BETWEEN REALISM AND ROMANTICISM: THE CURIOUS CAREER OF EUGENE BENSON

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As might be expected, virtually everything that we know about the question of literary apprenticeship and vocation in nineteenth-century America comes from studies of writers who were ultimately successful. We have, for instance, come to appreciate the value of Thoreau's long association with Emerson and the ways in which the fiction of Crane and Dreiser was shaped by their experiences as newspapermen. We have learned of the wide range of services that Emerson rendered Whitman, including the crucial stimulus of his vision of the function of the poet, the vital personal encouragement and unmistakable public stature of the famous letter of 1855, and even his willingness to act as Whitman's literary agent, as when he sold "Broad Music of the Storm" to the *Atlantic Monthly* for a most generous $100.00, the payment coming in advance.1 Analyses of the apprenticeship and participation in the literary marketplace of these and other writers provide an essential perspective on their mature work and at the same time yield valuable insights into the literary situation.

It may also prove useful to approach the topic of literary vocation from the opposite direction and consider not the example of the successful writer but that of one who failed to realize his potential because of an inability to overcome hostile conditions for authorship. And an analysis of a writer who copes of age during a transitional period may be particularly useful in defining the underlying shape and values of both the preceding and succeeding periods.

One such writer is Eugene Benson, who was born in Hyde Park, New York, in 1839 and died in Venice, Italy, in 1908. Beginning his career as critic during the Civil War, Benson was acutely aware that a great moment in American literature had come to a close. But in over eighty major essays published in such magazines as the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Galaxy*, *Round Table*, and *Putnam's*, he attempted to continue the tradition of vital, outspoken criticism that he identified in such writers as Thoreau, Emerson, Poe, and Parker. His most notable achievement is a group of six essays for the *Galaxy* forthrightly denouncing the political, social, literary, and business corruption of the immediate post-Civil War years, a series that anticipates Whitman's *Democratic Vistas* (1871), which was also written for the *Galaxy*.2 At the same time, in directly taking up the role of critic of his culture and in writing sympathetically of the fiction of a writer such as Rebecca Harding Davis, Benson became an early proponent of Realism.

There was, however, little interest at this time in critical analyses of the shortcomings of American life. Benson did not receive the support of established writers and editors. As the decade wore on, he became increasingly more shrill, and, like Poe, self-destructive. An abortive series for the *Galaxy* in 1869, critical of such powerful editors as E. L. Godkin, G. W. Curtis, and Theodore Tilton, led to the undermining of his base of support at this magazine. The fact that he induced Mrs. Harriette Malan Fletcher, the wife of a prominent Newport, Massachusetts, clergyman and mother of their two children, to leave her husband and come live with and then marry him damaged his reputation among Boston people, and, he feared, with the Atlantic. With no outlet in America for his criticism, he became a permanent expatriate in Italy, his removal marking the premature end of the literary career of a writer who may well have developed into one of our best critics of culture.

Very little is known of Benson's early life.3 A professional painter, he took his primary training in art, beginning his studies at the National Academy of Art in 1856, and also working in the studio of J. H. Twachtman, elected an Associate of the Academy in 1863, he exhibited there regularly during the years 1858-1870. It appears that he began his journalistic career to supplement his income, and from late 1873 through mid-1876, he was the regular art critic for the *Round Table*, a New York weekly.2 With the founding of the *Galaxy* in New York as a national and cosmopolitan rival to the sectional *Atlantic*, he had at hand an ideal vehicle for his comprehensive criticism. The young Benson lost little time in letting the proper guardians of American morals know just where he and they stood. His first *Galaxy* essay, "The Papal Element in France," published in June 1869, denounces the well-known French law opposing freedom of the French, particularly that "papal... delightful in bodily life," "ardent worship of the beautiful," and frank acceptance of the nude in art.4 He wrote sympathetically about such respectable authors as George Sand and, in a February 1869 *Atlantic* essay, "Charles Baudeleire: Poet of the Sensation." Through his discussion of such writers and his many essays on French art and life, he sought to broaden American culture by bringing it into contact with the older, more open and cosmopolitan society of France. Benson would be followed in this by such writers as Henry James, Jr., Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and W. D. Howells.

