." The Keepsake Annual for 1857.

1858

Hardy and Hunter. A Boy's Own Story. By Mrs. Ward, Authoress of "Jasper Lyle," "Five Years in Kafirland," etc. etc. George Routledge & Co.

1859

Hardy and Hunter. A Boy's Own Story. Routledge, Warnes, and
Routledge. (A re-issue of the above.)

1860

The Cape and the Kaffirs 4th Edition. Henry G. Bohn.

1868

October: Clarissa Harlowe. By Samuel Richardson. A New and
Abridged Edition by Mrs. Ward. Routledge's Railway Library.

1878

Jasper Lyle. Routledge's Railway Library.

1879

Jasper Lyle. Routledge's Railway Library.

1890

Clarissa Harlowe. By Samuel Richardson. A New and Abridged
Edition by Mrs. Ward. Routledge's Railway Library.

APPENDIX TWO

Mid-Century Connections: Imitations and Reflections in Helen Charteris

There are indications, as I have said, that Ward wrote Helen Charteris in a mood of homesickness, stationed as she was in South Africa, "this untempting illiterate country" (Brenthurst 5: 19.2. 1846). The world she evokes is an idyllic "merry England", for which the county of Worcestershire becomes a metonym. There is a coded allusion to Ward's own feelings in these words of Helen Charteris:

We used to say that my mother was not enthusiastic on any subject but that of the beauty of her own county. It is of a beauty, too, so peculiarly English in character, with its emerald meadows, its scented hedgerows, its sheltered farms, its stately halls, its parks, its woods, its winding and brimming river, its boundary of abrupt and picturesque hills,--our county presents, indeed, an apt and lovely illustration of "happy England". (HC 1853: 32)

The novel is certainly domestic in its setting, which is chiefly the cathedral close in Worcester, and a large country house, Cleaveland Park, not far from the city. Apart from the heroine and her mother and sister, the action involves Elara Villars, a young Creole school-friend of Helen's, Lionel and Laura Cleaveland of the Park, and the Irish Captain MackCrackin and his large and lively family. A key figure and frequent commentator for the author is Mrs Beaumont, down-to-earth and forthright wife of the Archdeacon of Worcester Cathedral. We are reminded of the wider world by Mrs Charteris's constant anxiety about her sailor son, Charles, who is in South Africa, and who brings home with him his "tiger" or valet, a "Bushman", Plaatje. There are visits to London and to Walmer in Kent.

One might speculate that Ward's depiction of the close-knit, almost claustrophobic world of the cathedral close caught Anthony

Trollope's eye. His first Barsetshire novel was published in 1855; according to John Sutherland, Trollope conceived the idea of The Warden (1855) while working as a civil servant for the Post Office in Salisbury in 1852 (LCVF: 635). It was completed in Belfast in 1853. In December 1851, Ward wrote from Boulogne to request that Richard Bentley allow her to "dispose of [the] right to reprint 'Helen Charteris' to some other publisher [the reprint publisher, George Routledge]" (BM Add.MS.46641, f.337). Allibone mentions that the novel was in its fourth edition by 1852 (Allibone: iii: 2574).¹ This would indicate the measure of its success, and the extent of its circulation, perhaps even as far as Salisbury. The gentle Archdeacon Beaumont in Helen Charteris is very much like Mr Harding in The Warden: both are unworldly, music-loving and scholarly; mild, but capable of great moral strength. While Mrs Beaumont is dominating, outspoken and involved in church politics, she is far more benevolent than the Barchester Bishop Proudie's wife. Her tone is very much that of Harriet Ward:

The clergy have themselves shaken the foundations of the church by their selfishness and supineness. If they were all like you [Archdeacon Beaumont], my dear, reform would never have been thought of, let alone clamoured for.

(HC 1853: 120)

The ferments of the Barchester Chronicles can be heard in these comments by the "saucy" Mrs Beaumont:

You know everybody belonging to the church is in a state of excitement at this moment. Positively they say they are going to dock the Bishop of Durham's income. Well, perhaps he has too much; but then some other bishops have too little....Lord L-- wants to keep the bishopric snug for Doctor--till he is old enough to hold it with propriety. I don't know how many expectants dropped off during the life of the last old man. What an age he was! to live so long; and have such a bishopric! It was out of all conscience to outlive nine expectants. (ibid.: 6-7)

It is worth quoting in full Ward's dedication of her novel:

These Volumes are (By her kind Permission) Dedicated to Miss Edgeworth with great admiration of her genius and appreciation of the benefits conferred on society by the masterly productions of her pen, by the Author.

(HC 1848)

¹ Maria Edgeworth's Helen was republished only once, in 1838.

In her preface she asserts that this dedication is

sufficient guarantee for the moral tendency of this "domestic novel," written expressly to illustrate the beauty of that peculiar companionship, which ought to exist between mothers and daughters. (ibid.)

Maria Edgeworth (1768-1849) was "the most commercially successful and prestigious novelist of her heyday" (DBWW: 206). Harriet Ward must have written to her from South Africa requesting permission for the dedication; it is typical of Edgeworth's generosity that she should grant it; she was also "consciously a woman writer who identified herself with a women's literary tradition" (ibid.: 206), and would have been happy to endorse a fellow woman writer's work. Harriet Ward would have revered her because, as Marilyn Butler in her entry on Edgeworth in Janet Todd's Dictionary of British Woman Writers points out, Edgeworth competed successfully with men in the world of publishing:

Although she used a woman's form, she wrote for both sexes and (notably in Patronage) ignored the convention that politics and professional life could be discussed, as they could be experienced, only by men. (ibid.: 206)

Another reason Harriet Ward would have held Maria Edgeworth in high esteem, as did so many of her contemporaries,² was because her works were moral and instructive. Butler highlights the importance of Helen:

This intelligent and characteristically individual book was admired and imitated in Wives and Daughters [published posthumously, in 1866] by Elizabeth Gaskell, the Victorian novelist who most resembles Maria Edgeworth. (ibid.: 207)

The dedication "to Helen Charteris" signals admiration and imitation of Edgeworth in a novelist nearly twenty years before Gaskell wrote Wives and Daughters.

Maria Edgeworth's desire for documentary accuracy, even in

² See Marilyn Butler: "Meeting her [ME] in London in her later years was an experience that often found its way into the copious diaries, letters and reminiscences of the period" (Butler 1972: 6).

a work of fiction, is a pre-echo of Ward's own. The setting for Helen is the country mansion, Clarendon Park, and the novel is, to quote Butler, "a leisurely panorama of the English [Whig] upper-class scene" (Butler 1972: 468). Much of Ward's novel is set in Cleaveland Park, and details the day-to-day events of house-parties held there by (the Tory) Lionel Cleaveland.

Edgeworth's forte was her use of dialogue. "Over half of Helen is developed through the use of dialogue, and dialogue is functional to the design and purpose of the novel" (McWhorter Harden: 222). Ward uses dialogue to equal effect in Helen Charteris.

Edgeworth's most famous novel is the burlesque on the English landowner in Ireland, Castle Rackrent (1800), as seen through the eyes of the faithful Irish bailiff, Thady Quirk, and it is remarkable for its accurate reproduction of the Irish dialect.³ Maria's father reported proudly that even the King [George III] "was much pleased with Castle Rackrent--he rubbed his hands and said what what--I know something now of my Irish subjects..." (Watson: xvii). He went on to say that he was more flattered by its being well received by the Irish themselves (ibid.: xvii). Even this aspect of Edgeworth's style is sympathetically echoed in Ward's comic depiction of the Irish Mackcrackins in Helen Charteris.⁴

³ Thady Quirk is based on ME's father's steward, John Langan: "I heard him when I first came to Ireland, and his dialect struck me, and his character, and I became so acquainted with it, that I could think and speak in it without effort; so that when, for mere amusement, without any idea of publishing, I began to write a family history as Thady would tell it, he seemed to stand beside me and dictate; and I wrote as fast as my pen could go, the characters all imaginary" (Watson: xi).

