

CHAPTER 2

Estrangement and Connection: Walter Pater, Benjamin Jowett, and William M. Hardinge

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EVER SINCE THOMAS WRIGHT stated in his biography of Pater in 1907 that Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol, applied a "salutary whip" to Pater in somehow snatching from him in 1874 a virtually promised University Proctorship, students of Pater have wondered whether the story were true and, if so, what Pater could have done to make Jowett think he should take such uncharacteristic action against a Fellow of Brasenose. Wright implied that although Jowett was not happy about Pater's philosophic stance in *The Renaissance*, it was loose talk of Pater's that really motivated Jowett,¹ but he gave no details. At the first international conference on Pater, at Brasenose College in 1980, Laurel Brake galvanized her audience by bringing forth the first real evidence pertaining to the, by that time, famous mystery regarding Pater, Jowett, and the Proctorship. She reported that Jowett's action was prompted by letters written by Pater that were carried to him by W. H. Mallock, known to Pater scholars primarily as the creator of Mr. Rose in *The New Republic*. She had found in the *Diary* of A. C. Benson evidence of this transaction that had been suppressed by Benson in his life of Pater in the English Men of Letters series (1906). As Brake reported, Benson in his *Diary* gives no facts about the content of the letters, but implies a good deal through his comment upon them "What a donkey P[ater]. must have been to *write* them" and his statement that they prompted a "dreadful interview" between Jowett and Pater, which left Pater "old, crushed, despairing."²Benson's source of information about the letters and the interview was Edmund Gosse. Laurel Brake assumed in her paper, printed in 1981 as "Judas and the Widow," that this incident occurred before

Pater was passed over for a University Proctorship in February 1874.

In "Oscar at Oxford," an essay published in 1984 in the *New York Review*, Richard Ellmann approached the Pater-Jowett estrangement from a different direction, placing its onset in 1876 rather than 1874. He reported that "[a]n undergraduate of Balliol named William Money Hardinge, whom Wilde knew as one of Ruskin's roadbuilders, was disclosed to have received letters from Walter Pater signed, 'Yours lovingly'."³ He adds: "Hardinge had also written and circulated some homosexual poems. The affair was brought to the attention of the authorities by Balliol students who feared that the 'Balliol Bugger', as Hardinge was called, was giving the college a bad name. Early in 1876 the master of Balliol, Benjamin Jowett, was apprised of the Pater letters and the sonnets. He now broke with Pater a famous rupture and summoned Hardinge on the official charge of 'keeping and reciting immoral poetry'."⁴ In his biography of Wilde, Ellmann repeated the story about Hardinge and Pater⁵ and reported, additionally, that it was Leonard Montefiore, a Balliol student, who complained to the authorities, while Alfred Milner and Arnold Toynbee, also Balliol students, tried to help Hardinge.⁶ Ellmann still placed the incident in 1876.

Since it stretches the imagination too far to suppose that two similar incidents leading to an estrangement between Pater and Jowett occurred, one in 1874 and the other in 1876, Brake and Ellmann must have been writing about the same incident. But how can the discrepancies in dates and the names of their informer be accounted for? Further, what was the source of Ellmann's account? And what sort of person was William Money Hardinge? My intention is to answer some questions pertaining to this matter, but I cannot help raising new questions as I proceed.

Ellmann based his account of the Hardinge incident upon information given him by Dr. Alon Kadish, a member of the Faculty of Humanities at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, who had found it in the Gell Correspondence at Hopton Hall near Wirksworth, Derbyshire, when doing research for his *Apostle Arnold: The Life and Death of Arnold Toynbee*.⁷ In the summer of 1988, I read the pertinent letters in the County Record Office at Matlock, Derbyshire, with the permission of Major Anthony Gell, the grandson of Henry Wellington Gell, the brother of Philip Lyttelton Gell, who was the preserver of the letters crucial to this inquiry as well as hundreds of other letters. The problem regarding the dating of the Hardinge incident quickly dissolved when I observed that the letters describing it were written in February and March 1874 not 1876. How could Alon Kadish, and therefore Richard Ellmann, have been mistaken about the year? Perhaps for four reasons: the Hardinge affair was not Kadish's primary concern, nor Ellmann's; some of the pertinent letters are dated only with month and day; a commemorative essay on Jowett written by Hardinge refers to his leaving Balliol College for good in 1876; and Philip Gell, to whom the letters were written, went down from Balliol because of illness in both February 1874 and February 1876. What Kadish did not realize is that Hardinge went

down twice: in February 1874, under a cloud of disapproval, to stay until November, and in June 1876, after becoming seriously ill. At the time of his second departure, his father, who had played a very important role in the events of 1874, was dead.⁸ The error in dating leads Ellmann to say that Oscar Wilde knew Hardinge at the time of the incident "as one of Ruskin's roadbuilders."⁹ However, when Hardinge was sent home in February 1874, Ruskin's road-building project had not begun¹⁰ and Wilde had not matriculated at Magdalen College, and would not do so until October. Both Hardinge and Wilde later joined in Ruskin's road-building. The error also leads Ellmann to infer that "[u]nder pressure, he [Hardinge] gracefully acknowledged himself to be too ill to . . . [read his Newdigate Prize poem in the Sheldonian], and Bodley [John Edward Courtenay], like others, pretended to accept the reason as true."¹¹ Actually when his poem "Troy" won the prize in 1876, Hardinge *was* too ill to read. The poem was read on 21 June 1876, by Philip Gell.

