

of many visitors' "readings" of commemorative space. More persuasive is Prendergast's model of narrative emplotment, whereby the site generates an increasingly powerful (if paradoxical) internal narrative logic that diminishes again due to mass tourism, poetry's weakened cultural status, and closure to new burials and memorials.

This self-assured contribution to British studies is nonetheless bookended by discussions of American responses: writings by Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne in the nineteenth century and the late-twentieth-century construction of the American Poets' Corner, in the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, New York. Prendergast's gesture demonstrates the "temporal and geographical reach" of Westminster Abbey's Poets' Corner (x), but also suggests anxiety that American readers will not fully grant the significance of such a "profoundly English space" (x). Engagement with scholarship in the field is good, though there are omissions, notably Paul Westover's *Necromanticism: Traveling to Meet the Dead, 1750–1860* (2012). One might also take issue with loose descriptions of Poets' Corner as "essentially a graveyard" (xii) or "cemetery" (xiii), terms denoting outdoor burial sites, when its character as an intramural burial place (within the church walls) is a key factor in its declining modern status, an anachronism at odds with the prevalent anti-monumental, back-to-nature aesthetic for poets' graves.

Prendergast argues with energy, presents his case with critically discriminating use of textual evidence, and in the main writes clear and readable prose; *Poetical Dust* is an engagingly lively account of a potentially dusty subject. Occasionally, though, it falls into a vein of verbal impressionism and approximation that exceeds the judicious qualification necessitated by presenting contentious or speculative interpretations or describing quasi-mystical affect. The use of "poetical" to mean "of poets"—hence a "poetical graveyard" (3)—casts a speciously figurative aura over factual statements; a poet's corpse is far from "poetical." The formula "a kind of" is a compulsive stylistic tic: Within a few sentences we are told that "This inscription would seem to be a kind of elegy," "We move ... through the poem as a kind of narrative," it laments "a kind of lost former self," and Robert Hailey is "a kind of 'martyr'" (35). The reader might legitimately ask, "what kind exactly?" The book would be better—and a couple of pages shorter—if every redundant "a kind of" was cut. However, this quibble does not diminish Prendergast's achievement. *Poetical Dust* is the authoritative modern account of Poets' Corner.

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JAMES QUINN. *Young Ireland and The Writing of Irish History*. Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2015. Pp. vii + 227. \$33.42 (paper).
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In *Young Ireland and The Writing of Irish History* James Quinn, the author of an earlier study of John Mitchel (2008), provides a wide-ranging, well-informed, and elegantly written account of the "Young Ireland" group to which Mitchel was attached in the 1840s. Fittingly, given his role as the managing editor of the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, Quinn provides readers with a series of useful biographical notes on key figures.

Quinn frames this study by exploring Young Ireland's promotional engagement with the written history of Ireland. This was, however, such an important concern for those who established the *Nation* in 1842 that a well-grounded treatment of it illuminates the entire history of the movement and its twentieth-century legacy. The prime movers in the *Nation* project were Thomas Davis, John Blake Dillon, and Charles Gavan Duffy. Davis and Duffy were key figures in utilizing a distinctive view of Irish history in their promotion of national reform and national independence. Young Ireland's campaign built upon the success of temperance initiatives by

stressing the importance of popular education and providing resources that could contribute to that mission. Those resources included the *Nation* itself and a series of historical and literary works published under the general title of the Library of Ireland.

Having initially been significant figures in Daniel O'Connor's Repeal Association, members of Young Ireland became disillusioned with his attachment to conventional political action and promoted a more radical approach that culminated practically in a farcically abortive rising in late July 1848. Quinn describes the leader of this affray, William Smith O'Brien, as "stumbling" into a "disorganised insurrection" in reaction to the arrest of many of his colleagues and the imposition of a fourteen-year term of transportation for "treason-felony" on Mitchel (96). It is indicative of Young Ireland's utilization of a historical lens in their political program that while travelling in the country outside Dublin before the attempt, O'Brien reflected on the proud history of insurrection in the area.

Quinn regards the failed rising as marking the end of the first phase of Young Ireland's engagement with the history of the country. The first stage saw the establishment of *The Nation* as a vehicle for the dissemination of historically focused works of poetry and prose and the related program of book-publishing in the Library of Ireland series. Young Ireland writers drew upon recent developments in Irish historical scholarship, and while Quinn does not claim any great originality for them as historical writers, he makes a compelling case for the cultural and political significance of their endeavors. He thus provides insightful evaluations of Young Ireland's utilization of works produced by serious, manuscript-based research conducted by scholars associated with the antiquarian revival (29). Quinn notes that Davis thought that supporting the interpretation of Irish antiquities was a key project for a future Irish government but not one that could be contemplated under existing circumstances.

