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Edward Bellamy: An Introductory Bibliography

BY PEGGY ANN BROWN

In thirteen short years the world enters the twenty-first century, long the province of science fiction writers and utopian dreamers. As envisioned by Edward Bellamy in his best-selling novel *Looking Backward, 2000-1887* (1888), the coming years will be characterized by a "universal reign of comfort" in which abundance and social harmony have replaced the class warfare and industrial strife of his lifetime. Under Nationalism—Bellamy's name for his social system—all men and women were full participants in the "industrial army" that managed every aspect of the country's business, from dress shops and dining halls to farms and factories. That society has not yet achieved his vision of utopia would surprise Bellamy, who considered municipal control of utilities evidence of the inevitable evolution toward Nationalism.

Bellamy's millennial vision captured the imagination of middle class readers caught between the increasing dominance of industrialists and violent outbursts of discontented workers. His world provided equally for all citizens, while recognizing individual achievement and giving power only to those who had earned their colleagues' respect. Although accused by some of stifling creativity and substituting managerial rule for true democracy, Bellamy captivated a multitude of readers with promises of universal education, magnificent parks and public buildings, and inventions ranging from automatic sidewalk umbrellas to radio-like receivers.[1]

Thirty-five thousand copies sold during the novel's first year of publication; by 1891, 165 clubs had been established to promote its ideals. Identifying similarities between Nationalism and the People's Party, Bellamy and others pushed the movement into a more active role, championing James Weaver for

president and petitioning for state and municipal reforms. By 1896 Nationalism's appeal had faded as Populists supported William Jennings Bryan, and Bellamy devoted his dying years to *Equality* (1897), the sequel to *Looking Backward*.

A perennial favorite on high school and college reading lists, *Looking Backward* has sparked modest attention during the centennial of its publication. Scholarly interest has included a handful of conferences, meeting sessions, and journal articles.[2] And although no centennial edition of *Looking Backward* has been published, the University of Massachusetts Press is marking the occasion with an essay collection titled *Looking Backward, 1988-1888. Essays on Edward Bellamy* (1989). Bellamy has received popular recognition via crossword puzzle clues and an article in the *New York Times Book Review* highly critical of the novel's totalitarian tone. An episode of CBS's popular "Murder, She Wrote" paid quiet homage with a minor character identified as Ed Bellamy from Massachusetts.

While Bellamy's reputation rightly rests on *Looking Backward*'s images and appeal, a full appreciation of his contributions as a social visionary and transformation from literary recluse to political activist requires attention to his earlier writings. This essay provides a brief introduction to Bellamy's literary and political career through works by and about the novelist.

EARLY WRITINGS

Born in Chicopee, Massachusetts in 1850, Bellamy spent most of his life in his hometown, where his father served as Baptist minister from 1848 to 1882. Although William Dean Howells traced Bellamy's appeal to the village atmosphere that pervaded his writings and touched a responsive chord in readers, Chicopee Falls already exhibited the urban problems of nearby Springfield and other industrial cities as the novelist reached maturity. In his early twenties Bellamy responded with Lyceum addresses urging his audience to accept their responsibility for society's injustices. He dared them to "dream ... of an era when, by equality in the distribution of the fruits of labor, every man at the price of moderate exertion shall be as secure of abundance and comfort, of the means of education and recreation, as he is today secure in his political rights and independence."[3]

At the same time he was voicing what would become lifelong sentiments, Bellamy foundered in choosing a career direction. Educated at local schools, he had pursued an independent year-long tutorial in literature at Union College after his frail health kept him out of West Point, a childhood ambition. A year in Germany was followed by preparation for the bar; tradition has it that he abandoned his practice after his first case—the eviction of a widow for failure to pay her rent—offended his sensibilities. Bellamy next tried journalism, living in New York City and working for the *New York Evening Post* for nine months. He returned to Massachusetts in 1872 to work as an editorial writer and literary reviewer for the *Springfield Daily News*.

In 1875 Bellamy published his first short story, "The Cold Snap," in *Scribner's Monthly*. During the next fourteen years he would publish twenty-two more stories, many reflecting his technique of combining fantasy and psychology. In "The Blindman's World," for example, Martians know all that will happen in their future and feel pity for the poor Earthlings, who blindly live their lives without benefit of foresight. Shortly before his death Bellamy chose fifteen stories for publication in *The Blindman's World and Other Stories* (1898). William Dean Howell's introduction praised Bellamy for "a romantic imagination surpassed only by that of Hawthorne."