In "About the Literary Spirit," published in the *Galaxy* in July 1866, Benson fearlessly attacked "the proper gentlemen who sit in editorial chairs" for attempting to enforce their own narrow sense of literary decorum on the entire community, while unmindful "how far the sensibilities of conventional propriety is destructive to the vitality and the charm of the literature of a people." He clearly recognized the extraordinary power that the editors of the magazines were coming to hold, and his essay provides us with a cogent analysis of the "monotonous, reflective, enslaved" qualities that would continue to characterize much of American writing for the remainder of the century.5

Like Whitman, Benson wrote of the importance of a democratic literature, one based on the actual lives of the people themselves. But as Whitman did not, Benson understood the potential of prose fiction, observing in "Literature and the People," published in the *Galaxy* in April 1867, that the novel would serve as "the great medium..."
of intercourse" between the writer and his audience. Lamenting the death of novelties on this side of the Atlantic, Benson saw that American prose fiction trailed the development of the form in Europe. It would be ten years before the appearance of the nature work of the best novelists of his own generation, James, Howells, and Twain, our first realists.

Benson's treatment of the nameless but powerful editors in "About the Literary Spirit" is a courageous one. Even more remarkable was his "Literary Frontiers," which he published in the GALAXY in September 1869, as a rejoinder to the powerful Russell Lowell for his notorious attack on Thoreau, which had appeared in the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW the previous October as a review of Thoreau's LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS. Benson used the occasion of this essay, the only defense of the recently dead Thoreau, to consider basic questions of literary vocation and of the artist's relationship to his society.

Lowell's essay has quite properly been seen as the culmination of his long-held antipathy to Thoreau for his disengagement from the world. But its length and moral force so far exceed the occasion that Lowell evidently intended the essay to serve a broader purpose: to warn younger writers not to undertake the sort of outspoken social criticism that Thoreau had written or, for that matter, to see themselves as superior to the social order as Lowells charges, Thoreau had done.

Lowell portrays Thoreau as 'a man with such high a conceit of himself that he accepted without questioning and insisted on our accepting, his defects and weaknesses of character as virtues and powers peculiar to himself,' and so induces him for criticizing "a world, the hollowness of whose satisfactions he had never had the means of testing."8 That Lowell is giving a clear "cease and desist" signal to would-be social critics, malcontents, and reformers of every stripe is made clear by his scornful description of the "Transcendentalists" of the 1830s:

Every possible form of intellectual and physical dyspepsia brought forth its gospel. Men had its prophets, and the prescriptive simplicity of Adam its martyr. Everybody had a mission (with a capital M) to attend to. Everybody else's business, the one thing to be common but common sense. All stood ready at a moment's notice to reform everything but themselves.9

This easy dismissal of reformers reflects the confident, even prophetic optimism in the North immediately after the defeat of the Confederacy. Unfortunately, as Melville discovered in the reception of BATTLE-PIECES AND ASPECTS OF THE WAR, the newly emerging confidence in the national destiny did not bring it with it a corresponding willingness to attend to or even tolerate adverse criticism.10 Lowell insists, then, that the path to becoming a writer lies not through fruitless social criticism, but rather participation in, and support for, the established social institutions. He would be followed in this by such younger writers as Edmund Clarence Stedman, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and Richard Henry Stoddard.

Benson charges that Lowell's position represents a regressive and even fatal undermining of the notion of the integrity of the literary career. He of course defends Thoreau personally, calling him "the most blameless and sincere man of letters who ever in this country resisted the majority," but his central concern is with the question of his vocation. He credits Thoreau and Emerson with having done much "to destroy the prestige of dilettantism."11 The application of the word "dilettante" to the talented but unfulfilled Lowell—professor, poet, scholar, editor, would-be diplomat—and strikes home. In several of his essays Benson argues that the evident thinness and insufficiency of much American literature is a result of the fact that what he called "the literary spirit" is not valued as an end; art has been made to serve other causes, usually those of didacticism and moralism, and our writers have been divided men, engaged in a variety of occupations.

