

*The Cultivation of the Senses for
Creative Nostalgia in the Essays of
W. H. Hudson*

MICHAEL A. MASON

IN 1922 W. H. HUDSON the naturalist and novelist died; and in 1925 the unveiling of a controversial memorial to him in London's Hyde Park commemorated his life. Jacob Epstein's *Rima* at once brought Hudson's name before a vaster public than he had ever been able to reach with his writings, his romance *Green Mansions* included. Ruth Tomalin, making this point in her biography of Hudson, remarks that the irony of this situation would have appealed to him (24). His reputation nevertheless continues to rise as the English countryside he wrote about with such devotion retreats into the olden time before the pollution of urban development and motorways; and that sense of the past he thus constantly evokes becomes for many of his readers his most attractive gift. He conveys that quality of nostalgia which so many of us share.

Nostalgia is a kind of sorrow, but it may be creative sorrow. From this concentrated recollection of the past can emerge its mental re-creation as, for instance, in Hudson's earliest memory of any of his family's friends, a memory from his childhood in the Argentine that cannot be later than the first half of 1846. It is of

an Englishman named Captain Scott, who used to visit us occasionally for a week's shooting or fishing, for he was a great sportsman. We were all extremely fond of him, for he was one of those simple men that love and sympathise with children; besides that, he used to come to us from some distant wonderful place where sugar-plums were made. . . . He was an immense man, with a great round face of a purplish-red colour, like the sun setting in glory, and surrounded with a fringe of silvery-white hair and whiskers, standing out like the petals round the disk of a sun-flower. . . .

I have not the faintest notion of who Captain Scott was, or of what he was ever captain, or whether residence in a warm climate or hard drinking had dyed his broad countenance with that deep magenta red, nor of how and when he finished his earthly career; for when we moved away the huge purple-faced strange-looking man dropped for ever out of our lives; yet in my mind how beautiful his gigantic image looks! And to this day I bless his memory for all the sweets he gave me, in a land where sweets were scarce, and for his friendliness to me when I was a very small boy.¹ (*Far Away* 12-14).

This intensely nostalgic passage from *Far Away and Long Ago*, one of literature's most nostalgic books, may remind us that Hudson left his native land in 1874 and never returned. Born in 1841 of American parents who had settled in the Argentine, he went "home" (*Far Away* 328) to England, already his "spiritual country," (*Afoot* 275) living there in poverty for years until a legacy inherited by his wife, together with money from his own writings, granted him increasing freedom from London to wander in the countryside. He declares his sense of relief at such times to be "so strong that on first coming out to where there are woods and fields and hedges, I am almost moved to tears" (*Traveller* 244). As the years passed, however, his memory of the Argentine in the 1840s and 1850s grew as "clear and bright as a living dream," (Roberts 19) and Hudson many times felt himself to be only an exile in England. Moreover, while the Argentine evolved out of its Heroic Age into a period of more settled exploitation, and Hudson's own freer past became at the same time more remote, he saw around him in his adopted home a comparable disappearance of the older ways under the pressure of ever-increasing urbanization. Defensively, in the face of this encroachment, *Far Away and Long Ago* enshrines the days of his childhood before his mother's death in 1859 and, further back, before the interruption of his own career by an attack of rheumatic fever when he was only fifteen.

Hudson's links with his childhood were all the stronger by virtue of his interest in natural history, especially the life of birds. To him they are "vertebrates and relations, with knowing, emotional, thinking brains like ours in their heads, and with senses like ours, only brighter" (*Adventures* 209). The word *bright* is a favourite with him for the minds of birds and young children. In his last

book he declares that "notwithstanding the enormous difference between man and animals, mentally it is one of degree only . . . all that is in our minds is also in theirs," (*Hind* 262) so that to be among them in their natural freedom is a "glorious gladness" (*Adventures* 42) and "a joy for ever in the heart." In his memories lived the auditory and visual images of many South American bird species² (*Birds and Man* 27-28). These did much to save him from the grief with which nostalgia is often associated. The charm that Hudson finds in Nature is something which a mind deadened by the pressures of civilization may only partially capture or retain; but in a memory strengthened by nostalgia "this 'gladness' of old sunshine stored within us . . . is . . . a joy for ever," (*Birds and Man* 35-36) so that "when I was compelled to exist shut out from Nature in London for long periods, sick and poor and friendless, I could yet always feel that it was infinitely better to be than not to be" (*Far Away* 348).