⁴ Ward would have felt drawn to Edgeworth through this Irish connection; John Ward was born in Waterford, Ireland; Harriet Ward had written a sympathetic account of the Irish "Agitator", Daniel O'Connell in 1842. Soon after this she had sailed from Cork harbour on her voyage to South Africa with the 91st. She was constantly mindful of the poverty of the Irish peasants (especially after the Potato Famine in 1846) and the benefits for them of emigration to South Africa. Another concern

One can see a further influence upon Ward in her imitation of Edgeworth's use of footnotes in their common desire to present events in an almost documentary light, and the compulsion to reflect "real life" in their works:

Only a reader of Maria's letters from London and from great houses like Bowood can know how closely her last novel compares with her real-life perceptions of Whig high Society. Many individual scenes and characters are drawn from life.... A single instance from one of the letters, a description of a dinner-party at Lady Davy's which Maria attended in 1831, shows that she moved to London that season with the deliberate expectation of finding material for Helen.... (Butler 1972: 465)

That this was a common practice is amusingly illustrated in Teresa Ransome's biography of Fanny Trollope: "Her books drew so ruthlessly on real people that strangers grew wary of meeting her. Few who did were spared" (Rodd: 30). On a less threatening level, the lively scenes and characters in Helen Charteris, the realistic use of dialogue and the constant reference to well-known personalities and events bear witness to Ward's perception too of the novel as necessarily bearing a strict relation to life.⁵

In order to reinforce the realism of Helen Charteris, Ward makes more use of topicalities than in any other of her works. The didactic novelist, Mrs Amelia Opie (1769-1853), born, like Harriet Ward, in Norfolk, who wrote a novel in 1804 called Adeline Mowbray, or, Mother and Daughter, is discovered in Helen Charteris as a visitor to a musical festival. Her "sober dress of dove-coloured silk" (HC 1853: 147) is a reminder of her conversion to Quakerism.

[Mrs Opie] was about to retire for the night, as she did not wish, I suppose, to appear dissipated, though no one was more capable of enjoying society than the intelligent

she shared with Edgeworth was the abuse of political power through jobbery (Butler 1972: 6).

⁵ The topicality of the novel is highlighted by an advertisement in "Bentley's List of New Publications" in The Athenaeum of 6.1.1849 which calls it "A Novel of the Present Day" (21). However, Ward specifies 1828 as the year in which the novel is set.

Quaker lady, and no one more fitted to adorn it. She was talking to Mrs. Beaumont of her late visit to France. Her first one had been during the time of Buonaparte's first consulship, and when she--not being a member of the Society of Friends--had visited the court in full dress. She told us how much she had been gratified by Charles X. sending for her, and when she pleaded in excuse that she could not alter her costume...Charles had requested her attendance in her ordinary costume...had led her to his own private library, and there shown her all her own works translated into French, in company with the best French authors.

(ibid.: 149)

This curious account looks as though Ward is recording the words of an actual occasion at which she herself was present; it is clearly designed to flatter the novelist, well-known in literary circles and still very much alive in 1848, as well as to demonstrate the author's familiarity with her.⁶ Another guest at the festival is the opera singer Pasta. Earlier, Mrs Beaumont has recounted Pasta's history, suggesting somewhat libellously that the way to get her to perform at the festival, next to offering her a handsome sum, is to "secure her the advantage of a well-appointed establishment, of which the cook is the focus of attention" (ibid: 107). Indeed, at the festival

Pasta soon vanished, saying, as she left the hall, "dere is noting to eat here--I am ver' glad I have order a duck stewed with peaches for mine own supper." (ibid.: 151)

The company compare Pasta at one stage with Henriette Sontag, and the topicality of the discussion is borne out by an article in Tait's Edinburgh Magazine in June 1849, which expresses the generally held opinion on the two: "In Pasta art was so complete that it concealed art, and seemed to be pure nature; but in Sontag you always felt the presence of science, and the extraordinary resources of art" (719). The date of the article is an indication of how up-to-the minute Ward was, and how closely in touch, even on the frontier of the Cape, with personalities in the public eye. A rival soprano, Maria Malibran, is also to be seen at the festival, quaffing porter; the normally fastidious Misses Upchurch tolerate this lapse of good taste by

⁶ Ward paid tribute to Mrs Opie by naming her short story for Bentley's Miscellany (1848 [2]: 155-62)) after Mrs Opie's novel Temper, or, Domestic Scenes, published in 1812.

describing it as "'quite original--so like Malibran's independence and naivete'" (151). "The capricious queen of song had soon recovered [sic] her 'indisposition' as soon as she discovered the committee had determined on doing without her, rather than pay her the enormous sum she demanded, and at the last moment had written to say that she would 'assist' at the meeting" (ibid.: 150). The use of topicalities brings out Ward's talent for the acerbic, and Ward shows a deft touch in blending the "real" characters with the fictional ones. When the young Miss Silverly is steadfastly rejecting the unwelcome advances of the Mackcrackins, her close bonnet "was directed in as straight a line as the Thames-tunnel" (ibid.: 127). (The Thames Tunnel was opened to pedestrians in 1843 as a tourist attraction [Altick: 496]). Anne Elizabeth Mackcrackin remarks indignantly that the poke bonnet "'puts you in mind of a Cape waggon'", and the reader is reminded of a wider world and of the life lived by the Mackcrackins before coming to Worcester. The result is a rich and realistically imagined fiction.

A highlight of graphic realism in the novel is the description of the Beaumonts in London:

Our old friends had taken apartments at Gordon's Hotel. It was in a delightful situation; Murray's shop was opposite: it was as good as the Bodleian Library to the Archdeacon, for plenty of Oxford dons were to be met with there, and a dressing-room window looking across Piccadilly down St. James's-street, was a favourite resort of Mrs. Beaumont when at home, which she very seldom was....Breakfast over, away she went through the Arcade....sauntering on, she would proceed through Bond Street to Oxford Street....Home to luncheon at one. After this, more sauntering, unless it rained; then the window was her resource, with its view of coaches, covered with streaming umbrellas, brewers' drays,...a flying fire-engine, muffin and milk-men, twopenny postboys on peculiar ponies, chimney-sweeps, stray guardsmen...and wretched street scavengers.

(ibid.: 199-200)

The party goes to listen to a performance by Paganini, and the Archdeacon is so moved, "he fairly took his wig off and waved it" (ibid.: 201). He and his old clerical friend are vividly and affectionately described as they walk home afterwards:

The light from a shop window shone on them at the moment;

they were moving as gravely along the busy lighted street, as they had done of old in Christchurch meadows.

(ibid.:201)

Ward is skilful in developing character through dialogue.

This is the lively Mrs Beaumont:

I am so glad you have got a strawberry wall....See now, you have as many strawberries on a patch of fourteen feet by five as my old obstinate gardener, at the Chantrey, has on the large bed at the foot of the garden. I must bring him here and shew him this; but he is a perfect old mule, and will never try experiments. I planted an onion near my best rose-bush to improve the scent of the roses, and he dug it up. I want him to plant a rose-tree with a black silk thread run through the root, to procure a black rose as the result, for I have heard of this in Norfolk; but he says Norfolk ain't W--shire, and he has no notion of trying what there is no certainty of succeeding in, so I am obliged to let him alone. Helen, I want you to write me down a set of names for my seedlings. How gay yours look! (HC 1853: 9)

And again:

What a stupid paper! there is not even any one dead that one knows, and they have given the Bishopric of B--to that dreary man, Dr. J--! (ibid.: 244)

Ward shows psychological insight into character here, as Mrs Beaumont has seen the news of Helen's lover's marriage to someone else and is preparing herself to tell Helen.

Mrs Mackcrackin's unconscious comedy is a highlight of the novel, with her belief that "there's nothing like being straight-forward...nothing like coming to the point at once, especially with men" (ibid.: 14). She tells Louisa Cleaveland that her brother is lucky to have gained his election so easily: "I only wish you saw an Irish election; instead of ordering the military out of the town, they are ordered in, and there's as much blood spilt as whisky drank" (ibid.: 19). Ward has fun caricaturing her, but does not allow the reader to forget her innate good-heartedness, which comes to the fore when Helen's brother Charles

is feared lost at sea. She has five daughters to marry off, and sees the landowner, Lionel Cleaveland, as a likely son-in-law.

"Well, I'm sure! who'd have thought of it! Mr. Cleaveland, M.P. We've come to wish you joy, sir, of your promotion. As our poor Irish would say, 'Long life to your honour! and more power to your elbow!' an' I don't see why I should not say so too, for I wish it with all my heart. An' here's the girls ain't a bit behindhand in good wishes nather. Well, haven't we all been walking about with our eyes upon sticks, seeing who could be coaxed into giving plumpers [undecided votes]. I know who got the last three votes for you, Mr. Cleaveland. I know who wore out a pair of bronze kid shoes, in two days, walking after an obstinate chemist and his son-in-law. But Dora has a pair of eyes and a tongue that would win the bird off the bush any day, an' the chemist an' his son-in-law said as much to her, I can tell you, Mr. Cleaveland." (ibid.: 15)

Like the novels of Caroline Norton (1808-1877) and Catherine Gore (1799-1861), Ward's novels are always autobiographical in inspiration. In her memoir of her father, Ward mentions the time in 1828 that he, and presumably she, as an unmarried twenty-year old, and the rest of the family spent in Worcester.⁷ That she was motivated by homesickness to write her domestic novel is demonstrable from poignant descriptions such as this one, almost Blakean in its mood:

"[C]ome and enjoy the fresh smell of the hay" [said Mrs Beaumont]; "they are mowing the turf in the close square for the last time this autumn....Bring out the hoops and sticks for a game at 'Les Graces'....".

