

Saint Morris: The Last Days of the Kelmscott Press in the Late-Victorian Media

Thomas J. Tobin

The founding of the Kelmscott Press, the works published under its aegis, and its impact on later artistic endeavours have been well explored, most notably in William S. Peterson's *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure*. Peterson's introduction indicates his initial reluctance to write about the Kelmscott Press, primarily because 'it had been discussed by almost every English-speaking print historian of this [twentieth] century'. However, Peterson's discovery of 'much fresh evidence about the Kelmscott Press, unavailable to earlier scholars', spurred him to write his book.¹

'Almost every English-speaking print historian' of the late nineteenth century also discussed the Kelmscott Press at length, and an examination of the periodical literature between October 1896 and December 1900 demonstrates how Morris's death, the closing of the Kelmscott Press, the publication of the first biographies and bibliographies about Morris, and the reprinting of Kelmscott Press books in cheaper format combined to create in the public mind the idea of the Great Man Morris: the Morris whose opinions and work in design, socialism, poetry, and, especially, printing came to be regarded as a sort of sacred scripture.

This article follows the fortunes of the post-Morris Kelmscott Press via the periodical literature of its day, beginning with the coverage of Morris's death and ending at the turn of the century, when the *Book-Lover* crowned the 'next' William Morris.² First, however, it may be useful briefly to review Morris's general relationship to the media.

Prior to the establishment of the Kelmscott Press in 1891, Morris already enjoyed an international reputation as a poet, craftsman, and socialist. His name often appeared in the media, for example, whenever he authored another book, whenever Morris, Marshall, Faulkner, and Co. offered new goods for sale, and whenever his socialist activities were deemed newsworthy – all of which combined to give the name 'William Morris' a good measure of familiarity to the readership of a broad spectrum of periodicals, journals, and newspapers. Moreover,

Morris's personal relationship to the periodical press was often close; many of his acquaintances were members of the press or prolific letter-writers. Morris himself used the media to reach a wider audience: much of his poetry, prose, and social discourse appeared in the pages of literary magazines and newspapers.³ Looking back from 1896, Andrew Lang notes in *Longman's Magazine* that Morris's first published poetry, *The Defence of Guenevre, and Other Poems* attracted a small but discerning number of admirers:

There was nothing like them [his early poems] before, nor will be again, for Mr. Morris after several years of silence abandoned his early manner. No doubt it was not a manner to persevere in, but happily, in a mood and a moment never to be re-born or return, Mr. Morris did fill a fresh page in English poetry with these imperishable fantasies. They were absolutely neglected by 'the reading public', but they found a few staunch friends.⁴

These 'few staunch friends' of Morris's early career were largely the editors and critics of the literary magazines and newspapers, who helped to create the early 'buzz' about Morris.

Morris's activities in areas other than poetry and socialism were less noticed by journalists in the popular media. Up to Morris's death on 3 October 1896, few people outside bibliophile circles knew much about the Kelmscott Press: if they knew Morris's name, it was as a poet, wall-paper-manufacturer, or agitator for social causes. The popular idea of Morris and his activities stemmed largely from the notices he garnered in the major journals and weeklies, such as the *Athenaeum*, the *Saturday Review*, and the *Spectator*.⁵ These and other outlets of the general press seldom mention the Kelmscott Press during the period between its founding and Morris's death.

That few knew about the Kelmscott Press is not surprising, once one takes into account the fact that the Kelmscott Press began as something of a private experiment. Morris had intended the Press to be a way to publish materials for a small audience of friends only. Philip C. Duschne notes that 'Morris's original plan had been to have no more than a composing room; all the printing was to be done at Emery Walker's plant in the city', and that 'originally there had been no idea of offering copies for sale. Morris planned to print twenty copies of *The Glittering Plain* for his friends, and he did not wish for any public notice for his "typographical adventure" and experiment'.⁶ Despite this original intent, Morris mentioned his plans to a friend who then told the *Athenaeum*, which 'broke' the story of the Kelmscott Press's existence

on 21 February 1891. The public demand for the output of the Kelmscott Press was increased when the *Athenaeum* mentioned on 4 April that Morris would offer 180 copies of *The Glittering Plain* for sale through Reeves and Turner, publishers through whom Morris had already sold his works.⁷ Despite the *Athenaeum* never mentioning any asking price, all 180 copies were soon spoken for, and Morris had embarked on his adventure as a printer.