Hudson always saw in the past the inspiration for the future, rather than experience to be forgotten or ignored. This required an active remembering of all that had gone before, to the most distant relationships of which we could have any understanding, and the constant attempt to bring them into harmony with their descendants in the present world, which has to be both their judge and their defender. Hudson's imagination, through his sympathy with endangered wildlife, penetrates into remote periods. The past, a priceless heritage to be protected, contained many kinds of rare creatures who "[l]ike immortal flowers . . . have drifted down to us on the ocean of time, and [whose] strangeness and beauty bring to our imaginations a dream and a picture of that unknown world, immeasurably far removed, where man was not . . ." (*Naturalist* 30).

In Britain, however, the relics of prehistoric man were a less distant feature of the past with which Hudson could associate himself more easily. He meditates on bygone peoples dead before the Romans came when, seated on an ancient burial mound on the "wide heath, east of Beaulieu, stretching miles away towards Southampton Water," (*Hampshire Days* 38) he imagines those of long ago returned to life around him and condemning, just as he does, "the little busy eager people" (*Hampshire Days* 51) of the

towns: "They are out of my world — the real world. All that they value, and seek and strain after all their lives long, their works and sports and pleasures, are the merest baubles and childish things; and their ideals are all false, and nothing but by-products, or growths, of the artificial life — little funguses cultivated in heated cellars" (*Hampshire Days* 48). These people can never rise to that harmony with the outer world which he has always known. The interests of townfolk appear in the amusements of a man Hudson had met long before in Patagonia, "a man of the pavement, whose pleasure was in society, in newspapers, the play, and in the café where one meets one's friends of an evening and has a pleasant game of dominoes . . . things which he valued . . . merely dust and ashes to me" (*Idle Days* 117-18). Elsewhere he is a little kinder: "These pleasant things which perish in the using are not to be despised, but they leave nothing for the mind in hungry days to feed upon" (*Birds and Man*), and may only "serve to make a present misery more poignantly felt."

That to avoid such distress requires the active and indeed ardent cultivation of the senses in close experience of the everlasting world of wildlife is Hudson's theme in all his writings. In fact, he became convinced that the secret of all things lay hidden somewhere in the "well-nigh unexplored wilderness of the mind" (*Hind* 228). The conscious exploitation of nostalgia through the use of all our senses therefore becomes the way to understand our place within the world, in all times past, and present, and to come. He seems indeed to have had some hope of rediscovering faculties now lost to humanity or the finding of others still dormant: hence his urging the cultivation of the senses as a way of intensifying our recollections so that we come to re-live the past with much greater understanding.

Hudson's own keen senses of sight and hearing help to create his vision of the vanished birds of the Somerset marshland near Glastonbury, a vision owing something to Drayton's picture of Lincolnshire in *Polyolbion* (1622), but whose original inspiration came from the vast bird-gatherings in the Argentine when Hudson was a boy, sights "nevermore to be seen . . ." (*Adventures* 195). He imagines as his guide upon the lake of Athelney a marshman of "twenty-five centuries ago," and says he feasts his eyes on wild geese, buzzards, kites, marsh harriers,

and greatest of all the pelican . . . doomed to vanish and be forgotten as a British species long ages before Drayton lived. But his familiar osprey was here too, a king among the hawks, sweeping round in wide circles, to pause by-and-by in mid career and closing his wings fall like a stone upon the water with a mighty splash. We floated in a world of birds; herons everywhere standing motionless in the water, and flocks of spoonbills busily at feed, and in the shallower places and by the margins innumerable shore-birds — curlews, godwits, and loquacious black and white avocets. Shel-drakes too in flocks rose up before us, with deep *honking* goose-like cries, their white wings glistening like silver in the early morning sunlight. Other sounds came from a great way off, faintly heard, a shrill confused buzzing clangour as of a swarm of bees passing overhead, and looking that way we saw a cloud rising out of the reeds and water, then another and another still — clouds of birds, each in its own colour, white, black, and brown, according to the species — gulls, black terns, and wild duck. Seen at that distance they appeared like clouds of starlings in the evening at their winter roosting haunts. Presently the clouds dispersed or settled on the water again, and for a little space it seemed a silent world. Then a new sound was heard from some distant spot perhaps a mile away — a great chorus of wild ringing jubilant cries, echoing and re-echoing all over that illimitable watery expanse; and I knew it was the crane — the giant crane that hath a trumpet sound! (*Adventures* 196-97)