Ellmann's account of the Hardinge crisis in *Oscar Wilde* is correct, however, in regard to the persons involved and the main charges. Still, since the crisis was so important to Pater's reputation at Oxford, it deserves a detailed treatment from one who is interested primarily in the nature of Pater's participation. I shall begin by introducing the correspondents and the central figure, mainly from facts in the *Balliol College Register, 1832-1914*, the *Alumni Oxonienses 1715-1886*, and *Who Was Who*, and then give as detailed an account of the incidents as can be derived from the Gell papers.

Philip Lyttelton Gell, who in time would become Benjamin Jowett's literary executor and later Director and President of the British South Africa Company; Alfred Milner, who would become the first Viscount Milner and Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony; Arnold Toynbee, who would blossom early as an influential social philosopher and economist, but die in his thirty-first year; and William Money Hardinge, who would become a novelist all were friends at Oxford at the beginning of 1874. Gell, Milner, and Toynbee had been together at King's College, London, before Gell and Milner matriculated at Balliol in January 1872 and February 1873 respectively, and Toynbee at Pembroke, in January 1873. As 1874 opened, Toynbee, who had been so dissatisfied at Pembroke that he had withdrawn, was reading in Oxford; he would enter Balliol in 1875. Hardinge states in "Some Personal Recollections of the Master of Balliol" that he "had known Toynbee years before at a tutor's."¹² *Who Was Who* names the Reverend J. M. Brackenbush, Wimbledon, as Toynbee's tutor. Hardinge had matriculated at Balliol on 3 February 1873 with Milner. In a letter to Gell written in December 1873, Toynbee concludes by saying, "Remember me to Milner, Rendel and Hardinge."¹³ James Meadows Rendel, who had also entered Balliol in 1873, will be present during the period to be described, but will not play an active role. Leonard Abraham Montefiore, who had matriculated in February 1873, with Milner and Hardinge, was a good friend of Rendel's and Milner's, but not of Gell's. It is clear in one of Milner's letters that he and Gell judged Montefiore differently.¹⁴

By the middle of February 1874, Philip Gell had gone down from Balliol because of illness, and was therefore not present when the news broke within the group that Montefiore had provided information to Richard Lewis Nettleship, a Balliol don, about Hardinge's "unnatural" behavior, which had prompted Jowett to ask Hardinge's father to call him home and keep him there until November. It was necessary for Milner and Toynbee to write letters to Gell to explain how matters stood with Hardinge and, on Milner's part, to defend Montefiore's action. Thus were written the letters of interest to Pater scholars, only a few in a personal correspondence between Gell and Toynbee extending nearly to Toynbee's death in 1883 and a personal and professional correspondence between Gell and Milner extending to Milner's death in 1925.

The letters that mention Pater by name are Toynbee's to Gell written 25 February 1874 and Milner's to Gell written 1 March 1874. These two letters are dated with only month and day, but another letter of Toynbee's linked in content to the letter of 25 February, is plainly dated "March 11, 1874." All other evidence points to 1874 as the year of the incident.

The pertinent paragraph in Arnold Toynbee's letter of 25 February 1874 is as follows:

Hardinge has gone down till November, and as Jowett now [?] knows all about Pater at any rate quite enough and his parents eyes before strangely closed are now wide open to the inferences that are & may be drawn from his manner & conversation, and as Hardinge himself for the first time seems distinctly to realize the peril in which his conduct has placed him, there is some hope of his working sufficient change in character & circumstances to prevent the catastrophe which otherwise must only have been a question of time.¹⁵

Milner's letter of 1 March 1874 is twenty-six pages long, and is written from a defensive stance, although he blames himself (rather than Gell) for what he thinks to be Gell's misinterpretation, because he had not written a full explanation earlier. Hardinge had apparently written Gell a letter containing what Milner calls "an unprincipled pack of lies," and Gell, incensed, because he believed Hardinge to be telling the truth, had written a letter to Montefiore, which had caused Milner "pain" when he had read it. Milner begins his long, corrective explanation:

On Saturday night (Feb. 21st) Hardinge, who had been down to London for a day, came into my room, telling me he was in the greatest mess he had ever been in / during his life. Jowett had been down to London & requested his father to withdraw him on the general ground, that he was living up here in a way wh. might ultimately harm himself & was already throwing discredit on the College. His conversation & writing were indecent, his

acquaintance bad, his work = 0². Why should he remain at Oxford?/

I don't doubt Jowett said to Hardinge's [sic] pèreat that time what he said in his own words to me on Sunday "I can't allow this sort of thing to go on, & yet I don't want to ruin the man for life." With what I cannot help regarding as a sound mixture of wisdom & kindness he suggested Hardinge's withdrawal by his father without any fuss or public inquiry.