Troops of children shouted and romped together among the little hillocks of hay, which perfumed the air. The rooks in the old trees were noisy in their glee; making the most, wise things, of the sunshine. The trees, which clustered in the opposite meadows, were almost all in their prime, but variegated here and there by some which 'had had their day,' and were yet "most lovely in decay." The chimes of the cathedral were more musical from the clearness of the air; for, although it was early in September, the raciness of the autumn was visible in every thing,--in the clear air, the waving of the heavy trees, and the rippling of the river. Though spring dawdled on her visit to us, autumn, in her subdued and most eloquent beauty, lingered with us. (HC 1853: 30)

Unlike Norton and Gore, Ward does not favour the "Silver

⁷ "... Colonel Tidy, in the autumn of the year 1828, took up his abode for a time in that grave cathedral city of Worcester" (ROS: 203).

Fork" genre of novels. In fact, in Helen Charteris, she actively disparages the upper classes and their way of life. The pretentious Silverlys and Leycesters are portrayed as shallow, selfish and worldly people, when not actively malevolent. By the mid-1840s, the "Silver Fork" genre was in decline, and the emphasis was on realistic novels. Sutherland calls the domestic novel "a well-defined anti-type" (LCVF: 192), which predates the "Sensation Novels" of the 1860s. He nominates Thackeray as the founder of the domestic novel with his publication of Vanity Fair in 1847 (ibid.: 193). Charlotte Brontë's purpose in writing Shirley (1849) was to create a novel as undramatic "as Monday morning" (Preface to Shirley). The reviewer of Helen Charteris in the New Monthly Magazine of January 1849 confidently asserts that it is "a tale of every-day life, of remarkable merit, the author of which we know to be Mrs. Ward, and the cathedral town in question Worcester....[It is] a story strictly of realities..." (518-9).

In her choice of plot, Ward followed a tradition of female bildungsroman or rite de passage (Figes: 117), which dates back to Fanny Burney, Mrs Jane West, Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth, among others. Marilyn Butler summarises the plot of The Advantages of Education (1793), by the now little known writer Jane West (1758-1852), which reads like a blueprint for Helen Charteris. In this "pleasant domestic history",

[a]s so often, the heroine, Maria Williams, is an ingenuous young girl whose formal education has just ended, and whose real education in life is just about to begin. Although her mother has now returned to supervise Maria's education, they have been apart for several years, so that Maria begins the novel dangerously impressionable. (Butler 1975: 96)

Burney's Camilla (1796) uses the theme of "the good-natured but impulsive heroine who needs to learn to school her own judgement and to submit it to the superior authority of her parents and her future husband" (ibid.: 140). Edgeworth picks up this apparently evergreen theme in Belinda (1833) and Helen (1834), while Ward follows the tradition with Helen Charteris in 1848. There is a small mystery in connection with a novel written by Emily Eden

(1797-1869), called The Semi-Detached Couple. Although it was published in 1860, Eden declares:

This story was partly written nearly thirty years ago [1834?], before railroads were established, and travelling carriages and four superseded; before postage-stamps had extinguished the privilege of franking, and before the Reform Bill had limited the duration of polling at borough elections to a single day. (Preface: iii)

Had she not made this declaration, one would suppose, with Marilyn Butler, that she were deliberately imitating Maria Edgeworth's Helen (1834) (Butler 1972: 479). It seems highly likely that another source of Eden's suspected plagiarism could have been Harriet Ward's Helen Charteris. The heroine is called Helen Beaufort, and like Ward's Clara Villars and Edgeworth's Cecilia Davenant, she is involved in an incompatible marriage. The setting is a country house, and there are numerous tortured moments between husband and wife. Helen Beaufort in The Semi-Detached Couple had married Lord Teviot without loving him because "she was too young to act for herself, and too much devoted to her parents to ask them to do for her, what she knew would give them pain..." (Eden: 47). So, like Helen Charteris, Eden's book also hinges on the effect of lack of communication between parents and children, caused by children's fear of what the consequences might be if parents know the truth. In each of the three novels, an election forms part of the action. That at this time writers were reading other writers is a point made by Eva Figes (Figes: 118). That there was a great deal of cross-fertilisation of ideas is obvious; sometimes, similarities of names, settings and events seem significantly close.

APPENDIX THREE

The Influence of James Fenimore Cooper on Harriet Ward

Twice during Five Years in Kaffirland, Ward gives an indication of her appreciation of and familiarity with the works of the American writer James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851). Fort Peddie reminds her of

Cooper's descriptions of groups of buildings erected by settlers in the prairies of America. The Fingo huts scattered all round favour the delusion, especially at night, when dark figures stalk to and fro, dimly seen in the light of their fires, and the chant I have endeavoured to describe rises and falls on the air. (Five Years i: 110)

Then, in describing "Cosani Jack", Ward invokes Cooper again:

He has a suspicious character, but has never proved unfaithful. His adventures would help to dress up a volume in Cooper's style, for he lives much amongst the English, but can wander at will from one part of Kaffirland to the other. (Five Years ii: 21)

Peires names "Cosani Jack" as "Sende ('Caffre Jack'), robber, interpreter and spy", one of the band of Xhosa who shifted allegiance between their chiefs and the English (Peires: 130).¹ Perhaps Ward was thinking of the resourceful pioneer scout, Natty Bumppo or Hawk-eye, the hero of Cooper's Leather-Stocking Tales. She would have been an impressionable fifteen years old when his first novel, The Pioneers was published in 1823. Cooper was among Bentley's prominent American authors, and was often represented in the Miscellany, even in the 1840s (Wellesley Index 4: 9). Kathleen Tillotson indicates that Cooper was "widely read, and by men as well as boys" (Tillotson 1954: 6); not only by men and boys, it would seem.

Cooper's powerful influence on Ward's Five Years in

¹ Alexander's catalogue mentions a portrait by I'Ons of "Kosani or Kaffir Jack" in the Africana Museum. I'Ons's order book records a purchase of such a portrait by Colonel Lindsay of the 91st in 1847 (Alexander: 19). The portrait, of Sende and his wife, shows two mild-eyed, beautifully draped figures.

Kaffirland can be detected in her depiction of the land as a compound of wilderness and paradise, and in the confusion and complexity of her reactions to people of another race. The anxiety of the coloniser is symbolised in The Last of the Mohicans (1826) in Cooper's metonymic use of the phrase "the forest" as representative of the wilderness, and which "contained such treacherous inmates" (Cooper: 31). Cooper, like Ward, was influenced by eighteenth-century theories on landscape painting, and believed that the writer's task was realistic representation. H. Daniel Peck points out that while Cooper and others like him claimed that "their art brought real nature into view, the landscapes they produced were strongly influenced and informed by earlier pictorial art" (Peck: 33). He quotes two important observations by E.H. Gombrich that "nature could never have become 'picturesque' for us unless we, too, had acquired the habit of seeing in pictorial terms" and that all paintings "owe more to other paintings than they owe to direct observation" (Gombrich: 315, 317). That these conceptions relate directly to Ward's perception and transmutation of the South African landscape is discussed in Chapter Four.