As a field-naturalist Hudson also accounted the sense of smell of great importance: “it is . . . more emotional [than sight or hearing], and stirs the mind more deeply. . . . It has, as it were, a higher and lower nature, and only in the lower does it come near to taste; and *taste* even the Protestant, full of dry light as he is, yet admits into his religious symbolism” (*Hind* 77). Not that Hudson has much to say about this “lowest or least intellectual of our five senses” (*Far Away* 207), although remembering the now indigestible meals of boyhood “is like recalling past perilous adventures by land and water in the brave young days when we loved danger for its own sake.” But a beautiful fragrance — “The bare remembrance of it . . . is a joy for ever” (*Hind* 64). The thought of a tree returns him to his old home on the pampas. “Trees differ from trees in glory in this respect [of scent]. I think less of orange and lime than of the Pride of China or Tree of Paradise, as it is variously called; I often stand, in memory, in the shade of its light loose feathery

foliage, drinking in the divine fragrance of its dim purple flowers, until I grow sick with longing, and being so far removed from it feel that I am indeed an exile and stranger in a strange land" (*Hind* 65).

The scent of an evening primrose evokes even stronger remembrance, "a mental change so great that it is like a miracle" (*Idle Days* 222). He is taken back in time across the ocean to the grassy pampas. The scent of the Lombardy poplar in spring has a similar effect. "I am actually a boy again [climbing high among the branches]. . . . It all comes and goes like a flash of lightning, but the scene revealed, and the accompanying feeling, the complete recovery of a lost sensation, are wonderfully real. Nothing that we see or hear can thus restore the past" (*Idle Days* 223). This is because a sensation of smell is soon forgotten; and one recovered "is like a recovery of the irrecoverable past" (*Idle Days* 232).

In these passages there is some evidence of the sense of touch, which Hudson occasionally celebrates, especially when describing the wind's influence upon him. He appears to recognize a separate wind-sense inspiring him with a remarkable freshness of thought, as when "on horseback . . . in a high wind . . . blowing through me, it had blown away some obstruction, some bar to a perfect freedom of mind . . . [My thoughts] would perhaps have been a joy for ever to me if I could have engaged them . . . but they were too many, too elusive, so that I no sooner gripped them in my hands than they slipped through my fingers and were gone" (*Hind* 37-38). The wind seems even to have brought him into touch with telepathic phenomena, of which he describes two instances in *A Hind in Richmond Park*, one of them at some length. He experienced both while walking in a strong wind, and they were the phantom-faces of women that he knew — "But . . . only the face," he says of the main instance, "and it appeared to be in and a part of the wind, since it did not rest still for one instant, but had a flutter like the flutter we used to see in a cinematograph picture, and continually moved to and fro and vanished and reappeared almost every second, always keeping on a level with and about three feet removed from my eyes . . . Then it vanished and I saw it no more" (*Hind* 40-41). This apparition, of a fourteen-year-old girl he wished to adopt, had come to him when she, under great

strain from religious differences with her family, had told them she was leaving home to seek his guardianship (Tomalin 219). Yet even before he knew all this and attempted to explain it, or rather to suggest the wind's influence as a basis for explanation — a kind of far-reaching branch of the sense of atmosphere — Hudson was quite certain that what he had seen “was of a nature of a telepathic communication.”

Hudson also believed that people, as well as birds, have a special sense of direction which has become atrophied in humanity through long disuse. Quite unrelated to the sense of polarity (*Hind* 211), of which he also claims to find some traces in man, the sense of direction appears to him to be independent of such external forces as the wind, or of clues like the way the grass lies under it. He cannot be authoritative about what he calls the sense of polarity in man, namely his sensitiveness to the positions of the magnetic poles, because he has never been affected in this way himself; but he does assert that on one occasion his own dormant sense of direction came to his aid, and enabled him to find his way out of a forest — the New Forest perhaps — after sunset, on a course which took him in a bee-line to his destination. This sense had nothing to do with memory or reason, forces which came into play later, when he saw a familiar landmark outside the forest; but when they did so, “The feeling . . . of intense elation” left him, and with it “perhaps the strangest [experience] I have ever had . . .” (*Hind* 148-49).