Well, Hardinge went home & denied everything. He came back to Oxford & told me, that he had been to/ see Jowett and had denied everything & proceeded to ask me, if Jowett should send for me, to assert that I had never heard from his mouth any indecent poetry or words, wh. could be construed into an allusion to unnatural profligacy. You know, how utterly impossible it would have been for me to deny such charges, but you do not know, that only one or two nights before Hardinge had repeated in my rooms a sonnet / yet more filthy & yet more unnatural than anything I had heard from his lips before. I pointed out to Hardinge, that he was asking me to commit myself to wholesale falsehood, wh. I could not do, but promised at the same time to give the most favourable colouring to the matter. Shall I confess it? At that moment I really felt sorry for Hardinge. He looked all this pretence the devil's own pretence, of contrition, affected me. Besides I thought, as I told him, / that his going down would do him more harm than good an opinion, of wh. at this moment I do not retain a single shred.

Next day much to my surprise Jowett did send for me. I made the very best of Hardinge's case. The sonnets, about wh. he asked, were in my representation mere literary exercises, the indecent language merely intended to <disgust> startle men. In confirmation of this theory, wh. I still believe / to be partially true, I cited the fact, that he often used blasphemous expressions, which seemed to me the mere echoes of sharp things he had heard from other men. These words of mine are, as far as I can discover, the whole sum & substance of the material, wh. under Hardinge's plastic hand has grown into a deliberate charge of blasphemy & impiety directed against him by Montefiore. [Milner's underlining] Before I left Jowett told me, that he had at least two witnesses, who were prepared / to affirm his first charge against Hardinge, wh. Hardinge had denied the day before. "His levity," said Jowett, "was perfectly disgusting. He has no sense of truth & nothing makes any impression on him." [Milner's vertical line]

That afternoon Jowett saw Hardinge & placed before him an alternative, wh. I think you will on calm consideration decide to have been substantially fair. "You are discrediting the College. I do not wish to discredit you. Go

down quietly, or, if you adhere to your denial of yesterday / wh. I believe to have been absolutely false, we will have an inquiry." That inquiry Hardinge shrank from. He came here on Monday morning & told me, that he was going to accept the first alternative. "You know yourself Milner," these were his words I can swear to them, "I could never stand an investigation. My character is too bad." I agreed with him & told him, we would all do our best we are all doing it, to hush up matters. . . . Now for Montefiore's conduct in the matter.

And in the first place let me say, that I have not the least wish to influence your judgment of Montefiore otherwise than by putting before you the plain facts./ We have never quite agreed about Montefiore & I don't expect us to agree now. We have both ~~agreed~~ decided about his injudiciousness. . . . Montefiore made no charge against Hardinge. He only spoke about him to Nettleship [Richard Lewis Nettleship, 1846-1892, B.A., Balliol 1869; elected Fellow at Balliol, 1870], not as a don, but as a / personal friend, a step wh. Rawnsley [Hardwicke Drummond Rawnsley, 1851-1920, matriculated at Balliol 24 October 1870; B.A. 1875; vicar of Crosthwaite, Cumberland, 1883] had taken on several previous occasions. [Milner's underlining] There can be no doubt that Nettleship, (as he has told both Rendel & Toynbee), was fairly well aware & exceedingly anxious to get rid of Hardinge. The only effect Montefiore's speaking had was the attempt on the part of the Dons to get his father to withdraw Hardinge quietly, on the whole the kindest thing they could have / done. For my own part, I do not see, that Montefiore was to blame even in the time of the step. ~~<You>~~ The very fact, that Hardinge had not yet irretrievably committed himself with Pater was all the more reason why the evil should be prevented. It seems more strongly absurd to say, that one should not interfere till the mischief was done. And it is vain to pretend that there was not evidence of the strongest character/ against Hardinge. When a man confesses to lying in another man's arms kissing him & having been found doing it, as there is the strongest evidence to prove ~~<in Hardinge's case>~~, or when letters pass between them in wh. they address one another as "darling" & sign themselves "yours lovingly," & such a letter I have seen, when verses are written from one man to another too vile to blot this paper, what hope can you have, that a criminal act, if not committed already, ~~<will>~~ may not be committed any day? / Why, if it does not occur, it is pure "good luck," & not "good management." For my own part I am thankful that Montefiore did take this step. It was no longer to be reconciled with one's conscience, that such a life as Hardinge's and such notoriety as Hardinge's you can have no idea how he was spoken of all over the Varsity should go on getting worse & worse, till some day we were startled by the news of the worst and [met] with the/ unanswerable question "How could you suffer these things to

proceed under your eyes"? If as I believe, Hardinge's character is the result of "Nature's spite," no amendment could be hoped for & the longer the blow was delayed, the more fatal must it be not only to himself but to his reputation.