Bellamy also experimented with longer pieces, publishing his first novel, *Six to One: A Nantucket Idyl*, anonymously in 1878. That same year the *Springfield Union* began serializing *Dr. Heidenhoff's Process*. In the novel Henry Burr's emotions quickly turn from elation to despair when he realizes that he had only dreamed the exision of his fiance's memory of an unhappy love affair by the doctor's galvanic battery process. The scene of Madeline's wedding dress fading into George's bedroom curtains foreshadows Bellamy's use of dreams in *Looking Backward:* Julian West's visit to Boston in the year 2000 appears at first to have been a dream; his return to the nineteenth century is later revealed as a nightmare.

Bellamy's early concern with the inequitable distribution of wealth and property is shown in *The Duke of Stockbridge*, serialized in 1879 in the *Berkshire Courier*. A fictionalized account of Shays' Rebellion—the 1786 uprising of debt-ridden farmers in Massachusetts against the oppressive state courts and legislature—the novel was "polished" by Bellamy's cousin Francis and published posthumously in 1900. A 1962 edition returns to the original newspaper text and includes Joseph Schiffman's informative discussion of the development of Bellamy's thought.

In 1880 Bellamy set aside his literary career to begin the *Penny News* (soon renamed the *Springfield Daily News*) with his brother Charles. When Charles refused to sell the paper during a period of financial difficulties in 1884, Bellamy turned over his interests and returned to writing, producing *Miss Ludington's Sister* (1884). This novel also demonstrates Bellamy's interest in the power of memory and use of illusion as reality. Miss Ludington's ward Paul falls in love with a portrait of her as a young woman. His speculation that each stage of life has its own separate spirit is confirmed when he and Miss Ludington attend seances in which her spirit at the time of the portrait appears. When the medium dies during a seance, the young Miss Ludington cannot return to the spirit world and goes to live with Paul and the wealthy, older Miss Ludington. Overcome with guilt and in love with Paul, the young Miss Ludington eventually reveals that the seances were a hoax.

LOOKING BACKWARD

Bellamy began writing *Looking Backward* in 1886. Married in 1882, he had become sensitive to the need for shaping a better world after the births of his two children. In the novel Julian West, a nineteenth-century representative of the idle rich, awakens from a mesmerized sleep to find himself in the nationalized society of the year 2000. In addition to numerous discussions on the changes that have taken place, West falls in love with his twenty-first century guide's daughter; their romance propels the story, as does the cleverly employed nightmare that forces Julian to reexperience with new eyes the urban and industrial horrors of Boston in the 1880s.

Mark Twain called the original edition of *Looking Backward*, published by Ticknor in 1888, as "scrofulous-looking and mangy a volume as I have set eyes on." In 1889 Houghton Mifflin purchased the failing Ticknor and published a second edition of the novel, incorporating changes made by Bellamy for a 1888 German translation. Subsequent editions follow this revision, their introductions offering insights into the current reform or scholarly climate. In 1917, for example, Heywood Broun, who believed the next fifty years would prove Bellamy's prophetic abilities, wrote that he first read the novel in a college course designed to disprove the soundness of radical panaceas.

While *Looking Backward*'s popularity declined in the early 1900s, its inclusion in the unfinished third volume of Vernon Louis Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought* (1930) sparked scholarly consideration of its place in American literature. Likewise, new readers hungry for a solution to hard times in the thirties found solace in its picture of plenty. Two publishers prepared limited illustrated editions in the early 1940s. In the introduction to the Limited Editions Club volume (1941), Irvin Edman wrote that one turns the novel's pages with "nostalgia tinctured with pathos and irony" for as bad as 1887 seemed to Bellamy, it appeared as a "singularly secure age" to the 1941 reader. Chapters are headed by boldly-colored illustrations, many featuring futuristic devices suggestive of the chapters' contents. Similarly, illustrations in the 1945 World Publishing edition merely evoke the novel's futuristic setting and do not attempt to portray the story. Bellamy's son wished in the introduction that he could analyze the social changes of the last forty-seven years with his father and called on "this soul searching era" to reconsider his prophesies.

One of the first scholarly introductions to *Looking Backward* appeared in 1951. It was written by Robert L. Shurter, whose 1936 doctoral thesis had examined "The Utopian Novel in America 1865-1900," with a special emphasis on *Looking Backward*. Critical of the novel's plot and dialogue, Shurter asserted that it was improbable that Bellamy's system would work unless peopled with Bellamys.