Reading of Hudson's supranormal experiences, we can understand his interest in mysticism, and in the sense of space as an element in it. In *Hampshire Days* he dwells on this sense: “It is a passion, an old ineradicable instinct in us: the strongest impulse in children, savage or civilised, is to go out into some open place. If a man be capable of an exalted mood, of a sense of absolute freedom, so that he is no longer flesh and spirit but both in one and one with nature, it comes to him like some miraculous gift on a hill or down or wide open heath . . . Many of us have experienced these ‘divine raptures’” — he has been quoting Traherne — “this sublimated state of feeling; and such moments are perhaps the best in our earthly lives” (*Hampshire Days* 38). But in English skies in his time something, without which the grandeur of heaven is never

fully understood, is nowhere found: "the great soaring bird in the scene — eagle, or vulture, or buzzard, or kite, or harrier — floating at ease on broad vans, or rising heavenwards in vast and ever vaster circles? That is the one object in nature which has the effect of widening the prospect, just as if the spectator had himself been miraculously raised to a greater altitude, while at the same time the blue dome of the sky appears to be lifted to an immeasurable height above him. The soaring figure reveals to sight and mind the immensity and glory of the visible world. Without it the blue sky can never seem sublime" (*Adventures* 92-93).

This intense appreciation of the individual creature may have led him to consider that, together with all these senses, "there is a sense of the *thing itself*" (*Hind* 33), no matter what it may be, "something . . . penetrative, special, individual, as if the quality of the thing itself had entered into us, changing us, affecting body and mind." This sense Hudson illustrates by reference to the protective colouring of animals under different conditions of climate and therefore of vegetation. He suggests that under the influence of these conditions the mind of each animal reacts upon its body, being already predisposed by inheritance to react in a standard way. He could perhaps have called this sense a sense of harmony, though he did not; but this sense of the thing itself, of harmony, of environment, what his contemporary G. M. Hopkins would have called the impulse from inscape, or instress, is very strong in Hudson, and really the core of his imaginative writing. His own intense sympathy allows him to blend with his surroundings and take a colouring from them, if they have anything to offer him. London had little: "You can almost smell the formic acid" (*Traveller* 245).

Through his relationship with rural folk, however, Hudson was constantly acquiring for himself those envisionings of the English past that were perhaps a bridge to the days of long ago when his paternal grandfather had emigrated from Devon and his mother's ancestors (the Merriams) from Kent.³ His gift for friendship with the country people comes through best in *Afoot in England* (1909); in no other work of his about English life is the commonplace so touched with magic, most of all where he shows gratitude for the kindness conferred upon himself, and upon his wife when she

travelled with him, by people as poor as they were themselves. They could hardly have been poorer. But the book also displays his undiminished independence of spirit no matter where he went; never, wherever he trespassed, even among the most sacred of pheasant preserves, nor by whoever accosted him there, was he ordered off: "always, after a few words, I have been permitted to keep on my way. And on that way I intend to keep until I have no more strength to climb over fences and force my way through hedges, but like a blind and worn-out badger must take to my earth and die" (*Afoot* 264). In the "great green county" (*Shepherd's Life* 1) of Wiltshire, among others, he questioned many people for their memories of an earlier England, parallel to the days of his childhood in the Argentine. His character of "Caleb Bawcombe" has the last word in *A Shepherd's Life*, the book of Wiltshire days built around him.⁴ Caleb is over eighty at the time of Hudson's writing and vividly remembers the bad old times of the Hungry Forties, while many of the shepherding folk he knew then and whose simple tales he recalls for his visitor were in full manhood well before the French Revolution and looked upon the same world as Samuel Johnson. Caleb "was long miles away from his beloved home now, lying on his back, a disabled man who would never again follow a flock on the hills nor listen to the sounds he loved best to hear — the multitudinous tremulous bleatings of the sheep, the tinkling of numerous bells, and crisp ringing bark of his dog. But his heart was there still, and the images of past scenes were more vivid in him than they can ever be in the minds of those who live in towns and read books." It was then no surprise to hear him utter "these impressive words: 'I don't say that I want to have my life again, because 'twould be sinful. We must take what is sent. But if 'twas offered to me and I was told to choose my work, I'd say, Give me my Wiltshere Downs again and let me be a shepherd there all my life long.'" (*Shepherd's Life* 332).

In harmony with this world of the open air in all its moods — "all weathers are good to those who love the open air" (*Shepherd's Life* 3) — Hudson reacted against much of what we call civilization; that is, industrialism and its human consequences. But if a townsman was to his sometimes rather cantankerous mind only a countryman astray, Hudson's outlook was neither the villager's

nor that of the educated idealiser of country life; the pastoral and patriarchal life he shows us in *A Crystal Age*, his Utopian dream in 1887, harks back to the ways of the more aristocratic and influential families he had known in the Argentine. "England," Amy Ronner observes in her study of Hudson's later life, "gave Hudson the necessary distance from South America which enabled him to interweave past and present most effectively" (Ronner 38). Alone in the New Forest, or on the Sussex Downs or Salisbury Plain, or gazing out to sea from Land's End, he feels nearer what he calls the real world than he does in the company of others, unless like himself they are people who share "the sense of the beautiful [which] is God's best gift to the human soul" (*Hampshire Days* 187). This sense and that of harmony may be seen as closely kindred insights into Hudson's vision of truth, since upon them he founds all the happiness still with him in his "new and simplified [post-Darwinian] philosophy of life. A good enough one so far as this life is concerned, but unhappily it takes no account of another, a second and perdurable life without change of personality" (*Far Away* 346).