During the early 1890s, Morris's association with Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the 'second-wave' Pre-Raphaelite movement ensured that the Kelmscott Press sometimes merited mention, however brief, in the media coverage of the many retrospective exhibitions and publication then appearing. A good example is an article on 3 June 1894 in the *Philadelphia Press* covering the exhibition of Samuel Bancroft's newly acquired collection of Pre-Raphaelite art. The author, Arthur Stedman, spends a considerable amount of space on the Kelmscott Press toward the end of his review of 'Kelmscott Manor and its True Poets':

Kelmscott has become a familiar name of late, more especially through the establishing of the Kelmscott Press at Hammersmith, near by [sic] London, [by] William Morris, the English poet and artist. There he supervises the printing of choice editions of old and new books, some of his own being included, from type designed by himself with border designs and illustrations made by himself, Burne Jones and others. A number of beautiful printed and bound books have been issued from the Kelmscott Press, and Mr. Morris is now preparing to bring out a superb edition of Chaucer's works, with sixty illustrations by Burne Jones, and many other attractive features. He has also announced the early publication of the poems of Theodore Watts, the eminent English critic.

These announcements, and the publication elsewhere of several books relating to the English group of painters and poets known as the 'pre-Raphaelites', with whom Mr. Morris has always been intimately associated, have attracted a great deal of attention to the Kelmscott Press.

... To return to Mr. Morris and his Kelmscott Press, it surely must have been a loving task for him to prepare and publish the superb edition of his old comrade Rossetti's poems which has just been issued at Hammersmith. It was a fitting tribute to their long and lasting relationship.⁸

In the popular media, the subject of the Kelmscott Press was often, as here, tacked on at the end of articles about the Pre-Raphaelite move-

ment, a sort of 'what-are-they-doing-now' report. On 4 September 1896, however, the *Chicago Record* mentioned Morris's ill health,⁹ and less than a month later, Morris had passed away, leaving the fortunes of the Kelmscott Press up in the air.

The mainstream media in England and America wrote encomia to Morris the poet and designer – who would have been Laureate had he not been a socialist. However, printers' journals and those periodicals devoted to book collecting were among the first to mourn Morris as a maker of books. The printing community had always thought highly of the Kelmscott Press, both as an exemplar of fine book making, and as an investment vehicle. For example, the *Inland Printer* proclaimed 'A New Era in English Printing' in March 1893:

William Morris, poet, artist, craftsman, printer, showed to a few friends, a short time since, an advance copy of his reprint of Caxton's 'Recueil of the Historyes of Troye'. On looking through it, Dr. Furnivall said enthusiastically, 'It's the most beautiful book I ever saw; it's the most beautiful book ever printed!' and the same opinion was expressed by the art editor of the *English Illustrated Magazine* ... Notwithstanding the high prices at which the productions Mr. Morris's Kelmscott Press are published, buyers are not likely to suffer by purchasing them. 'The Golden Legend', issued a few weeks ago at 5 guineas, is now obtainable only at 10 to 12 guineas. All Mr. Morris's own poems on sale by Reeves & Turner are now worth double their published price. A new era has dawned in English printing.¹⁰

Upon Morris's death, bibliophiles began worrying about the future of the Kelmscott Press. The *Book Buyer* devoted two feature articles in January 1897 to 'William Morris – The Poet'¹¹ and 'The Printing of William Morris',¹² as well as a sonnet series by Francis Sherman, the 'Canadian Pre-Raphaelite', which the editors claim 'are filled with the spirit in which Morris himself wrote'.¹³ Even those who could not condone the precipitous price increases surrounding the output of the Kelmscott Press acknowledged the place that the Press occupied in the history of printing. Russell Sturgis, writing for the *Architectural Record* in mid-1898, registered his grudging admiration for what Kelmscott Press books had come to symbolise:

It is good to possess one or two volumes of the Kelmscott [Press] Series, but if a student has one of the simplest and one of the more elaborate, he has enough. The same spirit appears in them all, and while that partial uniformity is perfectly legitimate and familiar – for no designer can be

always turning out wholly new things, and the buyer of his work should be content sometimes with agreeable modifications of a design once made – the high cost of the books make it unwise to purchase many of them if they appear to be all worked on the same lines of composition. At two or three dollars a volume one might like to possess the whole shelf full, but at ten or twenty times that price, their relative value seems inadequate.¹⁴