Milner goes on to say that Montefiore's motive might be attributed by some to personal spite, since he and Hardinge had quarreled, and that Hardinge had seized upon this interpretation, to assume the role of victim. And he adds, "It is all very / well to say he should have spoken to Hardinge first, but you know what the result would have been. Hardinge would have giggled blasphemed stared [?] & said `Go then'." Milner begins the penultimate paragraph:

In conclusion, it's a [?] mercy, that neither Jowett nor Nettleship know the worst, that Toynbee made Hardinge destroy his most culpable letters, I mean such as could be adduced against him in a court of law, & that for the future we all mean to keep absolute silence to the outside world & speak as little as possible among ourselves upon a subject, wh. has become [word after *become* blotted out by liquid] painful to most of us.¹⁶

Two days later, 3 March, Milner tried to explain a passage in this letter: "When I said Montefiore spoke to Nettleship as a friend, I did not mean to assert that he had blurted the matter out. But there / is a difference between bringing a deliberate charge before the constituted authorities & speaking seriously to a friend, who happens to be more or less an authority, about the conduct of a third person, who is distinctly going wrong & whom you both want to prevent from coming to worse harm." And he continues: "I still differ as to Hardinge's supposed innocuousness (to coin a word). His reputation as the `Balliol B. . . r' is injuring the College as a whole, though I think with you, that it did not harm individuals."¹⁷Gell was apparently still more sympathetic towards Hardinge than Milner was, and Gell had been conveying some information from Milner and others to Hardinge. Where Milner was concerned, Gell probably just sent on to Hardinge a letter enclosed by Milner in his letter of 3 March, in which Milner showed himself willing to express opinions "to Hardinge's face," as he said, as well as "behind his back," and in regard to which he told Gell to use his discretion whether to send it to Hardinge or return it to him. But that Gell had been in communication with someone besides Milner and Toynbee is shown in the following new detail, one especially interesting to Pater scholars. It is included in the second paragraph of Milner's letter to Gell written 13 March:

Hardinge with his usual delicacy has written an abusive letter to Rawnsley, in wh. he says, / that he has just heard from you, telling him that the three chief agents in his removal were Miss Pater, Montefiore & Rawnsley, who as it appears, had had a great row with Mac-Ewen [Alexander Robertson] in Hardinge's rooms, the night before the latter went down, in wh. he denied

having been in any way instrumental in H[ardinge]'s dismissal, was very indignant at the receipt of this letter, both with Hardinge for disbelieving his word & with you for prompting him.¹⁸

It is easy to infer from the passage following the one just quoted, that Milner had thought Rawnsley was Jowett's second witness. When Rawnsley assured Milner that he had not spoken to Nettleship for two terms, Milner apologized to him. After reporting this fact to Gell, he adds: "For my own part the question is more of a mystery to me than ever. Jowett distinctly told me, that he had / two witnesses against Hardinge in the matter of the indecent sonnets. The one of course was Montefiore, but who was the other?" Who, indeed? Perhaps another acquaintance of Hardinge's at Balliol could have been called in by Jowett as Milner was, to be questioned about Hardinge's sonnets and unacceptable behavior. Hardinge's circle included Walter Sydney Sichel (1855-1933),¹⁹ who was a student at Balliol from 1872 to 1877, and Thomas Herbert Warren (1853-1930), a student at Balliol from 1872 to 1876. Warren had been educated at Clifton, where, upon Jowett's recommendation, Hardinge studied before entering Balliol.²⁰ When Hardinge returned to Oxford in 1893 to attend a Balliol dinner, he visited Warren at Magdalen,²¹ and Warren was one of Benson's sources for his life of Pater. Also, Hardinge probably knew John Edward Courtenay Bodley in 1874 as in 1875 (when Bodley entered in his diary for 15 April that he had visited Hardinge's rooms and found him playing Weber),²² since he and Bodley matriculated at Balliol at the same time. Or perhaps the second witness to the sonnets and unacceptable behavior was an alarmed Miss Pater,²³ who went to the Master of Balliol and asked him to avert danger by sending Hardinge home.

