

# Colby



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## Hardy Notes

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### HARDY NOTES

By CARL J. WEBER

ABOUT a decade ago, the Library received from the late Carroll A. Wilson a copy of the poster used by the Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York in advertising Mrs. Fiske as Tess in Lorimer Stoddard's four-act play, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," based on the novel by Thomas Hardy. And now, thanks to the alert eye and the generosity of Dr. Dan H. Laurence, of Hofstra College, we have received a copy of the program used for this play, when Mrs. Fiske and her company gave it during the week of March 28, 1898.

We are also indebted to Dr. Laurence for a copy of a Hardy item which has long eluded us—his little essay on "A British 'Theatre Libre'" in the form of a letter to *The Weekly Comedy*, London, November 30, 1889. Hardy's low opinion of the British theatre at this date is clearly indicated in one sentence which we must find space to quote. "Nowadays," he wrote, "persons who were devoted to the drama in their youth find as they approach middle age that they cannot by any possibility feel deeply interested in the regulation stage-presentation of life, their impressions usually being: First act—it may be so; second act—it surely is not so; third—it cannot be so; fourth—ridiculous to make it so; fifth—it will do for the children."

Six years before the publication of this little essay, Hardy had contributed to the summer 1883 issue of *Longman's Magazine* a long essay entitled "The Dorsetshire Labourer." A year later this essay was reprinted as a 24-page pamphlet, of which there is no copy in the collection at Colby. On page 49 of Professor Purdy's "Bibliographical Study" (1954) we read that "the authenticity of this pamphlet . . . is open to serious question." Purdy's "tentative conclusion" is, however, that Hardy did authorize this pamphlet and we wish we had a copy of it at Colby. For Hardy thought

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highly of his essay, as we have good reason to know. For the Colby Library Associates have recently acquired and presented to the Library a letter of Hardy's dated June 25, 1883, in which he "makes no apology for drawing attention to the article." This letter takes on all the more significance because of the fact that Hardy addressed it to John Morley (1838-1923), then editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* and also, for a brief time in 1883, editor of *Macmillan's Magazine* in which (less than three years later) Hardy's novel *The Woodlanders* began its serialization. Morley was only two years older than Hardy, but he had the advantage of a superior education. He entered Oxford University in 1856, at which time Hardy's formal schooling came to an end; and in 1860 Morley began work as a freelance journalist in London and was soon commissioned to write articles and reviews for the *Saturday Review*. In 1867, at the age of 29, he became editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, and during his editorship (which continued until 1882) this periodical emerged as England's leading radical political journal. It was, then, to this influential editor that Hardy wrote the following letter:

SAVILE CLUB,  
107, PICCADILLY. W.

[London,] June 25. [18]83

Dear Mr Morley,

The Dorset labourer, Mr Joseph Arch, etc. are among the topics dwelt upon in the Birmingham Speeches: and Mr Arch has just been attacked in the *St James's Gazette*. By a curious coincidence I have a paper on those identical subjects in the number of *Longman's Magazine* which appears to-day. Though a Liberal, I have endeavoured to describe the state of things without political bias: and my description so well harmonizes with what was said at Birmingham that I make no apology for drawing your attention to the article. A copy is sent herewith.

Yours very truly

THOMAS HARDY.

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In addition to the letter and the other Hardy items mentioned above, three books in Japanese have come to us, as further contributions to the Foreign Books part of our Hardy Collection. For these Japanese books we are indebted to Professor Dan H. Laurence, of Hofstra College; they contain comments on, or quotations from, Hardy's works.

On June 2, 1955 (the 115th anniversary of Hardy's birth), there were fifty-eight cards in that section of the catalogue of our Hardy Collection which is labeled "Hardy's Library"—that is to say, Colby had 58 books, or sets of books, which were once in the library at Max Gate. We have just recently added a fifty-ninth: *The Dramatic Works* of Christopher Marlowe, edited by Percy E. Pinkerton (London: Walter Scott, 1889), autographed on the title-page "Thomas Hardy." and equipped with his red-ink book-plate reading "From the Library of Thomas Hardy, O. M. | Max Gate." On page 31 occur the famous lines in *Faustus*: "Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships | And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?" Hardy's only marginal comment on these lines is: "Cf Lucian." He did, however, mark two other lines on the same page:

O, thou art fairer than the evening air  
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

On page 27 he marked two phrases, and on page 28 he noted "delicates," used as a noun where we would say "delicacies." There are other markings on pages 32 and 33, but I have found no others.



## OTHER ACQUISITIONS

MR. JAMES L. ROSS (Colby 1936) has added to our growing file of the books produced by Thomas B. Mosher a copy of *Spring in Tuscany*, an anthology edited by Mosher in 1912.