Sturgis's concern with the inflation of the price of Kelmscott Press books after the announcement of the Press's demise would later be echoed in the popular press; however, the apparatus of the Kelmscott Press became a concern for the book-trade community: who would receive the presses, the type, the ornaments? Moriz Sondheim, writing in the *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde* in April 1898, reports that 'die Typen bleiben in den Händen der Trustees für spätere Benutzung, abuer die Ornamente von William Morris sollen nicht mer zur Anwendung kommen, die Holzstöcke werden dem British Museum einverleibt werden'. [The types remain in the hands of the Trustees for later use, and the ornaments by William Morris will no longer be used, and will be donated to the British Museum.]¹⁵ The bibliophile media also tracked the publication changes happening at the Kelmscott Press; the projected *Froissart* and Shakespeare projects had been cancelled, and the Press began to re-issue the works of William Morris. Few works other than Morris's were produced by the Kelmscott Press after Morris's death, a situation which the bibliophile media noted as a contrast to the Press's relative balance between works by Morris and other titles during his lifetime.

Part of the reason why the Kelmscott Press became a topic of note beyond the book-loving community was its retrenchment towards producing the works of Morris himself. After Morris's death, the Kelmscott Press's output included all of the works Morris was in the process of printing in late 1896, including the yet-unpublished volumes of *The Earthly Paradise*. Morris's son-in-law Henry Halliday Sparling, in his reminiscence on the Kelmscott Press, notes that Morris's 'translations of the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*, not having been reprinted at the Kelmscott Press, do not come into the story, but all his original poems were and do'.¹⁶ The volumes that were to be issued from the Kelmscott Press thus became a matter of concern to the general media, which published helpful summaries – sometimes no better than guesses – of what would eventually be published at the Kelmscott Press. For instance, the *Academy* mentions that Morris 'leaves two prose romances, *The Water of the*

Wondrous Isles, and *The Sundering Flood*, written during his last illness,¹⁷ and Theodore Watts-Dunton in the *Athenaeum* mentions both these titles and 'the next books issued will be "The Flower and the Leaf" and "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale"'.¹⁸ These two titles were the very last that Morris ever saw issue from the Press, having been shown the first bound copies as he lay on his deathbed.¹⁹ The only certainty was that the Kelmscott Press was going to publish only the works already in press at the time of Morris's death:

Beyond Mr. Morris's last romance, no fresh works are announced – a matter, alas! too significant to be misunderstood . . . The third volume of *The Earthly Paradise* will appear shortly, to be followed in due course by the five others . . . *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*, a new romance by William Morris, printed in his Chaucer type, with double columns, uniform with *The Well at the World's End* is to appear as announced in the June list. The only fresh item is *The Sundering Flood*, the story Mr. Morris managed to complete just before he died.²⁰

The Kelmscott Press printed 53 books during its existence, some of which comprised multiple volumes. Before Morris's death, of 45 volumes printed, 13–28 percent – were works written by Morris. Comparatively, after Morris's death, the Kelmscott Press produced 16 volumes, of which 11, or roughly 69%, were written by Morris.²¹ Given that several titles by authors other than Morris were abandoned, it is clear that the intent of the Kelmscott Press changed radically after Morris's death – from helping to revive the art of fine printing to helping to preserve Morris's memory. This latter aim was aided by two factors: the attention paid to the Kelmscott Press by the mainstream media and the reprinting of Kelmscott Press titles in cheap editions.

Beyond the printing and book communities, Morris's death was mourned as a loss of a great poet and designer; if they noticed it at all, the Kelmscott Press was reported by the mainstream media as being Morris's final hobbyhorse. However, as time passed, the books of the Kelmscott Press were transformed in the popular press from being prizes for the small circle of aficionados, 'among the most cherished possessions of bibliophiles'²² to 'having much the same qualities . . . as are shown in his work in other provinces of design',²³ and more accessible to the general public taste; this can be seen in an obituary notice from the *Saturday Review*. Writing just three weeks after Morris's passing, Herbert P. Horne posits the Kelmscott Press as part of recent efforts 'to produce sumptuously printed books, which should rival as works of art those of the early printers'.²⁴ Horne comments on the technical

details of the typical Kelmscott Press book, a tactic designed to introduce the average reader to the intricacies of the fine-press process in language suitable for a general audience:

The paper which Morris succeeded in making resembles the paper of the early printers in all its best qualities: it is thin, very tough, and somewhat transparent; pleasing not only to the eye, but the hand also; having something of the clean, crisp quality of a new banknote. In the same way Morris proceeded with his type, designing his founts anew, and causing the punches to be cut under his immediate direction . . . Lastly, a scrupulous care for all that is implied in the technical term 'press-work' – that is, for the quality of the ink, the careful inking of the type, the preparation of the paper, the fair and bright impression of the sheets, a minute care for all that sums up the excellences of Morris as a printer.²⁵

Note the manner in which Horne makes a deliberate attempt to draw parallels between what Morris strove for in the Kelmscott Press and concepts with which the everyday reader is familiar, such as the feeling and look of bank notes. The irony of comparing the Kelmscott Press books to bank notes is germane to this essay's conclusions, even if Horne did not overtly intend it.

Beginning in 1897, the general media also took note of the studies of Morris then appearing. For instance, the bibliography of Morris written by Temple Scott was reviewed in both the *Academy* and the *Athenaeum*²⁶ (among others), and both reviewers tell their readers about the importance of the Kelmscott Press. The *Academy* critic goes so far as to congratulate Scott for being so current: 'Mr. Scott has brought his catalogue well up to date, as we easily perceive in the fact that the article which we published a few months ago on "The End of the Kelmscott Press" is duly noticed'.²⁷ 'In these days of eager collecting'²⁸ by both bibliophiles and the larger public, any guide to the books issued by the Kelmscott Press was a boon. Scott's bibliography was soon followed by a biography by John W. Mackail,²⁹ which brought home to the average reader the idea that the Kelmscott Press had been instrumental in the beginnings of the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts sentiments. With such a set-up in the media, it was only a matter of time until the demand for Kelmscott Press productions began to come from the masses. One final stroke that touched the Kelmscott Press only tangentially was to ensure that Morris became widely known among everyday readers.

Under the direction of Sydney Cockerell, the Kelmscott Press had satisfied book collectors' demand for the works of Morris after his

death. In a similar way, after the closing of the Kelmscott Press, the media helped to create a great public demand to see the designs of the Great Morris. The publishing houses at Scribner's and Longmans & Company began to turn out inexpensive reissues of Morris's books to satisfy the clamour. This was possible because once the Kelmscott Press was officially closed, the trustees of Morris's estate donated many of his wood blocks to the British Museum but reserved his types for 'appropriate further use'. Scribner's came out with an inexpensive reprint 'of the ordinary sort'³⁰ of *Old French Romances* in October 1896. The success of reprinting Morris's Kelmscott Press titles was by no means certain, especially since 'Morris's views on the formation of the page may still be new to many readers'.³¹

With the permission of the Morris estate's trustees, Longmans brought out reprints of Morris's works re-set in his own type, and the media gave prominent notice to the new and affordable beautiful books. Of course, some critics raised doubts about the appropriateness of this step: Stephen Gwynn opines in June 1898 that 'The necessity for a cheap production did not seem to him [Morris] inevitable; and whatever he made was made to be kept'.³² Other journalists, however, were more than happy to puff the affordable books:

No typographical enthusiast, and we should all love good printing – can afford to miss the dainty and wholesome octavo reprint of the address delivered by William Morris at the distribution of prizes to students of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art, on February 21st, 1894, which is now issued by Messrs. Longmans. It is hoped that this lecture, which is printed in the 'Golden' type designed by William Morris for the Kelmscott Press, will be followed by other lectures in the same form, and at the same price, 2s. 6d. net. The Kelmscott Press is now closed, and all the wood blocks of the initials and the ornaments have been given to the British Museum. The type still remains under the control of the trustees, for whom this book was printed at the Chiswick Press.³³

As some of the shorter works gained success in reprint editions, Longmans attempted Morris's lengthier books. The *Dial* and *Outlook* reviewed the Longmans edition of Morris's translation of *Beowulf*, each reviewer noting the Kelmscott Press 'pedigree' of the new volume. First the *Dial*:

The 'Tale of Beowulf sometime King of the Folk of the Wedergeats', as translated by Messrs. William Morris and A. J. Wyatt, has hitherto been obtainable only as a publication of the Kelmscott Press, whence it issued

in 1895. An edition for the general purchaser, as distinguished from the bibliophile, is now offered by Messrs. Longmans, Green, & Co.³⁴

The *Outlook* even touts the reprints' tenuous 'connection' with the British Museum:

Visitors to the British Museum of late will surely have noticed with interest as they passed through the King's Library a number of show cases filled with specimens of the exquisite volumes, with their quaint old-time typography and beautiful designs, printed at the Kelmscott Press by the poet-artist, William Morris.³⁵

While such name-dropping may be seen as a way to create an *imprimatur* of sorts for the reprints, at least Longmans had the trustees' permission to publish. Other publishers' reprints of Morris's texts were done without permission, and the quality of the book production often suffered considerably, as the *Academy* critic noted in 1899 about a reprint of *Arts and Crafts Essays*: 'Among the essays is that on printing, by Mr. Morris and Mr. Emery Walker, one or two points of which have, we fear, been neglected by the printers of the book before us'.³⁶ Likewise, the reviewer at the *Quarterly Review* distinguished between the book as beautiful object and the book as content vehicle, reminding readers that 'Chaucer, as an examination text, may be read very well in newspaper type, but Morris's book seems to carry an illuminated atmosphere with the printed page'.³⁷

However, the reprints from Longmans caught on with the public precisely because they were relatively inexpensive (usually less than \$10.00 in the United States) and plentiful. William H. Hulme, writing for the fledgling *Modern Language Notes* in 1900, saw the utility in mass-producing affordable and beautiful editions in order to introduce the public to Morris as both a poet and a book designer:

The new edition of Morris's translation of *Beowulf* is merely a reprint of the Kelmscott Press edition of 1895. Although the first edition was published four years ago, the expensiveness of the book and the small number issued, made it from the beginning all but inaccessible to students and admirers of *Beowulf*. In fact, if *Beowulf* students in this country did not happen to read the excellent review of the book in the *Athenaeum* for August 10, 1895, its existence was probably for the most part unknown.³⁸

The flood of Kelmscott Press reprints, reissues, and pirated editions – and the press coverage afforded to it – helped to spread the mystique of William Morris the poet, designer, wallpaper-maker, socialist, and

book maker. The original Kelmscott Press books featured prominently in the press coverage of Morris's accomplishments, and the same journalists who helped to create a vogue for the Kelmscott Press also lamented the precipitous rise in prices accompanying the buzz.

Just after Morris's death, the *Academy* critic chastised his fellow journalists for artificially inflating demand for Kelmscott Press books: 'Certain journalist writers, not, it must be owned, with the best taste, have taken advantage of the present occasion to express their apprehensions lest a Morris reaction in book production should take place amongst us'.³⁹ By 1899, in a review of J. W. Mackail's *Life of William Morris*, the critic for the *Athenaeum* reprimands the imitators of the Kelmscott Press for cashing in: 'We can only repeat our warning against similar excesses in book decoration to those of Morris's feeble imitators in the past, who made the æsthete to be a byword among the Philistines'.⁴⁰

They needn't have bothered. The market for Kelmscott Press books grew quickly beyond the traditional small circle of collectors, and a transatlantic bidding war was soon evident, with much of the hype based on (and fed by) the media's coverage of the wide appreciation for all things Morris. The closer the link to Morris, the more objects, including books, were worth, as this passage from *Poet-Lore* in January 1898 makes plain:

The demand for Morris's work was emphatic, some of the books issued from the Kelmscott Press commanding extraordinary prices. The entire edition of Chaucer was sold two months before it appeared. 'Atalanta in Calydon,' published at \$10, sold at \$20 within six months. Keats' 'Poems,' published at \$7.50, now sell at \$28; Shakespeare's 'Poems,' published at \$7.50, cannot be bought at less than \$22. Some of the little sexto-decimo volumes, like 'King Florus and La Belle Jehane,' have brought as much as four and one-half times their publication price. The most valued of the octavos is 'The Story of the Glittering Plain,' for which \$45 is freely offered. Of this book it is said that Mr. Morris not only designed the type, the titlepages, and the cover, but that he cast the type for the book, set it up, did the press-work with his own hands, bound it and actually made the paper on which the volume was printed.⁴¹

The critic reports Morris's super-involvement in all facets of the design of *The Story of the Glittering Plain* as though the Kelmscott Press had been a one-man operation from design to papermaking to printing. Legends such as this increased the demand for Morris's 'handmade'

books.