It is interesting to contrast Cooper's representation of native American people with Ward's view of the Xhosa. The concept of "romantic wildness" (Cooper: 60) is dominant in both; Cooper's description of the young brave, Uncas, is similar to Ward's delineation of Sandile as a "wild child of nature":

The travellers anxiously regarded the upright, flexible figure of the young Mohican, graceful and unrestrained in the attitudes and movements of nature....there was no concealment to his dark, glancing, fearless eye, alike terrible and calm; [or to] the bold outline of his high, haughty features, pure in their native red; or to the dignified elevation of his receding forehead, together with all the finest proportions of a noble head, bared to the generous scalping tuft. (Cooper: 61)

The point of view is the "ingenuous gaze" of the young English woman, Alice, who

gazed at his free air and proud carriage as she would have looked upon some precious relic of the Grecian chisel to which life had been imparted by the intervention of a "miracle"; while Heyward, though accustomed to see

the perfection of form which abounds among the uncorrupted natives, openly expressed his admiration at such an unblemished specimen of the noblest proportions of man. (ibid.: 61)

As with Ward, a white woman looks with admiration on a dark and exotic "Other", though with Cooper, there is an insistence on the opposition of light to dark skin, as he describes his heroines as having such conventional attributes as "dazzling complexions, fair golden hair" and "bright blue eyes". Their "exquisite proportions" are finely "moulded" (ibid.: 20). The phrase "finely moulded", used later to describe the form of a young Huron (ibid.: 288), is one which Ward applies frequently and exclusively to people of colour, such as Amakeya and Clary, the Creole heroine of Helen Charteris. The idea of the Xhosa as replicas of Greek statuary often occurs to Ward, as we have seen. Like Ward, Cooper appreciates the musicality of the native language (ibid.: 237). Cooper discusses an admirable quality in a chief, "an elevation of breeding that many in a more cultivated state of society might emulate" (ibid.: 293). But there is a pattern here that Wylie Sypher has identified in writers of anti-slavery literature. The example of the "Other" race chosen to be elevated is distinguished by his or her complete otherness from the rest of the tribe, who are portrayed as unregenerate, in order to emphasise the virtues of the noble creature, usually of royal blood or even mixed blood.²

Alice says of Uncas,

"I could sleep in peace ...with such a fearless and generous looking youth for my sentinel. Surely...those cruel murders, those terrific scenes of torture...are never acted in the presence of such as he!" (ibid.: 61)

And later she looks at the arch-villain, the Huron leader Magua, who has "a human visage, as fiercely wild as savage art and unbridled passions could make it" (ibid.: 31). He and his people are called devils and savages: Magua has a "dark form and malignant visage" and a "deep guttural laugh ...[which] sounded...to Duncan like the hellish taunt of a demon" (ibid:

² See, passim, Wylie Sypher, Guinea's Captive Kings.

308). When two thousand of these "raving savages" attack Fort William Henry, the writer inhibits himself from dwelling on "the revolting horrors that succeeded" (ibid.: 207).

To a far greater extent than with Ward, Cooper emphasises the question of difference in colour. Cora remarks on something that strikes her as strange: "Who that looks on this creature of nature, remembers the shade of his skin!" (ibid.: 62). It would seem that her perceptions until now have been dominated by an awareness of colour and racial difference. Heyward expresses undying gratitude to Uncas for saving his life, and while they shake hands in an "act of friendship, the two young men exchanged looks of intelligence which caused Duncan to forget the character and condition of his wild associate" (ibid.: 85; my emphasis).

Cooper allows Cora and Uncas to fall in love. Obviously, then, it is not racial disgust which influences Cora's feelings after Magua proposes that she come and "live in his wigwam forever", but her awareness of him as a treacherous villain:

However revolting a proposal of such a character might prove to Cora, she retained, notwithstanding her powerful disgust, sufficient self-command to reply.... And what pleasure would Magua find in sharing his cabin [sic] with a wife he did not love; and one who would be of a nation and color [sic] different from his own? (ibid.: 122)

When Uncas and Cora are dead, Hawk-eye the white scout and Chingachgook, Uncas's father, mourn together. The note of colour is sounded again, though with some optimism; Hawk-eye stretches a hand to Chingachgook across the fresh earth of the grave, having said:

The gifts of our colors [sic] may be different, but God has so placed us as to journey in the same path.... (ibid.: 414)

There are pre-echoes here of Jasper Lyle; in a way, Lyle himself is the obverse of the good-hearted woodsman, Hawk-eye, and the love between Uncas and Cora is a tragic type in reverse of that between Gray and Amayeka.

Cooper's desire to represent the "Other" in all his (never her) strangeness, and to allow the reader to imagine fully the

alien environment finds expression in numerous footnotes, for example: "In vulgar parlance the condiments of a repast are called by the American 'a relish,' substituting a thing for its effect" (ibid.: 62); and often he introduces at this point a personal note: "Some years since, the writer was shooting..." (ibid.,:147). Ward follows his example in these instances too. One cannot ignore the evidence that early reading of Cooper was a formative influence on Ward's own writing, and that her perceptions of place and people had something of their origin on a frontier far from the Eastern Cape.

Note: One of the first examiners of this thesis has pointed out that Cooper "transplanted the novel of sentiment to the wilds. [Ward is indebted] to this, and to Cooper's integration of environment into plot....Ward owes much more to Cooper than is recognised in the candidate's appendix". The topic would evidently be a rewarding one for further research.

APPENDIX FOUR

The Cape and the Kaffirs (1851) and The Cape and the Kafirs (1852): Ward and Cole

In 1851, Harriet Ward re-issued in revised form Five Years in Kaffirland, under the title The Cape and the Kaffirs: A Diary of Five Years' Residence in Kaffirland; with a Chapter of Advice to Emigrants, based on the Latest Returns, and the Most Recent Information Regarding the Colony. Although she alludes to "some little alteration and abridgement" (see "Advertisement" verso "Contents"), the major change is the addition of two chapters, "British Possessions in Southern Africa" and "Information for Emigrants". There are two appendices, "The Deaths of Five British Officers at the Kei" and "Testimonial to Colonel Somerset". The work is otherwise virtually unchanged from its earlier form, and even the dedication remains the same: "My dear Colonel Somerset". One must conclude that Harriet Ward is seizing the opportunity provided by the Eighth Frontier War to keep her opinions at the forefront of public thinking, and she is most unlikely to have encountered any resistance to this desire. There is also a chance for Captain J. Ward to provide a frontispiece of his sketch of the "Passage of the Troops across the Tyumie" and "a map of the seat of war".

Less than a year later, in January 1852, Alfred Whaley Cole published his volume with the identical title: The Cape and the Kafirs: or, Notes on Five Years' Residence in South Africa. It is salutary to compare these two works, rooted as each is in five years' almost exactly contemporaneous experience of the country. A modern historian, Timothy J. Stapleton, vigorously tars Ward and Cole with the same post-colonial brush: "Both Ward and Cole were so overtly racist, even by nineteenth-century standards, that they must be read with suspicion" (Stapleton: 140). What must be read with suspicion is this sweeping statement, and I

hope to prove its fallacies in the course of the present discussion, one of which is that Ward and Cole were identical in their attitudes to race.

Cole arrived in South Africa 1841, having intended to proceed to New Zealand. However, his ship the Prince Rupert was wrecked four miles off Cape Town, and he lost everything. After finding an obliging banker, and being a carefree young bachelor, he decided to chance his luck in the Cape. The book describes his personal adventures, and though he maintains that it is "not mainly to advocate any political or social views", but to amuse and entertain (Cole: v), he makes a number of political suggestions which he considers would improve conditions in the Cape in 1852, such as centralising the seat of government in Grahamstown, granting a liberal constitution, selecting better Governors, and promoting emigration (ibid.: vi). He does not see his task in the responsible light in which Harriet Ward views hers; his measure as a lighthearted and fairly superficial young man can be taken from this statement about the pleasant nature of "stoeps" in Cape Town itself:

To walk there arm-in-arm with a fair friend, into whose eyes you look alternately with the stars, to sit with her under the shade of the orange-tree...at one end of the little terrace, and to talk--a great deal of delicious nonsense.
(ibid.: 25)

His fairly typical attitude to women is unlikely to have coincided with Harriet Ward's: in this entertaining scene, he is discovered

lying on our stretcher, and reading a "fashionable novel" on the plains of Africa. We wonder how the interesting and high-minded and well-tailored hero would look in "leather crackers" and a wide-awake, smoking a short pipe in a Cape wagon; or how the lovely Angelina, the heroine, would like to peel our potatoes for dinner.
(ibid.: 135)

Hardly any of his ideas is original, and his thinking makes use of such stereotypes as "[a] Hottentot is the most improvident, lazy animal on the face of the earth" (ibid.: 79), or, on the "laziness" of the Cape sheep farmer: "[an] 'exquisite' in London, or a flaneur in Paris, is a hardworking animal compared to him"

(ibid.: 87). His preferred word for anyone who is not English is "animal": the "Hottentot" is rather a "finer animal" than the "Bushman" (ibid.: 145), and "the Kafir is certainly a fine animal. He is tall, well-knit, clean-limbed, and graceful in his motions' (ibid.: 177), but of course also "restless" and "thievish" (ibid.: 150). Whereas Ward will sometimes compare indigenes with animals, using similes, Cole's choice of metaphor instead suits his thinking better; they ARE animals, almost. Everyone he meets is subject to his fastidious gaze and generally his ridicule. His crass judgements serve at least to highlight the sensitivity of Ward's judgements. She does not operate from his position of lordly superiority, but usually meets each person and situation without prejudgement.

Cole's most deliberately dehumanising exercise concerns the San leader of his ox-team.