Who suggested the name of Miss Pater to Philip Gell? There is no record of W. H. Mallock's ever having written a letter to Philip Gell, and it is unlikely that he would have. Milner's only two references to Mallock in the letters of the 1870s and, likely, in his entire correspondence with Gell, are the following in a letter dated from Balliol on 6 February 1876: "The Union [Oxford Union, of which Milner was the President] is peculiarly lively & peculiarly troublesome. Mutual friends are in *statusquo* except that Sloman has gone down, Mallock too as it seems, he being however hardly a mutual friend. . . . Toynbee is at last working for Greats. . . . Montefiore is going down next term²⁴ & Glazebrook will take rooms in the same house with Rendel & me in the Broad. . . . Mallock allowed himself to be drawn out to a considerable extent about his books.²⁵ He is the greatest *autologist* I know - a nice new word that, don't you think so?"²⁶

Benjamin Jowett himself was one of Gell's correspondents. The Gell collection contains forty-three letters from Jowett, written from 5 August 1873, to near the end of his life (the late letters are undated). Most of these letters are brief and rather formal, like many of Pater's letters, but Jowett did not hesitate to give Gell personal advice, for example, about positions he should not accept, or boys he should be pleased to see him tutor. There are no letters from 1874, but as Jowett's literary executor Gell knew that Jowett had burned all of

his personal correspondence that was at his command, and Gell might have removed letters from his own collection that he knew Jowett would have wanted to be destroyed. This is pure speculation, but if Jowett did not introduce the name of Miss Pater, I cannot imagine who did.

How Philip Gell came to say that Miss Pater wanted Hardinge out of town is just one of several questions we are left with. Another is, "Were letters handed to Jowett?" From Toynbee we learn that Jowett and Nettleship were not told everything the friends of Hardinge knew, much less given letters, and that Toynbee supervised Hardinge's burning of letters that could be used against him in a court of law, letters like the one Milner saw. Jowett was genuinely disturbed about the sonnets that at least two witnesses had thought to be indecent and unnatural, as well as by Hardinge's flippant attitude. Milner does not report that Jowett mentioned letters. When talking to Benson, Gosse might have been imaginatively filling in blanks in a story he knew imperfectly. Perhaps W. H. Mallock did not take letters to Jowett. The possibility that no letters were delivered is strengthened by the statement of Thomas Wright, who appears to have known more than he told, that a "common friend" of Pater and Jowett informed Jowett of Pater's loose talk by making a "casual observation."²⁷

But let us assume that Gosse was remembering and reporting correctly to Benson. What could Mallock's motive have been in taking letters to Jowett? Did the motive have anything to do with Pater at all? It is clear that to Milner, Gell, and Toynbee, Pater was simply a given in Hardinge's situation. They do not express surprise, sympathy, regret, or condemnation regarding his relationship with Hardinge. Montefiore had no motive relating to Pater. Perhaps Mallock, too, was concerned only about Hardinge's welfare and the reputation of Balliol College.

Certainly, Mallock would not have delivered letters to Jowett simply to strengthen his hand against Pater, as some Paterians tended to assume when Laurel Brake first presented the apparent evidence of his involvement. Mallock, even as a youth, when Jowett came to his house to "inspect him" and decide on his suitability for Balliol College, felt a temperamental antipathy to him.²⁸ He continued to be "repelled" by Jowett.²⁹ From his second term at Balliol, he thought Jowett's unorthodox support of Christianity was vague and intellectually absurd, but he knew his adverse feeling was not based altogether on intellectual grounds.³⁰ The sharpest satire in *The New Republic*, which Mallock began writing in his second year at Balliol,³¹ 1871, is directed at Dr. Jenkinson, the stand-in for Jowett.³² Mallock's treatment of Pater shows no personal animus. He does not accuse Mr. Rose of "doubleness" as he does Dr. Jenkinson. It is interesting, too, that his Mr. Rose is oblivious of Dr. Jenkinson's antipathy to him as of the implication that he has had a pernicious influence upon the education of the eighteen-year-old boy who has written "Three visions in the watches of one night," a sonnet which he reads.³³ In general, Mr. Rose is a happy Hedonist who does not realize what effect his words have on other

people. He seems also very naive in asking openly for a book that describes the rites of Priapus, which the more discreet Laurence has kept locked up.³⁴

But whatever his motive for taking letters to Jowett, if indeed he did, how could Mallock have gained possession of letters written from Pater to Hardinge or Hardinge to Pater? Certainly only Hardinge, Pater, or someone very close to one of them could have placed such letters in his hands. Did Mallock know Hardinge? Neither Hardinge nor Mallock mentions the other as far as I know, and, apparently, the only suggestion of a link is Geoffrey Faber's statement in a footnote in *Jowett: A Portrait with a Background* that Robert Leslie in *The New Republic* "was said to be a 'Mr. Hardinge'."³⁵ Faber adds: "But there were several Mr. Hardinges: None of them seem quite to fit. And who was 'Laurence'? Can he have been a wishful self-projection of Mallock himself? If so, Leslie might be a projection of W. M. Hardinge, novelist and poet, who was his younger contemporary at Balliol?"³⁶ Faber also calls attention to Leslie's early statement that " 'Dr. Jenkinson is the only one [of the distinguished people at Laurence's house-party] I know, and, naturally enough, he forgets me'."³⁷ But if Hardinge and Mallock knew each other well enough in 1874 for Hardinge to have given Mallock letters from Pater, it was likely before Montefiore's report and the burning of other letters, and certainly Hardinge did not intend that Jowett see them.