Like Browning's in "Our Lost Leader," Benson's tone of bitterness in treating Lowell is the more effective because of its restraint. He attempts to rekindle the war fought by Emerson and Thoreau against "the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times," and so reproaches Lowell for standing among the self-righteous crowd of Thoreau's detractors. . . . I mean that he allowed himself to act as prosecutor for the Boston public; and I can only acknowledge that, as literary Attorney-General for the State, his assignment and prosecution of Thoreau before the North American tribunal was an ingenious and brilliant effort; and after it, I have no doubt but that the kid glove literary and clerical mob of the country were ready to cry out, Release Barabbas but crucify Thoreau, for he has mocked our gods and he has been indifferent to our high priests.12

The central issue for Benson, then, is one of class and position. He charges that Lowell himself is so much a part of "the gratifying social life of Boston" that he is unable. He claims that the literary faculty "save in the service of the most time-honored institutions," by way of contrast, Benson makes the fundamental point that the sort of criticism that Thoreau had written, free of the prejudices of class or social institutions and independent of the levelling, conformist tendencies of mass society, is absolutely essential to the healthy functioning of American democracy.

Benson traces his critical ideal to the French tradition of the literary fondateur, the writer who "affronts, outrageous, defies, or does as something which time or custom has made respectable." He cites Mirabeau, Babelais, and Sand as well as Carlyle and Holmes as foreign exemplars. But most centrally, Benson based his concept on a once-vital American tradition that he associates with Emerson, Poe, Parker, Thoreau, and Henry James. S. Ironecally, then, the young Benson looked beyond Lowell in an attempt to revive a tradition of authorship of an earlier America. A few literary fondateurs in the army of American progress, he wrote with a confidence he would come to disavow, "would break a great many vulgar mirrors in our industrial palaces. . . ."15

In launching his lonely, but spirited campaign against "the great, gross body of our time," Benson had high hopes that the GALAXY would become the serious and fearless magazine that he, as certain, the country desperately needed. Early in 1867, he wrote the editors, the brothers William C. and Francis P. Church, "The function of the GALAXY plainly is to entertain first, then it is to set ideas. . . . We have no magazine to meet this want, all avoid salient criticism."16 Whether the editors, who also owned the magazine for its first two years, had committed themselves to this high purpose is hard to say. On the basis of a review of the editors' correspondence and their "Reuben" column, Frank Luther Mott found "a marked caution which always kept it from being really extremist."17 Nevertheless, their willingness to publish essays
CRATIC VISTAS are remarkable. In a time not especially noted for self-criticism, both Whitman and Benson played the role of social critic and insisted that society be evaluated by the quality of its life, not by its material achievements. In the absence of a shared religious faith and in the failure of secular guides and teachers, both writers place great, perhaps unrealistically great, faith in the writer as a source both of social criticism and the creation of cultural values. Both writers deal sensibly with contemporary writing and denounce the reliance of literary men on foreign, particularly British, artistic and cultural values. And both redefine accepted notions of culture, seeing it not as something foreign, to be imposed upon the people as a goal to be aspired to, but as an aspect of the deepest sense, the reflection of the entire life of a people. In view of the importance of the GALAXY at this time as a lucrative outlet to Whitman for his work and as the publisher of John Burroughs’ important essay on him, “Walt Whitman and His ‘Drum Taps’,” 26 it is likely that Whitman read the magazine regularly and was familiar with Benson’s essays. It is entirely possible that a reading of Benson contributed to the sensitive thinking which preceded the actual writing of DEMOCRATIC VISTAS.

Benson, however, lacked Whitman’s large and confident view of the evolution of American society. Nowhere does he approach Whitman’s profound exposition of the spiritual or “esthetic” qualities of democracy. This difference may be related to the fact that in several ways Benson’s position in American society and his sources of support as a writer were insecure. He had no firm geographical base, living at various times in New York, New Haven, and Newburyport. A highly sensitive man of fastidious taste, he was bothered by the crudities of American domestic life, his essays show, in such matters as fashion, food, furniture, and the hypocritical treatment of American women. He rebelled against the inconsistency involved in the worship of the American girl and designation of the American woman to the role of domestic servant. He seems to be describing his own ambivalence when, in “Literature and the People,” he speaks of the “sincere but cultivated man” who “finds it difficult to decide which he must prefer—the heartless culture of the critic who follows the lead of the foreign reviewer or the raw and local barbarisms of the untravelled American mind.” 27 Benson would shortly exchange the “raw and local barbarisms” for the life of the expatriate painter, in Florence, Rome, and Venice. His sense of social isolation and growing estrangement from American life were complicated by his sensitivity about his relationship with Ada Fiedler.