[H]e was about four feet high, and decidedly the ugliest specimen the human race ever beheld, without being deformed in body or limbs; the most prominent feature in his face was the mouth, with its huge, thick, sensual lips. The nose could scarcely be called a projection; at all events it was far less distinguishable in the outline of the side face than the mouth; it was an inverted (or concave) Roman, that is to say, the bridge formed a curve inwards, the nostrils were very wide open, so that you seemed, by means of them, to look a considerable distance into his head. With regard to the eyes, I am guilty of no exaggeration when I assert, that you could not see the eyeballs at all as you looked at his profile, but only the hollows which contained them; it was like looking at a mask when the eyes of the wearer are removed from the orifices cut for them in the pasteboard. The cheek-bones were immense, the cheeks thin and hollow; the forehead was shelving: in fact he could scarcely be said to have a forehead at all. He was two or three shades from being black, and he had even less hair than his countrymen generally--it was composed of tight wooly knots, with a considerable space of bare skin between each. So much for the young gentleman's features!

The expression was diabolically bad, and his disposition corresponded to it.... (ibid.: 142-3)

The writer might believe that the minute detail of this description will result in a finely objective view, but the contrary is true. The aim is to show how far short this example of the human race falls short of the observer's standards of acceptable appearance. In denigrating these non-western

features, so much so that they are seen as "diabolically bad", the speaker affirms the "normality" of western features. This person is not seen as an individual but as a list of features and so his body is relegated to the status of an object (see Mills: 90): a most effective way of Othering.

Harriet Ward, on the other hand, is charmed by people of Khoi or San origin, and devotes time in each major work of fiction to extolling at least one representative of each group: Juli and Nip in Hardy and Hunter, Plaatje in Helen Charteris, May, Fitje and the baby Ellen in Jasper Lyle. Compare the tone of Ward's description of May, the San groom attendant on Frankfort and Ormsby:

He is about three feet and a half high; his head would be bald, but for a few bead-like tufts of hair, scattered vaguely about the surface. His eyes are long, black, twinkling, and very merry, but his expression is less cunning than that of the Hottentot physiognomy. His nose! where is it? His mouth is wide, but his white teeth redeem this feature from its ugliness; his skin is of the palest gingerbread.

The countenance, however, is far from unpleasing;...The hands and feet are exquisitely small, and the frame lithe and agile as a monkey's....[He] is a capital mimic....

(JL: 19)

Through the warm appreciation of the observer, something of May's Otherness comes across, but much more of his humanity. Like Plaatje, he lives on the page as a rounded personality in his own right, not merely as a representative of a strangely ugly race to be marvelled at. Ward looks for the positive, Cole searches for the negative. This is how Ward describes May's Khoi wife:

[I]n spite of indolent propensities, Fitje made a good and tender mother, and a most kind wife. She loved gossiping in the sunshine, she could not resist a dance to the music of the drums and fifes; but she did not smoke a pipe, she was an excellent washerwoman, and she was a regular attendant at the Dutch chapel. She had a Hottentot taste for smart douks, but she never tasted Cape brandy....[T]he family of the bushman, his merry-hearted wife and good-tempered baby, presented a picture as agreeable to look at, in a moral point of view, as that of any independent gentleman on earth.

(JL: 34)

There is much one could censor as Othering and Eurocentric here,

but the gap is certainly not the chasm it is with Cole. As always, the mark of ultimate approval as a human being with Ward has to do with domestic animals: when the dogs belonging to Frankfort and Ormsby catch sight of May, they raise a "cry of joy" (ibid.: 36). An understanding of the extent of what the San people have lost is poignantly and simply conveyed: May stands a minute or two, "whistling as gleefully as if if he were 'monarch of all he surveyed'" (ibid.: 36; my emphasis).

What is most striking is Cole's arrogant assumption that he has the right to make judgements on another's physiognomy, because he believes that he is a member of the finest example of the human race, and his features must necessarily be the only ones aesthetically acceptable. It would be simplistic to say that this is the male colonial attitude; there are many women of the period who would endorse all that Cole asserts. Harriet Ward's more subtle perception of other human beings has to do with an intelligent refusal to accept the conventional response without testing it for herself. The difference in attitude may be partly due to Cole's immaturity and naive belief that he is being entertaining, but his approach to the colony, to its people and its animals, there simply as specimens to be compared unfavourably with the English, or mocked or hunted, comes close to the post-colonial stereotype of a racist, patronising colonialist. One remembers how often Ward is able to see herself from the point of view of the Other; Cole could not conceive that the Other might be capable of a point of view, or should he or she have one, whether it would be worth any consideration at all. There is however an exception to this blindness, confirmed by the findings of historians such as Jeff Peires: Cole, unusually for the time, loathes Sir Harry Smith, and finds him "miserably incompetent for the task placed before him" (Cole: 311). If he had listened to the colonists, says Cole, Smith would have learnt

that so far from being the terror of the Kafirs, he was their constant laughing-stock, that his bombastic speeches, his pantomimic antics, and his unseemly oaths were respected and imitated with intense gusto by the very men they were intended to alarm, in the presence of their applauding and

delighted fellow-savages.

(ibid.: 311)

Something of Cole's attitude of master to subject race can be estimated from the following account. He believes that the San team-leader has maliciously allowed the wagon to crash down a hill, and very shocked, he, Cole, seizes a

heavy sea-cow-hide whip [and] belaboured him with all my strength...as the little wretch had made the most bare-faced attempt on my life. I almost thought my strength would be exhausted before I could get a sign from the young gentleman that he felt my blows, but at length he uttered a yell of pain, and I knew he had had enough.... (Cole: 144)

The arrogance associated with this is similar to that which notices a buzzard flying overhead and shoots it simply because "we never shot so large a bird before" (ibid.: 135); the right to do so is beyond question.

The attitude to hunting sharply distinguishes Ward from Cole, and from most men writing at this time, when the recording of wholesale slaughter is the order of the day, and concomitant with virility and daring. Cole has the greatest admiration for the legendary "mighty hunter" Roualeyn Gordon Cumming (1820-1866). A review of Cumming's book Five Year's of a Hunter's Life (1850), which appeared in The Athenaeum of 6 July 1850, glorifies the hunter as one who says "Ha, ha!" to the hippopotamus, and mentions the Celestial Exhibition-room at Knightsbridge, the walls of which are clad with the "peltry" of "the Cape wilds and fastnesses" as a result of his efforts (702-3). Richard Owen¹ in his review of the same book in the Quarterly Review of December-March 1851 seems to share Ward's view of the excesses of the South African hunters:

There is an unavoidable sadness in the character of the incidents recorded, and the endless and too often useless slaughter of God's creatures will be revolting to most minds. Yet the style is so natural and fresh from the scene...that it is difficult to lay the volumes down.

(4)

Cole proudly shoots a leopard, recording its "terrific roar of pain" (ibid.: 92), and marvels that the Dutch farmers are too

¹ Identified by the Wellesley Index II 354.

lazy even to "sport". By contrast, Hardy and Hunter kill only when necessary for survival. "Sandy was grieved to knock the helpless [coney] on the head, yet what were we to do?" (HH: 203). Paul Hardy grieves at the death of a lion, and turns his head away at the sight of the "noble mane all dabbled with blood and dust"; "I had seen smaller game killed in the highlands of Argyleshire, but not even the death of a stag on the Kilgarry property could ever have affected me, I think, like the fall of this lordly creature" (ibid.: 269). This is Ralph Rover involved in a killing a gorilla simply as a trophy in The Gorilla Hunters (1862?): having broken both its thighs with a shot,

Jack sent a ball into its chest and the king of the African woods fell dead at our feet....Pity at first predominated in my heart, then I felt like an accomplice to a murder, and then an exulting sensation of joy at having obtained a specimen of one of the rarest animals in the world overwhelmed every other feeling. (Ch. XI)

The feeling obviously needs to be nurtured, as next day four more of these rarest animals are shot, and the killing proceeds with increasing excitement.

One of Cole's contemporaries had reservations about the value of his work, expressed in a review in The Athenaeum of 31 January 1852.