Philip Gell's mention of Miss Pater suggests another scenario, equally speculative but more plausible. Clara or Hester Pater happened to see in Walter's room letters written by Hardinge, and she feared that this young man would expose and disgrace her brother. She called upon Edmund Gosse, a friend of the family, for help, and he turned to a fellow Devonshireman who was a Balliol student with access to Jowett. Suppose that Gosse asked Mallock to show Jowett the letters so that he would send Hardinge down, for the welfare of Pater as well as Hardinge. If Gosse did not give Mallock letters, how would he have known that Mallock had them? Jowett would not have been inclined to reveal the identity of the informant to Pater, who might have told Gosse if he had. Mallock is not likely to have told Gosse or anyone else. He was the most circumspect of all circumspect men. In his *Memoirs*, he rarely if ever gives a date, and he names very few persons besides famous authors and influential aristocrats. About Pater he states only that in his *New Republic* he was represented by Mr. Rose, and he does not mention Hardinge. An Oxford outsider like Gosse would not have been likely to hear by chance from any man at Oxford what Milner, an insider, never learned, in spite of his curiosity on the subject of the second witness. However, it is possible as Lesley Higgins suggested at the Pater Conference, that R. L. Nettleship, who might have been privy to all the information Jowett had, might have told his older brother Henry Nettleship, who might have told Pater, who might have told Gosse.

In spite of all the unanswered questions, one can say that only seven months after Simeon Solomon was arrested for deviant behavior, Pater was involved in a homosexual romance

with a nineteen-year-old student who had a tendency, before faced with consequences, to advertise his homosexuality. It was not a "platonic" relationship, but unless Hardinge mischaracterized it to Milner, Gell, and Toynbee, it was unconsummated. Since the very day Hardinge left Oxford, 25 September 1874, is the day Brasenose nominated John Wordsworth to be University Proctor, it is likely that Jowett did tell the President of Brasenose that Pater was not the sort of man who should have a wider influence, although the Fellows of the College, almost all clerical, might have passed over Pater on the grounds of irreligion even without Jowett's advice.

But it was not in official Oxford's nature to "ruin a man's life" over manifestations of "unnatural" tendencies, but to remove temptation, keep publicly silent, and speak as little as possible about it among themselves. There was also much plain empathy with homosexuality (although Victorians did not use this word in the 1870s). When another young man, Charles Edward Hutchinson, who matriculated at Oxford in 1873, at Brasenose rather than Balliol, published a pamphlet entitled *Boy Worship* anonymously in 1880, he said that the worship of beautiful boys was by no means rare in Oxford or elsewhere:

Men of all tastes become boy-worshippers. It is not only Sayge Greene who goes into ecstasies over a boy's face and figure, (he may, it is true, express himself more eloquently than some of his more robust brethren,) but the devotees of the cricket and football fields have ere now furnished many an ardent follower.

The Upper River, as well as a certain College Chapel, has its little band of *habitués*. Here I would remark, that although sundry restrictions have, in some quarters, placed difficulties in the way of free intercourse, an ardent boy-worshipper will always find means of access to the shrine.³⁸

When selecting a headnote for his pamphlet, Hutchinson borrowed the first two and a half lines from the sonnet which Mr. Rose reads in the *New Republic*, the one written, he says, by an eighteen-year-old boy.

Three visions in the watches of one night
Made sweet my sleep almost too sweet to tell
One was Narcissus.³⁹

The use of these lines on the title-page and the first page of text in *Boy Worship* seems to link the subject of the work especially to Pater, but the main theme is that boy worship was not limited to aesthetes, much less to one aesthete, but was rather common at Oxford.