Scholarly introductions have also been prepared by Joseph Schiffman (1959), Erich Fromm (1961), Robert C. Elliott (1966), John L. Thomas (1967), Frederic R. White (1979), R. Jackson Wilson (1981), and Cecelia Tichi (1982). The edition

prepared by Thomas is especially useful; he noted textual additions and changes made for the 1888 German translation, provided biographical insights, and identified themes common to *Looking Backward* and Bellamy's earlier writings. White expressed surprise that a minor author could produce such a unique masterpiece. He credits the "chance conjunction" of three elements for the novel's success: Bellamy's skill with romantic fiction, ability to turn realistic social criticism into "appealing fiction," and insistence that equality could only be achieved through conscious effort. Placing the novel in its contemporary context, Tichi illustrates how Bellamy's life prepared him for writing *Looking Backward*. (In *Shifting Gears: Technology, Literature, Culture in Modernist America* [Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1987], Tichi offers another dimension on *Looking Backward*, identifying Bellamy's significance in ushering in the engineering ethos with his systematized society.)

CONTEMPORARY RESPONSES TO LOOKING BACKWARD

Sales figures along cannot measure contemporary response to *Looking Backward*. Reaching the three hundred thousand mark by 1891, the novel inspired imitation and analysis, acrimony and respect. It was discussed and debated at Theosophical and Christian Socialist meetings, as well as in mainstream churches, whose ministers often criticized its anticapitalist message. Appearing on both college and socialist reading lists, it was disdained by some as too radical and by others as not radical enough. A few examples of the general, political, and fictional responses to *Looking Backward* illustrate its reception outside literary circles.

General

While it is not surprising to find discussion of *Looking Backward* in reform journals, mention of both the novel and Nationalism in more popular publications indicates widespread interest in Bellamy's proposals. For example, the entire June 1890 issue of *Overland Monthly* was future-oriented. Primarily pro-Nationalism, its articles included a discussion of education's role in stimulating visionary thought, a comparison of Bellamy with other utopianists, and a criticism of Bellamy for linking crime's eradication to material prosperity rather than higher moral development.

Valuing the general interest reader as a potential convert to his cause, Bellamy demonstrated skills in centering his message on themes that would have the greatest appeal to his audience in two women's magazine articles. "A Vital Domestic Problem. Household Service Reform" appeared in the December 21, 1889 issue of *Good Housekeeping*. Bellamy assuaged his readers' guilt over the caste distinction between servant girls and employers, explaining it arose when an out-

sider, who was neither guest nor friend, became familiar with the intimacies of family life. Advising the elimination of live-in servants, Bellamy advocated the establishment of cooperative laundry, housecleaning, and cooking services and described how one hundred women could coordinate such a system. He admitted that his ideas were not new and suggested that store-bought bread and caterers were indications that the evolutionary process had begun. A more lively piece is Bellamy's "Christmas in the Year 2000," published in the January 1895 *Ladies Home Journal*. This article stresses the year 2000's Christian orientation. Speaking from the perspective of a twenty-first century inhabitant, Bellamy wrote that his readers would be shocked to learn that Christmas was openly celebrated in the nineteenth century, despite the systematic disregard of Christ's Golden Rule, the guiding principle of the collective state.

Bellamy was not the only person writing about Nationalism. An article in the August 16, 1890 *The American Architect and Building News*, "Nationalism at Des Moines, Iowa" reported that a Des Moines club that met weekly to discuss economic and social topics, was planning to establish a cooperative colony near Lake Charles, Louisiana. The author noted that the group's philosophy of "all will have equal opportunity and each will be rewarded according to his deeds" differed from Bellamy's principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." A more accurate summary of Bellamy's philosophy appeared in a July 1890 *Contemporary Review* article titled "Nationalism. What It Means": "from each equally, to each equally."

A satiric commentary on Bellamy's ideals appeared in the February 1890 issue of *Atlantic Monthly*. In "Mr. Bellamy and the New Nationalist Party," economist and MIT President Francis A. Walker offered a rather sarcastic assessment of Nationalism, admitting that he had no sympathy for the movement but felt no hostility toward its propagandists. He praised Bellamy's skill in solving problems that have "plagued (society) over the course of centuries and that Christ's devoted followers have been unable to remedy." Among the facets of Nationalism that are "too great for his unenlightened intellect" are how farmers will get their work done in one-and-a-half hours when twelve-hour days were currently not long enough and how people would buy the great things Bellamy described with the few cents they would earn if the nation's wealth was evenly divided among all.