Mr Cole writes of Cape Colony and its affairs and people as he would ride a steeple chase in a rough country. There are dash and adventure in his narrative,--the offspring of youth and boundless animal spirits; but these are little tempered by the sobriety which knowledge and reflection engender in men who have seen the world. The writer seems to be a sample,--a good sample, we would add,--of what is called the "rising generation". Fast--to use the slang of his order--he undoubtedly is, and he tries, often offensively, to introduce into his book the jargon of the stable and the mess-room. But his evident enjoyment of life--his gay humour--his frank confessions--his constant flow of good spirits, will probably induce the graver class of readers to overlook faults, which, even as faults, are not without something of "the graciousness of youth."...His proper sphere- and he seems to know it-- is, the colonial ball-room, the Kafir's hut, or the African's festival;--it lies in the scene for observation or adventure, not in that of politics and philosophy....Mr. Cole has written a pleasant, if not very instructive, book on the Cape and its inhabitants of many colours. (135-6)

Cole must be indulged on account of his youth and his sex. What is clear in a comparison of the two books is that his is not as accomplished, balanced or useful as Harriet Ward's, nor has it the authority or status of that work. It is obvious that in contrast to Ward, Cole has not the faintest suspicion that colonialism might not be the glorious enterprise it is said to be. One would suspect Cole of having taken advantage of Ward's title and situation, to help the sales of his book, written so many years after the events recorded. The identical nature of the titles however remains something of a mystery. Perhaps Cole's publisher, Richard Bentley, was exercising his notoriously perverse streak in offering a challenge to Henry Bohn's publication of a year earlier. Perhaps both Bentley and Cole assumed that the work of a male author would automatically carry more weight than, and so supersede, that of a woman on the same subject. So established was Ward's reputation as an authority, however, that such an assumption would have been unfounded.

Note: There is a frisson of interest to be gained in noting that the copy of Ward's The Cape and the Kaffirs donated to Rhodes University Library in 1932 by the historian Sir George Cory has a hand-written inscription on the flyleaf in the year of its publication:

To Erwin Millidge, pupil of 4th Class in High School of Edinburgh this prize was adjudged for exemplary conduct and for private studies by John Carmichael: Master. Sepim_[]
1850.51

Harriet Ward would have been pleased by this Scottish educational connection and the accolade conferred by John Carmichael, as already noted on page 132 of this thesis.

APPENDIX FIVE

Helen Charteris and Jasper Lyle as Popular Novels: Contemporary Reviews

1. Helen Charteris

Bentley's Miscellany published a review of Helen Charteris in 1848, and because the novel had been published by Bentley's house, one must regard it with caution as being an example of puffery. It is fulsome in its praise: "The endeavour of the authoress has been to represent life as it is, and manners as they exist in one of our cathedral cities" (Bentley's Miscellany 1848 [2]: xxiv: 633). The reader must not expect "'intense' writing, ...startling situations, unexpected or impossible meetings, unforeseen relationships, and 'all that sort of thing'". Nevertheless, the heroine has a story to tell, and the authoress is praised for having achieved the difficult task of inventing a story "at once probable and interesting", with characters drawn "after nature". The reviewer is reminded of "Miss Austen". Readers will have to confess

that they have not seen in modern domestic fiction any characters much better drawn than the moral and musical Archdeacon, his wife (a perfect gem) Mrs. Beaumont, and Clary, the Creole--a delineation, we think, hardly to be surpassed. The manner in which the heroine tells her story and discloses her own character is admirable; and the feminine delicacy of tact with which her lover Leycester is shown to be a heartless scoundrel, without being proclaimed to be one, is a stroke of art worthy of the highest praise.
(ibid.: 633)

The Athenaeum gave Helen Charteris a rather mixed review a few months after its publication (4.11.1848: 1101-2). The reviewer complained that the novel did not fulfil the expectations raised in the preface, which was "calculated to prepare the reader for a gentle, sound-hearted, shrewd domestic world: something... 'out of the common way'". The novel, "though not without merit", did not enthrall the critic:

Sweetness of temper there is--in the characters of Mrs. Charteris and Lionel Cleaveland--and there is humour--in the

exploits and ambitions of the Mackcrackin mother and daughters; but Miss Burney's Mr. Dubster and Mr. Dickens's Major Babcock are less bountiful in their tediousness than the bores in question--and the authoress of "Helen Charteris" is neither a Burney nor a Boz in neatness of hand or liveliness of colouring. (1101)

The heroine's relations with her lover Leycester and the story and trials of "Clary the Creole" are found to be improbable.

But the novel is written in an easy manner--and has its pleasant side. Many dismal tales have "leaked out" touching the pride and prejudice of the "good society" of cathedral towns:--"Helen Charteris" shows us what its cheerfulness, its raciness, its old-world kindness and refinement may be. (1101-2)

The review finishes with a decidedly back-handed compliment:

That benevolent old couple Mr. and Mrs. Beaumont would redeem the book were it twenty times more insipid than it is.

Perhaps the reviewer might have been pre-disposed towards the novel had he or she known that Harriet Ward was the author. In The Athenaeum of 8 December 1849 there was a review of Past and Future Emigration, which included the following approving comment:

This book is said to be the production of a military man who has been engaged in the wars of the Cape for some time past: but it derives its chief value from the fact that it bears on its title-page the imprimatur of Mrs. Ward, and contains a sensible preface from her pen. (1154)

The review in the less high-brow New Monthly Magazine in January 1849 was far more enthusiastic, which might have made one suspicious that it was an example of puffery. However, though the magazine was published by a notorious practitioner of puffery, Henry Colburn, Helen Charteris was published by Richard Bentley, and the two were rivals and not on good terms at this time. One can judge the reviewer then not to have been under coercion in this instance, but he or she must have had inside information to have been able to identify the author and the setting:

[W]e ought not to have omitted to notice a tale of every-day life, of remarkable merit, the author of which we know to be Mrs. Ward, and the cathedral town in question Worcester,

a tale which shows us what such a town can be when viewed in another light, one, too, in which we have ourselves contemplated it--all cheerfulness, liberality, hospitality, and refinement. (NMM [January 1849]: 518-9).

Whereas the Athenaeum reviewer had found it incomprehensible that Helen should have been loyal to Leycester, to the present reviewer Ward's view of the subject was "true to nature":

It is a question of steadfastness against self-interest, and love in the bosoms of most innocent young hearts is ... totally full of self-sacrifice. A woman will forgive almost anything in the man to whom she has once made over her whole heart. (519)

The story is felt to be "strictly of realities", and "when at the conclusion the cathedral close was exchanged for the park, there is a general glee, and a prevalent joyousness, that almost induced us to read the work over again". Surprisingly, this reviewer completely ignores the plight of Clara, and the sombre side of the novel, an indication of his or her failure to see anything of the real psychology and significance of the novel.

Superficial readings could have been occasioned by the flood of novels onto the market at mid-century. Reviewers were becoming fractious; this is J.M.W. in Sharpe's London Magazine:

It seems probable that cultivated society in England will come to universal novel-writing, at last. Even now, it is almost as great a distinction for a man or woman not to have written a novel at all, as to have written a very good one. Our fathers had their annual hundreds from the Minerva Press, but we have thousands and tens of thousands from Colburn, and Bentley, and Chapman, and all "the men of the Row [Paternoster]".

(v. 8, November 1848-February 1849: 213-4)

An anonymous reviewer in The Athenaeum complains

It is a discouraging feature of the times we live in (however inevitable to an era in which every second man has written his tragedy, and every third woman her novel, and every man, woman and child his, her and its quantum suff. of verse) that a new hero or heroine cannot be introduced to our acquaintance without a dozen imitations being forthwith turned loose upon us. The number of excellent children who have died in emulation of Little Nell is rather

agonising.¹ We fear that a company of Free Tradresses may be expected to take the field, wearing the colours of the spirited Becky: while here we have Interesting Governesses No. 2, Jane Eyre being, of course, No. 1.

(Review of Georgina Hammond by Mrs Mackenzie: 10 March 1849: 251)

Obviously, to have been successful under these circumstances, a writer had to offer what the reading public wanted. Harriet Ward seems to have been able to keep her audience happy, while at the same time fulfilling a secret need for self-expression and self-revelation. However, the need to achieve both aspects of her work, which would unavoidably at times be in conflict, explains to some extent the aporia--Derrida's "deadlock, or 'double bind,' between incompatible or contradictory meanings", as Abrams defines the word (Abrams: 205)--which is so disconcerting in Ward's work, and never more so than in the complexities of Helen Charteris and Jasper Lyle.

2. Jasper Lyle

The British Library has a copy of a Routledge Two-Shilling Railway Library reprint of Jasper Lyle (no date, but dated 1879 in the British Library Catalogue). After 1855, as Richard D. Altick points out, these "yellow-backs" with their characteristic binding--"glazed colored paper laid over boards, with an eye-catching picture on the front and advertisements on the back" were "the most inspired invention of the era" (Altick 1957: 299). Ward's novel has a lurid picture on the front, of a crucified Lyle being regarded with horror by two redcoats in shakoes. His eyes are turned to heaven, and he is naked except for a red undergarment, and some red cloths tying his legs together. There is an assegai in his side, but no sign of the Xhosa. The artist has hit on the sensational quality of the hero's death, and no doubt Jasper Lyle would have been a best-seller still in 1879.

