poetry should admit no word which, because of its profundity of intellectual content or because of its habitual associations, is unfitted to be the expression of feeling. Poetry is entirely, prose only in part, the utterance of emotion; the vocabulary of the two cannot therefore coincide throughout (Principles, p. 245).

Stedman's idealistic conception of poetry rested upon a romanticist theory which was fully developed by the associationist psychologists and by his fellow literary critics. Believing that the poet mechanically conveys his "ideas" to his reader through a diction and rhythm that correspond very closely to the poet's own, he was convinced that poetry is fundamentally rational, that it is legitimate only when it seeks to realize high purposes, that it makes emotion serve the reason. Such a poetry serves lofty ideas, it restrains and directs the emotions, and it reveals the beauty of the world as the poetic intellec-
tive perceives it. Poetry thus becomes a perfect creation, free from fault and unworthiness, and inspiring men through its vision of the perfection of man and his world. As Stedman saw it, poetry was distinguished by its purity; it was necessary because of its capacity to purify men's lives. He did not go so far as to argue for an aesthetic theory that the nature of poetry was identical, as the associationist had taught.

Note
"This is a factual term..." - our new expression, following where it leads, the occasionalism it generates...For the evolution of every moment of action, seized upon by universal force, a hierarchy, an evolution, and nothing else, convey through the body and both at stage of nature to the..." (p. 32).

"My Humble Muse:"
Some New Bierce Letters
Robert J. Scholnick

The Edmund C. Stedman Collection at Columbia University contains previously unpublished letters from Ambrose Bierce to Stedman, the prominent New York poet, critic, anthropologist, and businessman. In these letters Bierce presents a convincing and comprehensive analysis of his literary position. He touches upon his failure to produce a more extensive body of literary work and achieve a national reputation; his theory of satire; his goals in writing verse; his valuable relationship with two "puppets" — Edwin Markham and George Sterling; and the limitations of American readers and publishers. These new letters are valuable not only for Bierce's statements on a variety of important matters, but also for providing us with an opportunity to watch this combative man in action.

The immediate occasion for this correspondence was Bierce's appearance in Stedman's magazine, Antioch (1900). Through his major volumes of criticism, Victorian Poets, Poets of America, and The Nature and Elements of Poetry, as well as editorial projects as a Literary Editor of Antioch and a Victorian Anthologist, his own poetry, and his tireless efforts to help younger poets, Sted-

Edmund Clarence Stedman, 1904, Markham Archives.
oddly timed, out of its relation to the nobodies named in it, in whom I might, perhaps, more profitably have designated the ingrown immortals affecting the erring sinner who believe in en-
inuring sin and letting sinners enjoy the performance with im-
portance. I go for the system of his new book I am read-
ning, perhaps, so I must apologize for the slovenly proofreading, and some of the pining, in "Black Bees in Amber;" the book was put out by Markham while I was absent from San Francisco and ill.

Your conformation of my technical criticisms of Markham’s poem (we all regard you as the leading authority in such matters) gave me great satisfaction—the more so as it shows that literary criticism is not personal taste.

Sincerely yours,
Ambrose Bierce.

The typescript volume which he mentions is shapesey of Clay.

No doubt he felt that an appearance in the Anthology would be of some use in finding a publisher for it and would also broaden its reputation.

I have not recovered Stedman’s response to Bierce. However, it appears that he wrote briefly to inform him of his satisfaction with the "Two Yoraks" and expressed his hope that his poems "The Bride," "Another Way," "Montefiore," "Presen-
timent," "Creation," and "T.A.H." All are from "Shapes of Clay.

Bierce was not pleased.

Wright, Calif., May 4, 1904

My dear Mr. Stedman,

I am in good health but I am not well. I am mortified in my first letter to you to disclose, nor written with my own hand; but the grudge has fallen to an unamusing conclusion and I am not able to sign myself.

Cordially yours
Edmund C. Stedman

Mr. Ambrose Bierce
Wright, California

Mr. Stedman,

Mr. Bierce, as you have already observed, is in no sense a literary critic, his real vocation being well known, to be the production of sketches, articles, humorous and satirical, full of real humor and wit, and sometimes, if you call it a vice, I am so fortunate as to get into your Anthology. Nearly all our correspondence, in the newspapers, my literary work not being popular enough to profit me.