Political

In September 1888 Bellamy approved the formation of the first Bellamy Club, convened in Boston by a group of retired army officers to promote the novel's proposed reforms; additional clubs soon followed throughout the United States and Europe. At Bellamy's insistence, they were renamed Nationalist Clubs, to emphasize his social system rather than himself. The clubs initially acted as propagandists, informing the public of Nationalism's benefits but not actively cam-

paigning for changes. Ignoring his frail health, Bellamy was drawn into the Nationalist movement, writing articles and making speeches.

In May 1889 the Nationalist Education Association began publishing *The Nationalist*. A monthly journal, it featured essays, poems, and short stories devoted to Nationalism and club news and speeches. Concerned that *The Nationalist* was not adequately covering the industrial and social problems and solutions that interested him, Bellamy launched a weekly, *The New Nation*, in January 1891; *The Nationalist* folded in April of that year. Taking a more activist stance, *The New Nation* reported events signaling the evolution toward nationalization, promoted reform legislation, and featured "Talks on Nationalism," Bellamy's witty dialogues between proselytizing Nationalist Mr. Smith and a variety of harried individuals, such as a tariff reformer, evolutionist, and prohibitionist. Committed to Populism as a means to further his reform efforts, Bellamy highlighted convention news, state victories, and the 1892 Omaha platform. Greenwood has reprinted *The New Nation*, which ran until January 1894, with an introduction on the Nationalist movement by Frederic C. Jaher. Many of Bellamy's most important articles are collected in *Edward Bellamy Speaks Again!* (1937); *Talks on Nationalism* (1938) includes Bellamy's columns by that name and *The New Nation's* prospectus.

In an October 1890 *Forum* article titled "First Steps Toward Nationalism," Bellamy outlined the legislation advocated by Nationalists to ensure the orderly progress toward his ideal state. These included nationalization of telephone and telegraph services, municipal control of public utilities, government ownership of railroads and coal mines, and organization of all employees in these industries and services. Bellamy reviewed the "Progress of Nationalism in the U.S." in the June 1892 issue of *North American Review*. He explained that the nationalized state would result from economic revolution, a process that had begun with the founding of the United States on the principle of popular government. He saw the great monopolies and trade unions as signs of the organizing forces that would eventually lead to labor and capital blending in an indistinguishable union. Both articles are reprinted in *Edward Bellamy Speaks Again!*

Although Bellamy refused to call his system socialism because of the radical and revolutionary connotations, socialists often credited *Looking Backward* with making their ideas respectable among his middle class readers. The U.S. Socialist Party and various labor groups distributed "The Parable of the Water Tank," Bellamy's fable of capitalist exploitation of workers in *Equality*.

In 1894 the English Fabian Society, which, like Bellamy, advocated the natural evolution toward socialism, published an American edition of their 1888 lecture series *Socialism. The Fabian Essays*. Bellamy contributed the introduction, in which he commended the essays and praised the Fabians' educational efforts. He described Nationalists as socialists who "go further": while socialists believe merely in an equitable distribution of wealth, Nationalists call for equal shares for all, without regard to differing contributions to society.

Literary

Looking Backward's reception triggered new interest in utopian fiction in the U.S. In *Dreams and Visions. A Study of American Utopias, 1865-1917* (1985), Charles J. Rooney, identified 120 utopias published between 1865 and 1917—109 after 1888—and only twenty-four between 1715 and 1864. Some were written by Nationalists who envisioned a society similar to Bellamy's, while others offered different solutions to the urban industrial crises.

Both supporters and critics used *Looking Backward*'s main characters. For example, in Richard C. Michaelis' *Looking Further Forward. An Answer to Looking Backward by Edward Bellamy* (1890), Julian learns that Dr. Leete, his twenty-first century guide, was a member of the favored class and had presented a biased view of the new society. With most people actually poorer and more oppressed, Julian was delighted to awaken once again in the nineteenth century. Charging that Michaelis quoted Bellamy out of context, Ludwig Geissler responded with *Looking Beyond. A Sequel to "Looking Backward" by Edward Bellamy and An Answer to "Looking Further Forward" by Richard Michaelis* (1891). With footnoted references to both novels, his characters responded to Michaelis' allegations, and Julian once again found himself in the twentieth century.