Yet all this is not enough to explain the estrangement between Jowett and Pater. Jowett

tended to assume the role of kind fatherly adviser with "errant men." Geoffrey Faber quotes the following from a letter written by Josephine Butler to Lewis Campbell, Jowett's friend and early biographer, dating the incident "very much later" than 1869:

At one time . . . there was an outbreak of abnormal immorality among a few of the young men in Oxford. To such he [Jowett] was (I know) the wisest, most prudent and gentlest of counsellors. He was extremely severe and tender at the same time. We [she and her husband] had the unhappiness of having to try to guide for a time one of these youths (now dead) and thus I got to know how implicitly such misguided or guilty creatures might confide in him, and seek and follow his advice.⁴⁰

Jowett treated Hardinge in much the same way in 1874, and he accepted him back later that year, befriended him in 1876, was delighted, according to Hardinge, that he had won the Newdigate Prize for Poetry that year, visited him in London in later years, and invited him to the prestigious dinner at Balliol on 24 June 1893.⁴¹ Neither Swinburne's blasphemies nor John Addington Symonds's homosexuality caused an estrangement from Jowett. But these men, like Hardinge, accepted Jowett's kindness and called him master. Pater's estrangement from Jowett probably had its incipience long before 1874, because of Pater's independence. No man was less inclined than he to cater to or cultivate friendships with his older contemporaries. He did not write adulatory letters across the Channel to Renan as Carlyle did to Goethe; he did not evoke Rydal Mount as if it were "holy ground," as Arnold did. Although he bought *The Ring and the Book*, and five of Browning's books published afterwards, he apparently did not try to meet Browning. The fact that Rossetti, upon meeting Pater, "disliked him extremely" ⁴² is a good sign that he was not approached by Pater with the enthusiasm that young William Morris had exhibited in his approach. And there is no evidence that after he emerged from the student status he remained attentive to Jowett as many other younger men did.

If the interview which Gosse reported between Jowett and Pater was "dreadful" for Pater, it can be safely assumed that it was not satisfactory for Jowett either. Jowett confided to his diary in 1877: "I seem to have great power in thinking and in dealing privately with persons, but no power in public or society."⁴³ It is likely that with Pater, Jowett failed in the type of personal influence upon which he prided himself. What he probably found in Pater was not gratitude and a willingness to be counselled, but a resistant attitude based on a sense of superiority. Such an attitude, more than anything else, could have caused the estrangement between Jowett and Pater.

It is impossible to say now, how Pater felt about Hardinge in 1874 and afterwards. It is not difficult, however, to make an informed inference about the nature of Hardinge's feelings for Pater and to see the effects of the trauma of 1874 upon Pater's works.

Although Milner's letters describe Hardinge's untruthfulness, spite-fulness, and cockiness, and Toynbee refers to his "doubleness," all these traits were probably defenses marshalled for protection in a crisis, not settled traits of character. There are no traces of them in "Some Personal Recollections of the Master of Balliol," written primarily to show how kind Jowett could be to an individual over a long period of time in spite of the multifarious demands upon his time and strength. Hardinge expresses pride in having introduced Toynbee to Jowett⁴⁴ and when describing Jowett's funeral procession states, casually: "I walked with Alfred Milner, who had been my very first Balliol associate."⁴⁵ In 1874, Hardinge was full of literary and linguistic promise. His Newdigate Prize poem, "Troy," is felicitously written, and it contains the interesting idea that if Helen had been a woman instead of a "soulless spirit" sent by the gods to torment men, she would (like Pater's Aphrodite) have grown weary of the havoc she caused. Hardinge later published in *Nineteenth Century* translations of a considerable body of ancient Greek poems and French poems, with commentary ("Chrysanthema Gathered from the Greek Anthology," 1878, and "French Verse in English," 1881), and contributed stories and reminiscences to *Temple Bar*, *Universal Review*, and *Magazine of Art* in the late 1880s and the 1890s. He published four novels: *Clifford Gray: a Romance of Modern Life* (1881); *Eugenia: an Episode* (1883); *The Willow-Garth* (1886); and *Out of the Fog* (1888). All of the novels are heterosexual love stories, but the first is perhaps personally revealing and is interesting for some parallels with Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, written later. Clifford Gray is a prominent artist whose fate is strangely bound to one of his paintings, a portrait, although of a woman, which is exhibited at the Royal Academy after his death. There is "all hell and all heaven in the woman's face," and the portrait is absolutely true to life. Clifford Gray suffers the misfortune of being in love with this woman, Vera de Trekoff, although it is plain that the male narrator has a deeper appreciation of and a more tender love for Gray than she does, and is the only one who really mourns his death. Vera does, however, express a few Paterian sentiments. For example, she says, "Ask not what has become of passed sunlight and shadow, whither have vanished the glory-rays on tree and hill; look into your friend's face and find them there. . . ." ⁴⁶ The novel is dedicated, not to a person, but to the years 1876-77, which Hardinge apparently spent in France; and it was completed in 1877. The prefatory sonnet to this novel probably resembles the sonnets Alfred Milner called "filthy" and "unnatural":

'Lean over me lean over, dear, awhile,
 One while ere yet mine eyelids swoon to death;
 For one live moment give me of your breath
 And one last shaft of sunlight in your smile!
 Stoop down and kiss me once, and reconcile
 My soul to hear the word this instant saith;
 For the spent heart within me travaileth,
 Sense being so faint and this world's worth so vile.
 Speak not at all: but fold your hands in mine,

Dim not with tears my stars that are your eyes;
Lean low and listen . . . closer, closer bend!
It is not I that speak a voice divine
Whispers through mine its heavenlier harmonies
"Lo! I am with you always, to the end." '

Paris, 18

"(from a MS.)"

