5. Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and the Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 92–94. Peter Brooks also takes up the analysis of spectatorial enthrallment as "The Aesthetics of Astonishment," in *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (1976; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 24–55.
6. The best account of the subgenres may be found in Matthew Buckley, "Early English Melodrama," in *The Cambridge Companion to English Melodrama*, ed. Carolyn Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
7. This is the argument of *Melodrama Unbound: Across History, Media, and National Cultures*, ed. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).
8. See for example Nicholas Vardac, *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Method from Garrick to Griffith* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949) and Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs, *Theater to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
9. Other forms of the strip include William Hogarth's serial paintings and comic strips—at the earlier and later historical moments of stage melodrama. Erving Goffman's frame analysis offers a later, sociological version of strip-thinking.
10. Geoffrey Batchen, *Burning with Desire: The Conception of Photography* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997). But see also Garrett Stewart, *Between Film and Screen: Modernism's Photo Synthesis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

Memory

JUDITH STODDART

IN 1869 John Stuart Mill published a new edition of his father's *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* (1829), with a critical apparatus intended to update this foundational associationist psychology by reference to more recent discoveries in mental science. But the apparatus's explanatory power breaks down in the chapter on memory. As the elder Mill wraps up his demonstration that memory is a form of association,

where "sensation B, combined with the idea of self, calls up the idea of sensation A combined with the idea of self," John Stuart inserts a footnote. What he adds to this process is not a scientific update, however, but a leap of faith: to remember was to combine an association with a "belief that the corresponding sensation was actually felt *by me*."[1] And here mental science was caught in a conundrum: that belief was both generative of memory and its product. The conviction that self A and B are connected marks the association as memory; and yet, as he comments elsewhere, "I see no reason to think that there is any cognizance of an Ego until memory commences."[2] Thus "explaining memory by Self," as his father's associationism would have it, "seems very like explaining a thing by the thing."[3]

In J. S. Mill's view, "the one fact which the Psychological theory cannot explain, is the fact of Memory" because it was something of a chicken/egg problem for a field of study that assumed the continuity of ego from the outset.[4] This conundrum may well help explain why, as Nicholas Dames has suggested, memory went underground in mid-Victorian psychology.[5] Samuel Butler infamously revived the issue in his *Life and Habit* (1877), where he literalized the problem by arguing that causality was the wrong way of understanding the relation of the chicken to the egg: both were merely a "part-phase" of a transgenerational "unconscious memory." Here the thing *is* the thing: ego is self-identical with memory because the individual is merely the "continuation of the personality of every ovum in the chain of its ancestry."[6] As he later summarized the drift of this argument, memory should be understood as a process not of mental association but of organic "assimilation . . . the imbuing one thing with the memories of another."[7]

In one view, then, a self is formed through the possession and cultivation of memories; in the other, selves are byproducts. Henry Maudsley tried to parse this difference as the distinction between bodily memory—organic effects—and mental recollection—the organization of effects into "functional activity." But association is trumped by assimilation in the contest between mind and body, for "in every nerve-cell there is memory [. . .] We may forget it, but it will not forget us." Indeed, so strong are these memory "inscriptions" that individual volition cannot "efface their characters." Mental life should thus be understood as a kind of defensive maneuver against memory, as with any slight disruption of consciousness a memory may "thus some time be accidentally revealed."[8]

That is precisely the experience of the eponymous narrator in May Sinclair's novelistic reflection on Victorian memory, *Mary Olivier: A Life* (1919). You cannot recollect a past that never forgets you, Mary

concludes by reference to Maudsley, for in this version of memory there is no you: "There were no independent, separate entities, no sacred, inviolable selves. They were one immense organism and you were part of it; you were nothing that they had not been before you." Emphasizing this interconnectedness, the narrator refers to herself variously in the second and third person, with first person taking over briefly in the novel's final line: "If it never came again I should remember."[9] The complexity of this sentence summarizes the Victorian uncertainty about the status of memory. Is this statement a warning about a past that won't lose its hold? A hope that memory will cease and allow one to recollect one's self? An imperative to make the leap of faith required to posit, however briefly, an I who remembers?

Such uncertainty seems still very much with us, in the revived debates about our relation to the Victorians. Can we break free of the "transtemporal persistence of literary and cultural forms" so that "past cultural formations or structures of feeling" resonate with the present "without coming directly into contact"?[10] Or is this distance a delusion? Are we "habitually, perhaps inevitably, presentist" in our reading of the past,[11] not so much because we approach it from the perspective of the twenty-first century, but because Victorian "inscriptions" still set the terms? Is a hermeneutics of suspicion a defensive maneuver against the accidental revelation that we are nothing that they had not been before us? Even methods of distant reading, which seem to get around such impasses, look remarkably close to a Victorian view of organic memory as "being nothing but the revived stimulation of the brain cells where neural paths having once met, meet forever" in the manner of "an immense fantastic telephone exchange." Memory here is the product of "the automatic stamping out of weaker and less frequent associations by stronger and more frequent ones." The result is an unvarying reproductive loop, a process of "automatic association" whereby "we remember, never because we choose, but always because we must."[12]

Perhaps we should ask not how to remember the Victorians, but whether they will forget us. Is there an act of reading that is not always assimilation, in the Butlerian sense of that term? Does it take a leap of faith to conjure the twenty-first century reader in the presence of a Victorian text? We might conclude, with John Stuart Mill, that correspondences and associations are a trick of the mind, and that to distill ourselves from our memories of the Victorians is merely an instance of explaining the thing by the thing.

NOTES

1. James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, ed. Alexander Bain, Andrew Findlater, George Grote, and John Stuart Mill (London: Longmans, 1869), 337, editor's note 340 (emphases original). This and subsequent notes cited are identified as being written by John Stuart Mill.
2. John Stuart Mill, *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, 5th ed. (London: Longmans, 1878), 262.
3. Editor's note, James Mill, *Analysis*, 340.
4. John Stuart Mill, *An Examination*, 262.
5. Nicholas Dames, *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810–1870* (New York: Oxford University Press), 24.
6. Samuel Butler, *Life and Habit* (London: A. C. Fifield), 134, 86.
7. Samuel Butler, *Unconscious Memory: A Comparison between the Theory of Dr. Ewald Hering and the "Philosophy of the Unconscious" of Dr. Edward Von Hartmann* (London: Longmans, 1890), 21.
8. Henry Maudsley, *Body and Mind: An Inquiry into their Connection and Mutual Influence* (London: Macmillan, 1870), 19, 21.
9. May Sinclair, *Mary Olivier: A Life* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002), 333, 437.
10. Benjamin Morgan, "Scale, Resonance, Presence," *Victorian Studies* 59, no. 1 (2016): 109–12, 110.
11. Andrew H. Miller, "Response: Responsibility to the Present," *Victorian Studies* 59, no. 1 (2016): 122–26, 123.
12. May Sinclair, *A Defense of Idealism: Some Questions and Conclusions* (London: Macmillan, 1917), 104–05.

Monstrosity

JAMES ELI ADAMS

MONSTERS are always with us. Whatever obscure psychic needs and anxieties monsters address, monstrosity more obviously helps to define the manifold meanings we attach to the idea of the human: monstrosity is incarnated in those bodies and forces that delimit or threaten