Benson did not have an independent income, and although he continued to exhibit his paintings during the 1860's, he sought to support himself primarily through literature. Temporarily he was not suited to the patient labors and tight harness of an intellectual position. Still, he needed the security of a regular income, and he attempted to work out separate arrangements with the ATLANTIC and the GALAXY under which he would write a major article for each every other month. In a letter, dated September 8, 1866, to Frank Church proposing such an arrangement, he reported that the ATLANTIC had agreed to take an article from him every other month. In 1868 Benson did publish five articles in the ATLANTIC and four in the GALAXY. However, his connection with the ATLANTIC was hardly a secure one. As he observed in the letter to Church, that magazine’s “large corps of contributors precludes the expectation that it can give me more espaço than it has given me,” and he stated that he had on hand “several unprinted but paid for articles of my writing.” 28 Only three of his essays appeared in the Boston magazine the next year. That meant that he would have to rely primarily on the GALAXY both for financial support and, more important, as an outlet
for his best and characteristic work as literary frondeur.

Personally, Benson and both editors appear to have enjoyed something more than a merely professional relationship. Benson's letter to Frank Church of August 1, 1868, written from New Haven, concludes, "However, radical differences of opinion aside,—I hope to see you at Bird-WULS [his home]—what Saturday can you come?" But those radical differences of opinion were certainly real and centered both on the magazine's basic editorial policy and its treatment of Benson's own work. He found, as he wrote the editors on January 6, 1869, that the GALAXY was becoming just another pretentious ... and essays that touch the more external of life and literature. So important was the chance magazine to him that Benson felt compelled to challenge the Churches every step of the way for its soul. In the letter of January 6, 1869, he expressed his great dismay upon learning that the GALAXY planned to carry a long series by the "odonistor" Richard Grant White on "Words and Their Uses." He could not understand why the GALAXY would make room for a topic of merely philological interest, one which was "not close to the people and the needs of our intellectual life" and which had already been well treated elsewhere. In view of the fact that White was serving as an editorial assistant at the magazine, one wonders just why Benson protested in this way.

The major source of conflict between editors and contributor—one which persisted throughout his four-year association with the magazine—concerned the Churches' treatment of Benson's own work. On two occasions they used the editorial "Nebula" column to dissociate themselves from certain of his positions. The column for August 1, 1868, begins by observing that "A house divided against itself cannot stand, and it would be really bad policy, as well as bad manners, for this GALAXY to fall foul of its own writers. Yet we venture to take exception to some of the positions assumed by our spirited contributor ... in his earnest protest. In our last number, against reserve and decency," Under attack is Benson's "About the Literary Spirits," which is the object of a full page of the editors' moralistic criticism. Similarly, in the same number of the magazine which carried Benson's "George Sand and Her Works" the editors devoted an essay to charging that their own contributor was in error. It was simply a failure of the "odontist" to recognize that throughout Sand is vitiated by the "artificial and corrupting" French sentiment and that her example cannot be considered generally moralized society would not endure one generation. To add insult to injury, the editors published only half of Benson's essay, forcing him to write an angry letter protesting the treatment of his "soon mutilated" essay and the attempt to interpose an "editorial buffer" between author and audience. The letter achieved its purpose. The next month the editors published the missing portion—and prefixed with a paragraph attacking those "false, facile, and trivial writers, with whom it is sufficient to charactrize a thing as French" to stigmatize it as the embodiment of abominations. Benson's essay on de Maupassant—never published as far as I can determine—led him to write Frank Church, "Evidently my dear Church you read with average spectacles and I write without them." 

That Benson frequently met a hostile response from his own, comparatively enlightened, editors suggests just how precarious his literary position was. For, as a front de la, a writer who "slings truth—is unbeatable and often destructive truths," he regularly came under attack for the positions he had staked out. Of his essay on

Illustration, the NATION said on January 28, 1869, that "We have seen nothing that our essayist has written which is more to be reprehended than this exhibition of his tendency to confound the immoral with the un immoral which, as an artist, he may be supposed to have a special belief in. The matter becomes serious when the expression is too complete and too long continued, the immoral being falseness and futility in the case of the artist as much as of other men and women."