Very sincerely yours,

Ambrose Bierce

Wright, Calif., March 19, 1904

My dear Mr. Stedman,

The verse that Markham was kind enough to ask me for, for subscription to you, hardly "represents" my humble issue. As I am, almost perfectly certain of having written a few

ted poems gives one but little tithe to this distinction. The greater part, if not of my verse is satirical and intended to invoke laughter, but this kind of thing is that for dry-wines—it comes of cultivation. It is not

underground in this country, nor does it, I never thought so much of myself, though, and I think it "stinks" by its patriotism rather than its poetry—as our friend Markham’s "boom" is more to his "industrial discontent" than his artistic discontent. One could wish that these things were otherwise.

Ambrose Bierce

In his introduction to "The Man with the Hoe," Millard had called it "invention." "One of the poorest poems written by a Californian," and the English critic Robert

I found Stedman’s reply, written by one of his editorial assistants, in his Letterbook.
May 11, 1899

My dear Mr. Bierce,

Thank you for your letter of May 4, because Mr. Stedman, in addition to the illness he has long suffered, is much afflicted with an infirmit of the eye, and is forced to yield [to me] his rights as assistant.

The fact of the matter is when Mr. Stedman first read your poem, he realized in his "Far Fusing Show" and "Invention," and said to me that he would never consent to be included in the Anthology. As, however, he wanted to present you variously in your Omar Khayyam measures, and he determined, at any rate, to have the "The Man with the Hoe" included, he was simply bound to think that the poem had been selected inappropriately from the manuscript which Bierce had prepared for submission to the publisher, it is likely that his office was responsible for the rejection of the poem. But in "Creation" noted above, there is one more variation. Since Stedman had made his selection, it would seem that the publisher, when he submitted the poem for review, thought among the very best of your pieces, and considered the subject matter might be more broadly representative. He felt, too, that, all in all, [the] poems he did finally decide upon were better suited to an Anthology than either of the poems in question.

Of course he regrets that he did not know of your preference in the matter. We crowded your poems in a public space the allowed period to the poet, and it seems quite impossible to make any alterations now, even if Mr. Stedman were not convinced that, on the whole, he chose wisely. With Mr. Stedman's kind regards and his regret that he is unable to write to you by his own hand,

Sincerely yours,

Ellen M. Boulé
Assistant Editor

Mr. Ambrose Bierce

P.S. I neglected to say that your Ms. has been forwarded to your son in New York, and has been received by him. Under these circumstances, Bierce had only one response.

Wright's, Calif. May 22, '99.

Dear Mr. Stedman,

Please do not give my preferences any consideration in your next selection from my work. Your select [sic] from my work will seem to me good enough for the place. And the selections ought to be made by the publishers, not that of the authors. We ought all to be thankful to get in at all.

Sincerely yours,

Ambrose Bierce

Upon its appearance late in 1900, Stedman's Anthology was hailed as a major event in American publishing history. Reviewers praised it from San Francisco to New York. In a piece in the December of that year, and commented on the Anthology in the postscript to a letter to the poet George Sterling on New Year's Day in 1901.

P.S. In your studies of poetry have you dipped into Stedman's new "American Anthology"? It is the most notable collection of American verse that has been made—on the whole, a book worth having. In saying so I rather pride myself on my imaginativeness, for of course I don't think he has done as well as he might have done. That, I suppose, is what every one who thinks he is able to do it. So I try to be thankful to get in at all.

Sincerely yours,

Ambrose Bierce

Social Quilt and Private Suffering in W.D. Howells's Strops of Various Quills

Valden J. Madoc

The present study examines W.D. Howells's final volume, Strops of Various Quills (1935), emphasizing the clarity and force with which this poetry reflects the tragedy of his author's inner life. Much of the poetry, excellent in itself, provides valuable footnotes to the author's life and offers illustrious insights into the relationships and dilemmas of his life. For nearly thirty years, since the publication of Edwin H. Cadys article on Howells's neuroticism, students have known that the novelist suffered psychic disfigurements throughout his life. It was Kenneth S. Lynn's article on Howells's biography of Howells, who presented an in-depth portrait of him as a tortured, divided "modern sensibility, whose awareness of alienation and of his own anxiety." "Strops of Various Quills" details the mature realist's profound doubts and most debilitating anxieties and, as Cadys suggests, illustrates his "personal struggle with ideas" most dramatically that he is unable to reconcile all of these ideas and the intensity with which the struggle is waged that informs the collection and makes it the valuable document it is. Reflectively offered and openly these poems are two major sources of Howells's renowned "his crisis ridden private life and his inability to achieve tranquility because of the guilt his material comfort caused him when he contrasted it to his economic hardships endured by millions of his countryst."