Young Ireland's interest in antiquities and adherents' practice of visiting the scenes of significant past events would have pleased the Scottish historian and social critic Thomas Carlyle. Duffy and some of his friends called on Carlyle in Chelsea, and he returned the courtesy by visiting Dublin and touring parts of the south and west with Duffy. Together with Thierry, Carlyle was an important source for the romantically inclined approach to history which became a key aspect of Young Ireland's program. Carlyle and members of Young Ireland expressed a personal regard for each other, and a qualified endorsement of various political views. As the latter moved away from O'Connell, Carlyle's vivid portrayal of the French Revolution, his critique of aspects of modern capitalist society, and his stress on personal veracity seemed appealing enough to partly counteract his rejection of the need for and the feasibility of Irish independence. In the early 1850s, when the Irish population struggled with the aftermath of the Famine, Duffy's concentration on practical social and economic issues such as land reform provided additional shared ground.

Davis, Duffy and their colleagues advanced their views in accounts of the Irish past and historically freighted discussions of the present that were to inspire an independent republican future (61–62). In prose, poetry, and song they sought to kindle pleasure and pride in Ireland's past in place of shame and shamefaced frivolity. They sought, for example, to "raise the tone" of popular song and remove it from the tendency to slapstick or dirges that marked prevailing genres. Quinn quotes William Hazlitt's remark that "if Moore's *Irish Melodies* with their drawing-room, lackadaisical patriotism, were really the melodies of the Irish nation, the people of Ireland deserved to be slaves forever" (45–46).

Having initially focused on the more distant history of Ireland in ways that stressed its cultural vigor and the confident, proud military spirit of its heroes and their followers, Young Ireland's writers turned increasingly to the history of recent times, dwelling on the events leading to the rebellion and treating their own experiences as emblematic of the history of their country. Michael Doheny's *The Felon's Track* (1849) and Mitchel's *Jail Journal* (1854) were sharply critical of O'Connell and sought to vindicate the decision to rebel. The latter also attacked Duffy's turn to constitutional politics in the early 1850s. Quinn notes that Mitchel's

later account of the Famine as an instrument of British policy had a lasting impact on Famine historiography.

Mitchel's legacy is but one manifestation of the enduring impact of Young Ireland's historical writings. In the closing chapters of his book, Quinn traces their influence on members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, who were critical of the deracinating agenda of state-sponsored schools in Ireland, and on the creation of a New Library of Ireland. Although writers such as W. E. H. Lecky brought a new professionalism to the writing of Irish history which challenged Young Ireland's nationalist narratives, Quinn shows that these writings continued to play a key ideological role before and after independence.

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JEFF ROSEN. *Julia Margaret Cameron's 'Fancy Subjects': Photographic Allegories of Victorian Identity and Empire*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016. Pp. 318. \$110.00 (cloth).

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Henry Peach Robinson's 1896 assertion that the art of photography lies in "poetry, sentiment, story ... the literary part of a picture" (*The Elements of a Pictorial Photograph* [1973], 13–14) had its enthusiastic proponents, but few Victorian photographers demonstrated a literary imagination as powerful as that of Julia Margaret Cameron. Beginning work with her camera some thirty years earlier, in 1864, Cameron immediately embraced photographic "allegory," scenes performed for the camera, in costume, posed in the manner of theatrical tableaux, portraying significant moments from literary, biblical, and historical texts. The overworked persona of Cameron—a cartoonish figure of Freshwater fame, eccentric, domineering, least-beautiful of the Pattle sisters, forever chasing down Tennyson and his guests with her camera, forcing her servants to participate in long sessions of posing so that the household had to live off eggs and bacon—is put firmly to the side in Jeff Rosen's painstaking, revelatory, and serious assessment of the allegorical photographs. What matters to Rosen, and, it turns out, to the photographs themselves, is history: the political exigencies of the ten-year span in which these images were made, and in which their maker intended them to make sense.

Julia Margaret Cameron's 'Fancy Subjects': Photographic Allegories of Victorian Identity and Empire is not a book for someone seeking an introduction to Cameron. For the life, there is Victoria Olsen's 2003 biography, and for an overview of the work there is the 2002 catalogue raisonné and its articles. Rosen, however, is interested in a thicker description of the cultural context of Cameron's work, and his goal is to make visible what is inevitably overlooked in twenty-first-century readings of it. It is debatable, of course, whether a truly historicized reading of anything is ever possible, but the breadth and depth of Rosen's scholarship makes at least some of the conditions of that reading available to us.

By the mid-1850s, Rosen writes, "the 'fancy picture' became a catchall term for paintings that framed isolated subjects in a momentary suspension of activity, capturing quiet contemplation, religious devotion, or sentimental feelings," and photographers like Cameron, Robinson, Oscar Rejlander, and Lewis Carroll "embraced" its aesthetic (2). Rosen's main argument is that Cameron's "fancy subjects," as she termed them, were painstakingly crafted "to represent the country's national heritage and cultural identity" (1), and throughout the book he explores the political self-consciousness of photographs that for much of the twentieth century were regarded as little more than whimsical personal expression. I say "twentieth century," since it is not clear when we stopped "speaking Victorian" (on or about December, 1910, perhaps?), but the post-Victorian afterlife of Cameron's photographs is not something