In the Godkin essay, Benson observed that the contemporary "journalist has so much influence upon his contemporaries that we cannot be indifferent to his personality and ignore his limitations." While avoiding personal attacks, Benson hit close to home, characterizing Godkin, for instance, as being "deficient in imagination" and so "necessarily limited in his sympathies." For an author in the 1860s to write with such frankness of the limitations of his colleagues may strike us as suicidal. But of course it is impossible to imagine Benson engaged in the thinly disguised "puff" that were then typical.

In response to the volley of protest that the articles elicited, Frank Church was forced to use his blue pencil liberally on newer submissions. Benson charged that his suggested deletions in an article on Horace Greeley were so damaging that he was forced to withdraw it. Benson warned Church that a negative verdict of the Godkin essay would represent "disguise the pages of the magazine. It must be remembered that because of continuing losses, the Church brothers had been forced early in 1868 to enter into a complicated arrangement with the firm of Sheldon and Company which gave the Sheldon's ultimate control over the magazine, even though the Churches continued as editors. The Sheldons expressly reserved to themselves the right to reject any article they may not wish" and to fix the amount to be paid to any contributor. Benson feared the conservative influence of the Sheldon firm on the magazine, and in a letter of July 30, 1868, he urged the Churches to "consider it best and leave the Sheldonites, and the Philistines, with as much of the frontier literature as you may affect to make good your hold on your magazine, or boldly carry into effect your plans. If these do not prohibit their editors from smuggling the magazine's notorious frontier into the magazine, the editors grew tired of him and dismissed him, or he was forced to resign. The result is the same; Benson's series on the New York Journalists ended prematurely with the publication of "Theodore Tilton" in the GALAXY for September 1869. It was Benson's last critical essay for the GALAXY.
After his association with the GALAXY ended, Benson did a series for PUTNAM'S on "Private Galleries in New York" and approximately thirty-five short, primarily educational essays for APPLICTION'S JOURNAL. None of this work approaches the depth and seriousness of his GALAXY essays. No other magazine, he felt, would be receptive to his characteristic work; his career as a fronten was dependent, then, upon the availability of the GALAXY. Other GALAXY writers had similar experiences, as J. R. Pearson has observed:

A comparison of the contributions made to the GALAXY by its outstanding writers, with their contributions to other leading magazines of the period, shows that the GALAXY had the writers' best work, especially their best critical essays. Of five writers--Walt Whitman, John Burroughs, Eugene Benson, Titus Munson Coan, and Richard Grant White--four contributed to the GALAXY work which was not approached in quality by anything submitted to other periodicals.

The only exception, John Burroughs, was generally restricted to nature or travel subjects in his articles for the ATLANTIC and SCRIBNER'S. With the demise of the GALAXY in 1878, when its subscription list was purchased, ironically, by its former rival, the ATLANTIC, the nation lost a unique magazine. No other contemporary magazine attempted to "suit itself" to use Benson's phrase, in quite the same way it had done.

After settling in Italy, Benson concentrated on his marginally successful career as a painter. He proceeded to be indifferent to the American magazines, which had once meant so much to him. He continued to write, but now turned away, perforce, from topics "close to the people and the needs of our intellectual life." Instead, he looked back, to the heroic Italian past, to find an image against which to contrast the littleness of the present. His COMPARE STAMPA: THE STORY OF HER LIFE, published in 1881 by the Boston firm of Roberts Brothers, tells the story of the unrequited love of the great and tragic Renaissance poetess for Collatino Coni di Collalto. The small volume contains translations from the poetry by Benson's step-daughter, Julia Constance Fletcher, who also suffered the pain of rejection by a well-born suitor, Lord Lovelace, Byron's grandson. Ralph Gordon Noel King Milbanke. In 1885 Roberts Brothers brought out a collection of Benson's travel letters, ART AND NATURE IN ITALY. Three letters, which originally appeared in the New York POST, edited by Benson's good friend Parko Godden, record his search, in the most obscure Italian towns, for neglected and forgotten masterpieces of art. In the course of the narrative, Benson frequently contrasts the image of aesthetic and spiritual unity of the ideal Italian past with the fragmentation and incompleteness of the contemporary America that he recalls. He also published a rather wooden long poem, written in couplets, FROM THE ISOLAN NELLS, which appeared in 1891 in an edition of 380 copies under the imprint of E. Matthews, a London publisher. It was not published in the United States. The poem celebrates the countryside which had been a source of inspiration not only to the great Italian poets but also to his friend Longfellow. It was as if the embittered Benson, whom the NATION, in a leader dated January 2, 1868, had linked with Whitman as a leading champion of American literary nationalism, was attempting to demonstrate the infinite superiority of his adopted to his native land.