The craze showed no signs of slowing, and *Macmillan's Magazine* reported later that year on the remunerative value of owning a Kelmscott Press book: 'For my own part, I admire the excellence of type, paper, and binding, but would sooner lay out my money on almost any other article that Morris ever offered for sale. However, that is a matter of opinion, and those who paid their £20 for the Chaucer made from a mere commercial point of view a very good investment'.⁴² By the turn of the century, both original Kelmscott Press titles and their cheaper reprint editions were such money-makers that many other presses and printers touted their ties to the Kelmscott Press, however tenuous. After the appearance of the inexpensive reprints of Kelmscott Press titles, the media became concerned that those who might imitate the Kelmscott Press style would do more harm than good. In October 1899 the *Quarterly Review* critic lamented that

The appearance of these books [the reprints] promises to bring about a revival of printing, or rather a return to healthier models, but the revival is complicated by the fact that the fringe of imitators who are the first to seize on any idea have chosen the one part which cannot be imitated. It will probably be long before another man arises who can design decorations and borders as new and fresh as those of Morris; but any printer with an eye for his work can get good results by care in placing the letterpress on the page of paper, by attention in the spacing, so that no ugly rivulets of white run down the page, and by the selection of type not too thin, too oval, or too small.⁴³

Some new presses exploited their 'direct' connections with the Kelmscott Press, however slim, especially those who had hired former Kelmscott Press employees, or those who had purchased some of the apparatus when the Kelmscott Press's assets were sold. Few journalists paid much attention to these sorts of linkages, preferring to cast about for the successors to Morris's legacy, eager to make thematic connections between the Kelmscott Press standards of production and those of a new generation of printers and designers.

In some cases, the link was made explicit through issuing Morris's works, but with Arts and Crafts designs by up-and-coming artists, such as was done at the Elston Press by Helen O'Kane. Although the reviewer for the *Dial* in December 1900 confuses the gender of the illustrator, there is no doubt as to the intended effect of the new volume at hand – to make explicit the link between Morris and the newly-established press:

Four of the 'Pre-Raphaelite Ballads' of William Morris have been selected for decorative treatment by Mr. [sic] H[elen] M[arguerite] O'Kane [Colour Fig. D], and the resulting publication, which bears the imprint of the A. Wessels Co., is a small volume so charming that we linger over its pages with unalloyed satisfaction. The illustrative material consists of borders, full-page drawings, and rubricated initials, all in keeping with the Kelmscott type and the old-world feeling of the text.⁴⁴

The more usual route for establishing the connection between the Kelmscott Press and a new venture, however, was to draw affinities between the principal movers of each organisation: as the Kelmscott Press had been seen as an extension of William Morris, so also were the successors to the Kelmscott Press knighted by the bibliophile journals. Although many candidates were posited as the 'next' William Morris, one seemed to be regarded above the others; indeed, he courted the press actively for the title. Elbert Hubbard and his Roycrofters in East Aurora, New York saw themselves as the torch-bearers of the new Arts and Crafts movement, and the *Book-Lover* deigned him the 'American William Morris' in its Winter 1900 issue: 'It is in this particular branch of brother Hubbard's achievements, namely, in the making of books, veritable editions de luxe, that he has gained the reputation of an American "William Morris"'.⁴⁵ Indeed, Hubbard printed a short pamphlet containing 'a symposium of essays on socialism by William Morris' [Colour Fig. E]⁴⁶ in order to underline his pedigree.

With the ascendancy of the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts movements, Morris and the Kelmscott Press completed their slow movement into the background of the popular imagination. Now that the Kelmscott Press was closed, the media reported on – and the public read about – the ways in which Morris had assumed the role of progenitor to current artistic trends. When Henry C. Fehr's bust of Morris⁴⁷ was dedicated to the people of Waltham Forest in November 1900, G. K. Chesterton wrote for the *Speaker* that 'It is proper enough that the unveiling of the bust of William Morris should approximate to a public festival'.⁴⁸ Chesterton asserts that 'an abiding testimony' to Morris's 'tremendous personal influence in the æsthetic world is the vitality and recurrence of the Arts and Crafts Exhibitions, which are steeped in his personality like a chapel in that of a saint'.⁴⁹ The media had charted – had indeed helped to further – the posthumous development of Morris, the energetic fellow who had dabbled in printing as a lark, into an ink-stained saint.