The best known fictional condemnation of Bellamy came from English Socialist William Morris. Repelled by Bellamy's technological utopia, his *News from Nowhere* (1890) reflected his own commitment to fine craftsmanship and abhorrence of useless mass production. As the result of a proletariat revolution in 1952, twenty-second century society was governed by the will of the majority in matters of community welfare, otherwise everyone did as they pleased. Children learned by doing rather than in school and were free to pursue a variety of tasks, much like their parents, who reveled in the sensuous pleasure of work. Quoting liberally from Morris' 1889 *Commonweal* review of *Looking Backward*, Paul Meier in *William Morris: the Marxist Dreamer* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1978; first published as *La Pensée Utopique de William Morris*, France: Editions Sociales, 1972) identified the author's horror of Bellamy's regimented society as the prime motivation for his novel.

In contrast to *News from Nowhere*'s absence of schooling, Rabbi Solomon Schindler, a member of the Boston School Board, created a many-tiered child care/education system in *Young West. A Sequel to Edward Bellamy's Celebrated Novel Looking Backward* (1894). The primary character, Julian and Edith West's son, was called Young West even at the age of seventy, when he began the book and reflected on the events of his life, including his election as president. The novel's upbeat storyline demonstrates the ardent Nationalism of Rabbi Schindler, who prepared the 1888 German translation of *Looking Backward*.

Bellamy also felt obliged to respond to *Looking Backward*'s reception. Disillusioned with the Populists, in ill health and financial trouble, he began writing *Equality* (1897) in 1894. His political experience, contact with various reformers,

and the criticisms leveled at *Looking Backward* called for further explanation of his utopian society. Detailing the workings of the industrial service, no longer referred to as the industrial army, Bellamy offered dry descriptions of life in the new age, as well as lengthy history lessons on numerous nineteenth century shortcomings. With few references to the love story that sweetened *Looking Backward*, *Equality* failed to gain a popular audience and appealed mostly to committed Nationalists. After completing *Equality*, Bellamy moved to Denver in a futile attempt to restore his health. Homesick for Chicopee Falls, he returned to Massachusetts and died from tuberculosis a month later, on May 22, 1898, at the age of 48.

BIOGRAPHY AND CRITICISM

Although biographical sketches of Bellamy had appeared in contemporary journals and various editions of his novels, Arthur Morgan wrote the first separately published biography in 1944. Despite—and perhaps because of—its admiring tone, Morgan's thorough *Edward Bellamy* remains the best introduction to the novelist. An earlier biography by *New Nation* managing editor Mason Green was never published; according to Morgan, Green's book contained inaccuracies and was written from memory after a fire destroyed most of Bellamy's early papers lent him by the family. (Morgan deposited copies of Green's manuscript at Harvard, Library of Congress, Huntington Library, and Antioch College.) Highlighting various facets of his subject's personality, Morgan's book was based on later papers discovered by Bellamy's grandson, interviews with family and Chicopee Falls acquaintances, and Bellamy's published articles, novels, and short stories. Morgan quoted extensively from Bellamy's unpublished journals and plot outlines, including "Eliot Carson," his unfinished, fictionalized autobiography. Morgan also wrote *Plagarism in Utopia* (1944), in which he defends *Looking Backward*'s originality; edited *The Religion of Solidarity* (1940)[4], a volume of Bellamy's published and unpublished nonfiction; and analyzed his beliefs in *The Philosophy of Edward Bellamy* (1945).

A less zealous treatment is Sylvia Bowman's *The Year 2000. A Critical Biography of Edward Bellamy* (1958), which places Bellamy's life and writings in their social, economic, and political context. Bowman gave greater emphasis to the psychological underpinnings of Bellamy's utopia. Especially useful is her listing of Bellamy's published works, including anonymous pieces from *The Nationalist* and *The New Nation*. In 1962 Bowman edited *Edward Bellamy Abroad. An American Prophet's Influence*, essays by scholars in Russia, Australia, Holland, South Africa, and France, among others, on Bellamy's literary and political influence in their countries. An international bibliography listed translations of Bellamy's novels, articles about him, and fiction and nonfiction influenced by his writings. Bowman's *Edward Bellamy* (1986) is a slim volume focused on the author's career, beliefs, and influence, including an analysis of his ideal state. A regrettably brief chapter

traces his influence through the 1930s, a subject Bowman maintains is ripe for scholarly exploration.