¹ Harriet Ward herself has just such an excellent child in mind in Hester Fleming: "The sketch of Mary is from the MS. Memoir of the beloved daughter of valued friends" (Hester Fleming: vii).

Robin Gilmour's definition of the so-called "sensation novel" is applicable to the genre of Jasper Lyle: "[It was] associated with Wilkie Collins [and was] the lurid anti-type of the domestic novel, dealing melodramatically with a hidden world of middle-class nightmare" (Gilmour: 5). Ironically, had the readers of the Railway Library looked below the surface, the sensation of shock might have been even more unsettling.

The kind of novel in demand reflected, as newspapers did, the world (Altick 1991: 10). Gilmour bears this out: "The relations between the novel and society are particularly close and fascinating here: nearly every major novel of the decade can be seen as a response, direct or indirect, to the upheaval of the times" (Gilmour: 4). Jasper Lyle was just what the public was wanting; one presumes that the subversive aspects of the novel had been successfully hidden from the patriarchy at least.

There are often complaints that Victorian novelists are uninterested in or unskilled at shaping plots. "Nothing would persuade them to concentrate," said Virginia Woolf.

Able by nature to spin sentence after sentence melodiously, they seem to have left out nothing that they knew how to say. Our ambition, on the other hand, is to put in nothing that need not be there. What we want to be there is the brain and the view of life; the autumnal woods, the history of the whale fishing industry and the decline of stage coaching we omit entirely. (Woolf: 146)

The reviewer of Jasper Lyle in The Athenaeum of 27 September 1851, used, one would think, to mid-Victorian novels, nevertheless complains, as we have seen, that it is all too much:

Mrs. Warde [sic] has been in Kafirland,--seen a great deal of life there,--and picked up much information about Hottentot Kraals [sic], Dutch Boers, native warfare, and colonial life. But the wish to introduce everything which she knows, to paint all that she has seen from every point of view at once, to crowd in every possible kind of adventure, to leave nothing undescribed and nothing unsaid, has made her book like an escaped nightmare--confused, tumultuous, and disagreeable. (1020)

Perhaps it was what had been left unsaid and something he intuited about the novel and its intentions that made this reviewer so uncomfortable.

Elisabeth Jay sees the problem as being dependent on the fact that Victorian novels have none of the "tightness of structure or the management of overall coherence which might have come with careful revision. Sometimes novels almost burst apart, because of the multiplicity of themes, images, and ideas with which they teem" (Jay: 5). David Cecil speaks of the "irresponsible" Victorians, who "crowd realism and fantasy, thrills and theories, knockabout farce and effects of pure aesthetic beauty, cheek by jowl on the same page" (Cecil: 18). O. Elizabeth McWhorter Harden considers Maria Edgeworth's lack of capacity for framing a plot to be her greatest failure as a creative writer (McWhorter Harden: 232). R.H. Super goes so far as to see The Warden as completely lacking in plot: "[It] is a novel almost without incident" (Super: 70); this is hardly a charge which could be levelled against Jasper Lyle.

David Cecil has some further cogent things to say about the early Victorian conception of what a novel should be. To begin with, as was certainly true of Harriet Ward, the Victorians thought a novel was "a picture of life; and therefore that it was entertaining in so far as it was an accurate picture of life" (Cecil: 188). They did not see that it was necessary for their books to be united by a single idea, and so it did not matter if they were formless (ibid.: 196). "It is very rare for a Victorian novelist before George Eliot to conceive the story as an organic whole of which every incident and character forms a contributory and integral part" (ibid.: 14). Cecil paints a completely easygoing attitude: "Because [the novel] was looked on as light reading its readers did not expect a high standard of craft, nor mind if it had occasional lapses" (ibid.: 23).

This will partly explain why Harriet Ward's two major novels are likely to be judged as formless and simply ambling along. She

is accused of "a confused and improbable story-line, clumsy transitions and authorial intrusions" (van Wyk Smith 1990: 10). As was the case with Trollope, her forte was characterisation and dialogue rather than plot,² and her special flair was for setting a scene. Ward's authorial intrusions require some indulgence: she says early in Jasper Lyle that we shall discover that she is always inclined to like her reader (JL: 172). She appears very anxious not to be misjudged or condemned out of hand and so is ready with a counter-argument to any demurral:

You will think it all very novel-like and romantic to have brought these delightful, handsome, intelligent officers into the wilderness, and established them there with an obliging mamma, and a soldierlike [sic] host, and two charming daughters--you will consider it all perfectly correct in romance, but not quite so true to nature. Ah! if you had seen the world at home and abroad as I have done, dear reader, you would have discovered that romance and reality are much more nearly allied than untravelled folks imagine.

(ibid.: 184)

One might think that such "innocent" authorial intrusion provides a smokescreen for the transgression concealed below.

The reviewer of Jasper Lyle in The Athenaeum of 27 September 1851 rather unfairly complains that the novel is like "so much ill-leavened, ill-kneaded, half-baked bread--no one part coheres to the other"; one wonders whether he or she would have used such a simile if the author were presumed to be male.

The action is hopelessly confused, and the characters are all in each other's way. There is a love story, the venue of which ought to have been laid in some London drawing-room of fashionable life; and there are colonial politics, and a night attack on a settlement by the Kafirs, and a battle: --but what it is all about, the most patient reader must not expect to know.

(The Athenaeum: 1020)

With lordly condescension, the reviewer decides that "Mrs. Warde" has the ability to have written a "good book about Kafirland and Kafir politics" if she had simply "said what she meant, and gone to less expense in cloudy declamation and fine writing". Harriet

² Victoria Glendinning makes this point about Trollope in her biography of him: 234.

Ward must have ground her teeth at the phallogocentric injustice of it; the story is certainly not obscure, and one does not need to know *Le Vaillant*, as the reviewer suggests, in order to make sense of it or the countryside described. Compared with some contemporary novels (Maria Edgeworth's *Helen*, for example) it coheres very well indeed, and could never be accused of being dull. I am sure some of Ward's readers felt, with a present-day critic, that "the novel reveals a persuasive familiarity with both the landscapes and people (British, Boer and Xhosa) of the frontier, as well as with its military realities" (Van Wyk Smith 1990: 10).

APPENDIX SIX

Harriet Ward and Emigration

In 1845, the first signs of potato blight occurred in Ireland, and by "Black Forty-Seven", that country was in the grip of the worst famine Europe had seen. Winifred Gérin records that in the first great frost of the winter of 1846, after the year of the famine, thousands of destitute Irish died (Gérin 1987: 334). Even those escaping to Liverpool died of exposure on the quays. Emigration gathered pace as an alternative to starvation: one million died; one million emigrated.

...it was proved, that, between the months of January and March, 1847, nine thousand natives of Ireland had sailed from Liverpool to America!

(Five Years ii: 241)

Emigration as a solution to the problems of British poverty and unemployment seems always to have been a preoccupation of Harriet Ward's. Her sympathies with the poor, and with the Irish in particular, are early made plain: in Recollections of an Old Soldier, she remembers the anecdotes her father told of his time as a young volunteer in Ireland in the early 1790s, and of how he

sat down at the hearths of the cabins belonging to the very people he was sent to "keep in order;" how he made friends with them at their very thresholds.... Poor, poor Ireland! there is great pleasure in duly appreciating your good qualities, they do, or at least did, so far predominate over the bad ones.... Let us hope that some method may yet be discovered for directing the good impulses of Irish hearts into their proper channel....

(ROS: 8-9)

(At this point, as characteristic of her early writing, she pulls herself up short, for meddling, inappropriately as a woman, "with the fiery furnace of politics" [9]). Colonel Tidy returned to Ireland soon after his marriage, to join the 24th Regiment (ROS: 68). When Ward hears of her father's death in Canada in 1835, she is in the Cove of Cork, on board a vessel due to sail to St

Helena. Harriet Ward's husband was born in Waterford, Ireland, and this no doubt further strengthened her interest. Surgeon William Munro records that amongst the sprinkling of Highlanders in the ranks of the 91st Regiment there were many Irishmen (Records: 217) and these the Wards would have got to know well. She notes with feeling :

When I read the miserable accounts from Ireland of its past year's woe, and the wretched prospect for the next, I long to hear of ships making their way to Algoa Bay, with emigrants from that country.

(Five Years ii: 191)

And again:

The Pekin has brought us letters and papers from England. In all we read of the distress in Ireland and the Highlands. Oh that we had some of these starving people here to till the ground now lying waste!

(ibid.: 200)

[W]e learned from English papers that the subject of emigration, "as a relief from the alarming destitution of the United Kingdom," was discussed in various societies....Let us hope that some of our poor may, some day, find safe refuge here [in the Cape].