The Willow-Garth is dedicated to the unnamed person addressed in the poem below:

To . . .

Because outside this region of my life
There lies for ever something known not yet,
A world wherein you enter and find set
Your crystal throne of rest from human strife,

Because beyond these bounded eyes of mine
There spreads the vision of a wider sphere,
And there your daylight is as mine is here
And there you know what I at most divine,

Because my hoped-for future is yours now,
Because you have all that I have not and I
Having nothing that you have not, by and by
Might have, when reaching you, yet dream not how

Therefore this vase whereinto memory pours
Wine that is stranger not to tears or blood,
With whatsoever of hope be here or good,
This book of mine is yours as I am yours.

August 1886

I do not maintain that this poem was written to Pater, in spite of the "crystal throne."
Twelve years had passed since 1874. But I think it illustrates the attitude the aspiring

writer of nineteen had toward the celebrated writer of thirty-five, a self-effacing adulation for a superior man, which Pater thought natural to women in love and to men with "female souls," men like his Raoul in *Gaston de Latour* (unpublished chapter 10) and his Emerald Uthwart. It is reasonable to assume that in the relationship between Pater and Hardinge, Pater was the "seigneurial species of soul," like Jasmin and James Stokes, and Hardinge was the "servile species," a "servant of servants' to his brother" (terms from *Gaston de Latour*, chapter 10).

That Pater became Socrates, with his circle, can be inferred from the following commentary of Alexander Michaelson (Marc André Raffalovich):

There would have been something irresistible about Pater at the height of his power had he cared to exert his personal influence. Those unacquainted with his writings, or prejudiced by Mallock's *New Republic*, could describe him as "a black, white, ingratiatory vampire." Of course we who knew and loved him saw and understood the feelings of that delightful youth (now a distinguished novelist)⁴⁷ when first face to face with that Minotaur. And we were not less aware when we watched with malicious amusement the less delightful and vainer youths who expected to make an impression. What fun it must have been, what fun it was, for aspirants to praise of so rare a quality when they compared notes. Well! it was worth while to have performed in his presence, he would never think the worse of one for that. Few men, I suppose, have been kinder and more affectionate to young men *as they were*; it is so much easier to be kind and affectionate to the men we imagine.⁴⁸

Like Socrates, Pater thought the love of refined men for one another the highest type of love. But he also thought the adoring, selfless love of a "noble" woman for a man to be a fine thing (thus his appreciation of Octave Feuillet's selfless heroines); and the patriarchal home, which depended upon "the discretion of wives," was to him the basis of "civilised order."⁴⁹

One can infer that what Pater felt after the disclosure of his relationship with W. M. Hardinge in 1874 was not shame, but anger, pain, and recognition of the circumscribed boundaries within which he would be constrained to live if he were to remain acceptable to polite society. I have shown in detail in *Pater and His Reading* that the theme of victimization and the tendency to glorify suffering entered Pater's works after 1874 and that most of his works published over the next four years were written as veiled responses to criticism of his life and influence;⁵⁰ in short, the personal crisis of 1874 had distinct ramifications in his writings, as did the religious crisis of 1860. I will repeat here only one reference to Pater's new stance. His revision in 1877 to his characterization of Abelard in *The Renaissance* contains his most revealing protest against the type of persons who had

judged him:

The opposition into which Abelard is thrown, which gives its colour to his career, which breaks his soul to pieces, is no less subtle opposition than that between the mere professional, official, hireling ministers of that system, with their ignorant worship of system for its own sake, and the true child of light, the humanist with reason and heart and senses quick, as theirs were almost dead, reaching out to and attaining modes of ideal living, beyond the prescribed limits of that system, though possibly contained in essential germ within it. As always happens, the adherents of the poorer and narrower culture had no sympathy with, because no understanding of a culture richer and more ample than their own; after the discovery of wheat they would still live upon acorns *après l'invention du blé ils voulaient encore vivre du gland*; and would hear of no service to the higher needs of humanity with instruments not of their forging.⁵¹

The image of the soul (or the body) being torn to pieces becomes a recurring motif in Pater's works, with a poignant representation of it to be found in "A Study of Dionysus" (1876), where the *Zagreus* in *Dionysus Zagreus* means literally "torn to pieces."

Without the crisis of 1874 Pater might have given us *Marius the Epicurean*, most of the essays in *Appreciations*, and parts of *Plato and Platonism*, but not *Imaginary Portraits*, the major essays in *Greek Studies*, *Gaston de Latour*, "Lacedaemon," and "Emerald Uthwart."