After the death of his much-worshipped Hazlett, whom he married after their arrival in Italy, Benson lived on into a lonely and impoverished old age. His friend Henry James used his Venetian home, Palazzo Capello, as the model for the setting of "The Aspera Papers." Like the Misses Bordereau of James's tale, he was all but forgotten by the great outside world.

Benson's achievement remains a modest one. A transitional figure, he deserves credit for continuing the respective battles of both Thoreau and Poe into the 1860s. Like Poe, he defended the autonomy of the artistic experience and denounced moralism and didacticism in art. Like Thoreau's, his vision extended to the society as a whole and he scornfully depicted the destructive worship of material things, and in a vigorous, pointed style called the attention of his neighbors to more basic values. Unfortunately, Benson's career as an essayist was cut short by his failure to establish a secure literary position. But if Benson had been able to continue his work into the next three decades, the country would have benefited from his incisive criticism of moral corruption and artistic pretension. Since he recognized the importance of realistic prose fiction, he might well have taken up earlier the work of Howells in championing realism. And younger writers might well have benefited from his informed appreciation of European literature. But Benson was a figure who was born too late and came of age too early. He was too late to participate with the Transcendentalists in pursuing their lofty ideals of the literary vocation. And because he came of age too early and attempted simultaneously the difficult task of looking back to the great achievement of the Transcendentalists and forward to the challenge awaiting Realism, he lacked the strength and maturity to establish a literary position that would enable him to carry on over the long haul. But in this very position, standing astride two great movements in American letters, he helps define the shape of nineteenth-century American literature.

NOTES


2. The essays were not identified as a separate series. However, since they developed a consistent view of contemporary democratic culture, they may profitably be considered together: "About the Literary Spirit," THE GALAXY, 1 (Jul. 15, 1866), 487-495; "Literary Frontiers," THE GALAXY, 2 (Sep. 1, 1866), 78-81; "Literature and the People," THE GALAXY, 3 (Apr. 15, 1867), 871-876; "Soil and Democracy," THE GALAXY, 4 (Jun. 1867), 165-170; "To-Day," THE GALAXY, 4 (Nov. 1867), 815-821; "Democratic Deities," THE GALAXY, 6 (Nov. 1869), 661-685.

3. The most reliable biographical essay is Helen Wright, "Benson, Eugene," DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (Scribner's, 1929), II, 204-205. For an impressionistic account of Benson's life, see Mabel Dodge Luhan, EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1930), pp. 290-300.


6"Literature and the People," p. 874.


8James Russell Lowell, rev. of LETTERS TO VARIOUS PERSONS, NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, 101 (Oct. 1855), 601, 602.

9Ibid., 597-598.


11"Literary Frondeurs," p. 81.

12Ibid.

13Ibid., p. 80.

14Ibid., p. 78.

15Ibid., p. 82.

16Eugene Benson, Letter to William C. and Francis P. Church, Jan. 6, 1867, Church Collection, New York Public Library.


20"To-Day," p. 815.

21Ibid., pp. 815-816.

22Ibid., p. 821.


24Ibid., p. 170.

25Whitman, PROSE WORKS, II, 398.

26John Barbourgh, "Walt Whitman and His 'Drum-Taps'," THE GALAXY, 2 (Dec. 1, 1866), 606-615.


28Eugene Benson, Letter to Francis P. Church, Sep. 9, 1868, Church Collection, New York Public Library.

29Ibid.

30Ibid.

31THE GALAXY, 1 (Aug. 1, 1866), 617.

32THE GALAXY, 3 (Feb. 2, 1868), 334-335.