NOTES

- 1 William S. Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. vii.
- 2 Eduard Ackerman, 'An American William Morris', *Book-Lover* 2 (Winter 1899/1900), pp. 203–05.
- 3 For example, these articles by Morris demonstrate the range of his topics and the audiences with whom he shared his thinking: 'The Saga of Gunnlaug the Worm-Tongue', *Fortnightly Review* 11: 25 (Jan. 1869), pp. 27–56; 'Poems by Dante Gabriel Rossetti', *Academy* 1: 18 (14 May 1870), pp. 199–200; 'The Revival of Handicraft', *Fortnightly Review* 50 (Dec. 1888), pp. 603–10; and 'The Present Outlook of Socialism in England', *Forum* 21: 2 (Apr. 1896), pp. 193–200.
- 4 Andrew Lang, 'Mr. Morris's Poems', *Longman's Magazine* 28: 168 (Oct. 1896), pp. 564–65.
- 5 Peter Faulkner did much to form the modern canon of nineteenth-century critical responses to Morris's works by collecting and reprinting 84 selected articles in *William Morris: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973). Given the breadth of Morris's endeavours, it is hardly surprising that the total number of known nineteenth-century articles on the Kelmscott Press alone now numbers more than 240.
- 6 *William Morris and the Kelmscott Press: An Exhibition Held in the Library of Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, from October 9 to December 31, 1959* (Providence: Brown University, 1960), pp. 44–45.
- 7 'Literary Gossip', *Athenaeum* no. 3304 (21 Feb. 1891), p. 252; and 'Literary Gossip', *Athenaeum* no. 3310 (4 Apr. 1891), p. 442. Theodore Watts-Dunton is the most likely suspect, since he was both an associate of Morris and he regularly wrote the 'Literary Gossip' column for the *Athenaeum* during this time.
- 8 Arthur Stedman, 'Kelmscott Manor and its True Poets', *Philadelphia Press* 36 (3 June 1894), p. 30. I am indebted to Kraig Binkowski and Margaretta Frederick of the Delaware Art Museum for pointing me to this article.
- 9 'William Morris', *Chicago Record* 17: 213 (4 Sep. 1896), p. 4.
- 10 'A New Era in English Printing', *Inland Printer* 10: 6 (Mar. 1893), p. 518.
- 11 J. J. C., 'William Morris – The Poet', *Book Buyer* 13: 12 (Jan. 1897), pp. 917–18. The author mentions that Morris's reputation among book lovers is now being spread to the wider public: 'William Morris, the many-sided man; the pioneer of household decoration, fine printing, and new bookbinding; the rescuer of lost arts; the competent business man; the socialist; the enthusiast; the indomitable, vigorous, hopeful, helpful, much-loved man William Morris, has, by his death, become known to many people who were acquainted for many years with William Morris the poet' (p. 917).
- 12 Theod[ore] L. DeVinne, 'The Printing of William Morris', *Book Buyer* 13: 12 (Jan. 1897), pp. 920–23. 'No one can examine a book made by Morris without the conviction that it shows the hand of a master' (p. 921).
- 13 Francis Sherman, 'The Rambler [In Memorabilia Mortis]', *Book Buyer* 13: 12 (Jan. 1897), p. 927.

- 14 Russell Sturgis, 'The Art of William Morris', *Architectural Record* 7: 4 (Apr.–Jun. 1898), p. 461.
- 15 Moriz Sondheim, 'William Morris', *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde* 2:1 (Apr. 1898), p. 20. The translation is my own. See also Jean Loubier, 'Bibliographien von William Morris Schriften', *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde* 2: 6 (Aug. 1898), pp. 256–57.
- 16 H. Halliday Sparling [with Joseph Pennell and Sydney Carlyle Cockerell], *The Kelmscott Press and William Morris, Master-Craftsman* (London: Macmillan, 1924), p. 93.
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