Nationalism itself is the focus of Everett MacNair's *Edward Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement, 1889-1894* (1957). Providing extensive details on Nationalist clubs and publications, MacNair traced the movement's development from educational activities to political involvement. Another view of Nationalism is offered by Arthur Lipow in *Authoritarian Socialism in America. Edward Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement* (1982). Utilizing Hal Draper's division of socialism into "democratic revolutionary socialism based on a mass working-class movement" and "authoritarian socialism" in which a "despotic 'new class' rules over a stratified economy" (*The Two Souls of Socialism,* Berkeley: Independent Socialist Press, 1961), Lipow placed Nationalism in the latter category. Striving to correct previous interpretations of *Looking Backward* as part of the leftist reform tradition rather than a middle class reaction against capitalism and a turning away from democracy, he maintained that its message was typical of the era's conservative reformers; only through contact with agrarian radicals did Bellamy begin to modify his elitism, as evidenced in *Equality.* Krishan Kumar provides an excellent overview of Bellamy's relationship to socialism in *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (1987).

Bellamy is viewed alongside his contemporaries in Daniel Aaron's *Men of Good Hope. A Story of American Progressives* (1961) and John L. Thomas's *Alternative America. Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Henry Demarest Lloyd and the Adversary Tradition* (1983). Aaron credited the "village utopian" with defining and "domesticating socialism by removing its 'objectionable' and 'disreputable' features and by making it palatable for masses intimidated by the name of socialism while yearning for its promised benefits." His examination of the *History of the Revolution* by Storiot, *Equality's* fictional historian, emphasized Bellamy's belief in the peaceful—even religious—evolution that would lead to Nationalism. Greatly expanding his 1967 introduction to *Looking Backward,* Thomas followed the careers of his three subjects, identifying parallels and dissimilarities in their lives and beliefs. He focuses on the world envisioned by Bellamy and shows how he and his fellow utopianists were influenced by the post-Civil War society in which they came of age.

Literary studies have also included Bellamy. In *The Economic Novel in America* (1942), Walter Fuller Taylor called *Looking Backward* "One of the three or four genuinely great books produced in the course of the middle-class critique of economics." He identified expanded mechanical power and conservation of human energy as the chief forces behind Bellamy's idealized society. In an article in *Clockwork Worlds: Mechanized Environments in SF* (1983), Reimer Jehmlich suggested that this "pragmatic, quantitative technocratic approach to socioeconomic problems"—essential in both *Looking Backward* and B.F. Skinner's *Walden Two*—was a "typically American" characteristic of utopias, which "reflect national idiosyncracies more clearly and more stubbornly than ordinary literature." Howard Bruce Franklin called Bellamy the "most influential science fiction writer of the

nineteenth century'' in *Future Perfect: American Science Fiction of the Nineteenth Century* (1966). He discussed a number of Bellamy's short stories and reprinted ''The Blindman's World'' and ''To Whom This May Come.''

Looking Backward naturally serves as the core of many utopian studies. In *The Utopian Novel in America, 1865-1900* (1973), Robert Shurter surveys *Looking Backward*'s sources, concluding that Bellamy was greatly influenced by August Bebel's *Frau un der Sozialismus* (1883) and Laurence Gronlund's *The Cooperative Commonwealth in Its Outlines; an Exposition of Modern Socialism* (1884). Inspired by his father's interest, Vernon Louis Parrington, Jr., discussed Bellamy's predecessors and successors in *American Dreams. A Study of American Utopias* (1947).

Less inclined to group their studies around Bellamy are Charles Rooney in *Dreams and Visions. A Study of American Utopias, 1865-1917* (1985) and Kenneth Roemer in *The Obsolete Necessity. America in Utopian Writings, 1888-1900* (1976). Both books confirm the outpouring of utopian literature occasioned by *Looking Backward* and by the crises that also motivated Bellamy, providing annotated bibliographies of their sources. Rooney delineates the problems, solutions, and values in 106 novels, while Roemer seeks insights into American culture offered by 160 utopian, anti-utopian, and partially utopian works. In *The Utopian Novel in American 1886-1896. The Politics of Form* (1984), Jean Pfaelzer organizes late nineteenth century utopias according to popular social theories they reflected, labeling them industrial-progressive, agrarian-pastoral, conservative, apocalyptic, and feminist; she places *Looking Backward* in the former category.