33Letter dated Jan. 23, 1867, Church Collection, New York Public Library.

34"George Sand and Her Works," THE GALAXY, 3 (Mar. 15, 1867), 616.

35Letter dated Aug. 1, 1868, Church Collection, New York Public Library.

36THE NATION, 8 (Jan. 28, 1869), 73.

37THE ROUND TABLE, 9 (Jan. 30, 1869), 68.

38Letter dated Aug. 1, 1868, Church Collection, New York Public Library.


40Ibid., p. 871.

41Letter dated Apr. 11, 1869, Church Collection, New York Public Library.


43Church Collection, New York Public Library.

44Pearson, p. 301.
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF EUGENE BENSON

The first writing by Benson which I have identified appeared in THE ROUND TABLE, a short-lived (Dec. 19, 1863–July 3, 1863) New York weekly. For the most part, the magazine published articles anonymously, but on the basis of both internal and external evidence I have concluded that Benson served as regular art critic from the magazine’s inception until approximately June 1866, when his work began to appear regularly in THE GALAXY. His name is included on a list of contributors published by the editors at the end of the first volume, June 11, 1864. Also, the initials E.B. are affixed to four articles published during the spring of 1866, on April 7 and 28 and on May 12 and 19. Benson’s weekly essays and reviews in THE ROUND TABLE provide a valuable record of the New York art world at this time. Eugene Benson is the publicly identified author of all other essays and published volumes listed below.

“Mr. Irving and His Literary Friends.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (28 Dec. 1863), 27.
“Fine Art Emporiums This Winter.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (2 Jan. 1864), 44.
“Artists’ Studios.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (9 Jan. 1864), 60.
“Colored Statues.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (9 Jan. 1864), 60.
“Art and the Century Club.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (13 Feb. 1864), 139.
“Bierstadt’s Picture of the Rocky Mountains.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (20 Feb. 1864), 159.
“Artists’ Reception.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (2 Apr. 1864), 249.
“Sketching Clubs.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (2 Apr. 1864), 244.
“Mr. Belmont’s Gallery.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (9 Apr. 1864), 265.
“Pictures at the Metropolitan Fair.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (16 Apr. 1864), 280-281.
“Exhibition of the National Academy of Design, II.” THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (30 Apr.
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"George Sand and Her Works." THE GALAXY, 3 (1 Feb. 1867), 240-248.
"Literature and the People." THE GALAXY, 3 (15 Apr. 1867), 871-876.
"To-Day." THE GALAXY, 4 (Nov. 1867), 815-821.
"The Old Masters in the Louvre, and Modern Art." THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, 21 (Jan. 1868), 111-118.
"Eastman Johnson." THE GALAXY, 6 (Jul. 1868), 111-112.
"Democratic Duties." THE GALAXY, 6 (Nov. 1868), 661-666.
"Poe and Hawthorne." THE GALAXY, 6 (Dec. 1868), 742-748.
"Charles Baudelaire, Poet of the Malign. THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, 23 (Feb. 1869), 171-177.

1866, 312.
"Journalism in France." THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (30 Apr. 1866), 307-308.
"Exhibition of the National Academy of Design, III." THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (7 May 1864), 325.
"Art." THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (14 May 1864), 343-344.
"Mr. Clark Mills, The Sculptor." THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (14 May 1864), 340.
"Rothemel's Christian Martyrs." THE ROUND TABLE, 1 (21 May 1864), 355.
"Our Public Charities." THE ROUND TABLE, 2 (29 Sep. 1865), 51.
"Picture Sales." THE ROUND TABLE, 3 (10 Feb. 1866), 87.
"Among the Picture Auctioneers." THE ROUND TABLE, 3 (3 Mar. 1866), 135.
"Mr. Kellogg's 'After the Ban." THE ROUND TABLE, 3 (17 Mar. 1866), 167.
"The Nude in Art." THE ROUND TABLE, 3 (7 Apr. 1866), 215.
"A First Look at the Academy." THE ROUND TABLE, 3 (21 Apr. 1866), 249.
"About Portraits at the Academy." THE ROUND TABLE, 3 (28 Apr. 1866), 263.
"About Figure Pictures at the Academy." THE ROUND TABLE, 3 (12 May 1866), 295.
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