(ibid.: 241-2)

In a letter to Philippart from the frontier, she writes: "Please God this land may yet be a safe refuge for our famine stricken Irish population. Now is their time to emigrate..." (Brenthurst Letter 7: 2.4.1847).

As always, Ward is alert to current trends of opinion (and in this case she is in advance of them), and sees her opportunity to have her say. The last pieces on South Africa she publishes in Bentley's Miscellany are an account of her experiences just before leaving the Eastern Province, and each has the significant word "emigrant" in its title. The first, "The Emigrant Party; or, Our Last Treck in Southern Africa", appears in November 1848 (v.xxiv), and the second, "The Happy Valley; or, The Emigrant's Home", in January 1849 (v.xxv). In the former, despite a declaration that "[t]hese pages...are unsuited to discussions", she presents "a slight sketch of an emigrant party", as Bentley's will "probably be read by those who...are interested in the

subject of emigration or colonization". What moves her to do this is "the cry of the hungry and the wretched" (BM (xxiv): 472). We cannot doubt that her concern is genuine and not merely self-serving, so strong are her sympathies for the Irish and the poor generally. In the second article, she describes a visit to the Winterberg to view a Bushman cave with paintings, but concentrates upon portraying the admirable lives and humanitarian motives of a party of Scottish emigrants, the Pringles of Glenthorn. She concludes by contrasting the "pauperism, disease, and discontent" she finds on her return to England in June 1848 with the prosperity and happiness of the Pringle settlement, founded on the emigrant's industry, patience, perseverance and integrity. The implication is that any of the poor of the United Kingdom could emulate the success of the Pringle party. What she does not make plain is that the Pringles were not indigent, but people of substance and education before their arrival in the eastern Cape in the 1820s.

Ward's tentative venture into the question of emigration is quickly followed by a piece of good luck. Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Hungerford Delaval Elers Napier (1808-70) had written a choleric account of his experiences in the Cape, and either he or his publisher, Thomas Cautley Newby, no doubt taking note of the success of Five Years in Kaffirland, asked Ward to edit Napier's work. That Napier would have approved of such an arrangement is borne out by a comment he makes in a contemporary volume, Excursions in Southern Africa (1849). He writes:

I have become acquainted here with Captain Ward, of the 91st Regiment, the husband of the lady who has written the "Scenes in Kaffirland" in the United Service Magazine.

(pp.374-5)

(John Ward must have become resigned to his claim to fame: most people who met the couple and recorded the event showed more interest in Harriet, as I have noted in chapter one.) In an article in the United Service Magazine of January 1848, Napier defers to Harriet Ward as having "a more able pen than mine" (27).

The volume which results from this collaboration is an interesting one. Published as Past and Future Emigration; or, The Book of the Cape (1849), its title betrays Ward's influence, and she elaborates on this in the the seven-page "Editress's Preface". She was flattered by the request to edit the work, she says, but found the writer to be "excitable" and open to misinterpretation. She felt obliged to "modify" the "tone of the work", in order, by implication, to avoid the defamation of "many right-minded men" (ii). She was obviously given a very free hand, by both author and publisher. We presume that Parts I and II are largely Napier's own, but Part III--a third of the book: the chapters on emigration and the convict question--Ward acknowledges as her own, and her contribution is given precedence in the title.

That the easiest part of her task was the composing of Part III is obvious from her statement that "...the chapters relating to Emigration and the convict question are framed from the rough draft of a paper written in June 1848" (PFE: 378). This would have been the month she arrived back in England, and her Scottish thriftiness must have been satisfied at once again not having to waste a finely-wrought piece of writing. She has no qualms about quoting verbatim from the two Bentley's Miscellany articles referred to above, even though these had found their way into Volume II of Five Years in Kaffirland, published the year before (1848). Both her public and her publishers seem to have been very tolerant. Initially, Past and Future Emigration was published anonymously, but in its re-issue in 1851, both Napier and Ward are identified. Curiously, the title is now reversed, and the volume becomes The Book of the Cape; or, Past and Future Emigration. One can guess from this re-issue that Napier and Ward have assumed the status of authorities on emigration (and this despite the fact, as Brian Cheadle points out, that at mid-century there was a flood of guides for emigrants [Cheadle: 39]).

We can get some idea of the hard work Ward had to put into "modifying" Napier's text from comments made in a

substantial review of his Excursions in Southern Africa in Sharpe's London Journal (II (1850): 120-5), a work in which she had no modifying hand. One of the "right-minded men" mentioned above is identified, in the reviewer's strong criticism of Napier's "offensive and uncalled-for allusion to the memory of Mr. [Thomas] Pringle", and this is "not the only instance in which the friendliness of a kind critic would have advised Colonel Napier to have erased a passage" (121-22). He is later accused of using

more vehemence than truth....There is an affectation of ferocity about his writing, which ill-becomes a British officer; and if all his family shared his feelings, there would be little credit in being allied by blood to all the Napiers.

(122)

The reviewer resorts to heavy irony to express his distaste for Napier's attitudes:

Colonel Napier['s]...greatest enemies appear to be savages, missionaries, and young civilians in black coats and white cravats. His hatred of the Kaffirs is accounted for by their ferocity, of the missionaries by their meddling manners, and of the civilians by their conceited dandyism.

(123)

For Ward, South Africa is a place of promise for those prepared to work hard. There is a ring of sincerity in the following statement which seems to indicate personal feeling:

...[Few emigrants] who do return home remain here [in England]: on the contrary, they long for the space and comforts they have enjoyed in South Africa, and feel discontented with the position they occupy in England, where the lines of demarcation are so strongly marked. between the various grades of society, especially when compared with colonial circles.

(PFE: 315-16)

There are no beggars in the Eastern Province of South Africa, she emphasises (378), but as to the question of admitting convicts,

It will be time enough to talk of making the Cape a penal settlement when it shall have acquired a population of industrious protectors, and when

sufficient time has elapsed to prove the existence of peace.

(378)

She expresses satisfaction that her long-held views are now proven to be justified:

As regards the destitution of the lower classes of Great Britain and Ireland, and the demand for a working population at the Cape[,] we were long ago prepared to state the importance of emigration to Southern Africa, but we take our leave of the reader, satisfied at the delay in publishing such an opinion since it is at last confirmed by others whose voice will add weight to our own.

(378)

She is writing shortly after very strong protest against Earl Grey's decision to transport convicts to the Cape in the Neptune,¹ and no doubt her informed opinion was once again a major influence on the attitudes of people in power, as well as on those of the general public.

Ten years later, in 1859, Ward introduces her "tale of boyish adventure", Hardy and Hunter, in the following words:

During the progress of this work through the press a great movement in favour of emigration has taken place at the Cape of Good Hope....The story of "Hardy and Hunter" could, therefore, hardly appear at a more opportune moment; since, although but a tale of boyish adventure, it relates to scenes which, it is to be hoped, will become familiar to many a British settler, now struggling against poverty in our own over-populated island....Colonization, with her trusty handmaidens, Commerce and Agriculture, will, by God's

¹ "When [Earl] Grey proposed to send convicts to Capetown provided colonial opinion approved...opinion did not approve. Nevertheless, Capetown heard that the convicts, mostly Irishmen captured in 'Widow McCormack's potato patch rebellion' of 1848, were coming in the Neptune. Neither convicts nor Irishmen were popular in Capetown in those days....[and] a mass meeting of 5 000 formed an Anti-Convict Association [March 1849]". (Walker: 241).

blessing, be the best antidotes to those evils which have hitherto been the stumbling blocks to Emigration.
(HH: v-vi)

Yet again, a serendipitous conjunction of Ward's interests and events of the time has occurred.².

². Ward's venture into children's authorship was probably inspired by that of her heroines Maria Edgeworth and Harriet Martineau. The latter particularly, as a section of her Illustrations of Political Economy (1832-4), was a bestseller. This was Life in the Wilds, "irresistible in its account of the survival of English settlers in South Africa left destitute by ravaging Bushmen, a survival made possible by division of labour and distribution of wealth, whether honey from a tree or firewood collected by children. The first 1500 copies sold out and 5000 more were demanded" (DBWW: 454).

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[I have dated those letters about which there is some confusion, from internal evidence, and for ease of reference in this thesis, have numbered them chronologically.]

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Brenthurst Letter 3: December, 1845, January, 1846? to Sir John Philiphardt. ["I now send you a military story called 'Selling Out'...".]

Brenthurst Letter 4: January 3rd, 1846; Graham's Town. [To Philiphardt?]

Brenthurst Letter 5: February 19th, 1846; Fort Brown, near Graham's Town, to Philiphardt.

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