In *Edward Bellamy: A Bibliography* (1986), Nancy Snell Griffith lists 1,097 works by and about the novelist. Her entries cover Bellamy's fiction and nonfiction and related books, articles, reviews, and dissertations. Although entries on Bellamy's short stories and nonfiction are not annotated, Griffith does provide introductions to his novels and summarizes the content of secondary sources. Especially useful is a section on Nationalism, which identifies both contemporary and scholarly pieces. Another recent bibliography, *Edward Bellamy. An Annotated Bibliography of Secondary Criticism* (1988) by Richard Toby Widdicombe, was unavailable as this issue of *ASI* went to press.

Reflecting recent literary and historical trends, *Looking Backward, 1988-1888. Essays on Edward Bellamy* (1989) offers new insights on Bellamy and *Looking Backward*. Edited by Daphne Patai, the volume's ten essays—including a selected, annotated bibliography by Nancy Snell Griffith—cover topics ranging from Chicopee Falls' influence on Bellamy and the novelist's impact on later radicals to *Looking Backward*'s use of technology as both problem and solution and the application of textual analysis and reader response theory to utopian works.

As evidenced by this essay, the study of Edward Bellamy and his writings need not be limited to *Looking Backward* and its context and influence. In issuing a ringing indictment of late nineteenth century society and proposing solutions that appealed at least to his middle class peers, Bellamy provides an entree to topics as varied as education, medicine, and feminism.[5] His perspectives can com-

plement the writings of other nineteenth century theorists and help explain the initial appeal of totalitarian rule. The twenty-first century's fast approach provides an opportunity to reconsider the criticism leveled by Bellamy and his fellow utopianists and measure the progress toward both their desirable—and their misguided—ideals.

NOTES

1. In "Contents and Texts: The Influence of Looking Backward" (*Centennial Review* 27 [1983]: 204-23), Kenneth Roemer pursues a theme that has interested critics since 1888: what is the basis for *Looking Backward*'s popularity? He rejects the notion that it was the "longed-for-response to confusing times in industrial nations," noting that few utopian novels were published during the Depression. Instead, he attributes the novel's success to such unconnected factors as the popularity of entertaining fiction and how-to manuals in the late nineteenth century (*Looking Backward* was both); a Boston department store's clearance sale that reduced its cost to ten cents in late 1888; its depiction of new inventions that appealed to readers enthralled, rather than horrified by, technology; and Bellamy's use of simple, familiar terms to describe his new society and complex, strangely artificial paragraphs on the nineteenth century.
2. Among the conferences scheduled were: "Looking Backward: Class, Gender, Technology, and the Making of Modern Culture", Mid-America American Studies Association, April 15-17, 1988, Columbia, Missouri; "Utopia Revisited One Hundred Years Later...", Edward Bellamy Memorial Association, April 29-May 1, 1988, Chicopee, Massachusetts; and "Bellamy Centennial Conference", Society for Utopian Studies and New England American Studies Association, September 29-October 2, 1988, Boston, Massachusetts. The Chicopee conference premiered "Edward Bellamy. Hopes and Dreams," a 30-minute videotape prepared for the centennial by a local PBS station (for more information, contact Rich Panter, WGBY, 44 Hampden St., Springfield, MA 01103; 413/781-2801).
3. Quoted in Arthur E. Morgan, *Edward Bellamy* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1944; reprint, Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1974), 99.
4. "The Religion of Solidarity" was an unpublished essay prepared by Bellamy at age 24, delineating his personal philosophy. At times rambling, the essay stressed the dual qualities of human life—individual and universal—a theme several scholars see repeated in his later writings. Joseph Schiffman included the essay in *Selected Writings on Religion and Society* [by Edward Bellamy] (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1955; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1974). It also appears in *The Religion of Solidarity*, a collection of Bellamy pieces published in 1984 by Concord Grove Press annoyingly in blue ink.
5. Bibliographies are helpful in identifying discussion of various themes. Examples are James J. Kopp's dissertation on "Curing the Ills of Society: Health and Disease in American Utopian Literature, 1888-1914" (George Washington University, forthcoming, 1988) and Sylvia Strauss's essay, "Gender, Class, and Race in Utopia" in *Looking Backward, 1988-1888. Essays on Edward Bellamy*, ed. Daphne Patai (Amherst, Univ. of Massachusetts Press, forthcoming, 1989).

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