Having lost his hope in the possibility of an after-life, Hudson clove more than ever to the one so nearly lost in youth; but the conflict remained with him between his Nature-mysticism and his intellectual and by no means joyous acceptance of the idea of extinction at the moment of death. Throughout his adult life there came to him, in the presence of some manifestation of Nature, the "momentary intense joy" (*Far Away* 340) of mystical experience. He had eventually come to understand that the gift was a rare one, for in other people the animistic faculty, "the sense and apprehension of an intelligence like our own but more powerful in all visible things" (*Far Away* 235), and not necessarily a soul, had died away. His own vision splendid, the mystical state or "rare condition of beautiful illusions," as he calls it at the end of *A Traveller in Little Things* (256), he illustrates there by a lyric poem. Reason assures him that no divinity could have been present; still, the recollection of his emotions on one such occasion in the New Forest leads to Hudson donning an unusual mantle. Poetry, he felt in 1908, was the proper medium for this; "our deepest emotions and the best in us cannot be expressed in any

other way" (*Letters* 92), although he had given up all hope of ever mastering "that delicate and difficult instrument." This may have been partly because the animistic "sense and apprehension" could be received by him only in a form tarnished by the sceptical spirit of the contemporary world in which he encountered it.

On various occasions we therefore find Hudson expressing the constant tension in his mind between the ideas of individual survival and extinction after death. What distinguishes him from so many of his contemporaries, however, is his awareness of the potential extinction of entire species. Destruction of species means the annihilation of the past; and if it is wanton destruction, then to Hudson the crime is unforgivable. In both his native land and his adopted country the existence of many wild creatures lay under the threat of extinction; but in England this threat was often embodied in Hudson's day by the collector, a kind of predator roaming the land in search of rare species to destroy. Hudson had no use for collectors. One great pleasure he felt when visiting a part of the New Forest was purely negative: not one was there. "Never once in all my rambles did I encounter that hated being the collector, with his white, spectacled town face and green butterfly net" (*Hampshire Days* 54). He observes that "entomologist generally means collector" (*Hampshire Days* 113). However, on being introduced to a self-styled lepidopterist by a friend who was, like the lepidopterist, a vicar, Hudson hoped for the best, and told him of a recent experience, of "the vivid image of a humming-bird hawk-moth seen suspended on his misty wings among the tall flowers in the brilliant August sunshine. . . ."

He smiled again, and remarked that the season had not proved a very good one for the *Macroglossa stellatarum*. He had, so far, seen only three specimens; the first two he had easily secured, as he fortunately had his butterfly net when he saw them. But the third! — he hadn't his net then; he was visiting one of his old women, and was sitting in her garden behind the cottage talking to her when the moth suddenly made its appearance, and began sucking at the flowers within a yard of his chair. He knew that in a few moments it would be gone for ever, but fortunately from long practice, and a natural quickness and dexterity, he could take any insect that came within reach of his hand, however wild and swift

it might be. "So!" — the parson-lepidopterist explained, suddenly dashing out his arm, then slowly opening his closed hand to exhibit the imaginary insect he had captured. Well, he got the moth after all! And thus owing to his quickness and dexterity all three specimens had been secured. (*Hampshire Days* 113-14)

The use throughout of reported speech, with the exception of the single, revealing "So!"; the grabbing of a moth without any apparent concern for its inevitable state of damage even as a dead specimen; the hint that the parson frequently smiles without either humour or goodwill; the double-edged comment on the season as Hudson brings out that unintended irony in the words spoken; the dead technical name; the parson's praise of his own dexterity in killing; his contemptuous reference to a parishioner to whose spiritual welfare he can hardly have been giving his full attention; Hudson's ironic repetition of phrase and word — *quickness and dexterity; specimens; fortunately*: all these devices pin down the parson, spread-eagled under Hudson's scrutiny. If his portrait of Captain Scott represents human benevolence, this miniature of the unnamed vicar shows us something quite the reverse.

Hudson strove throughout his life against such a mentality as this vicar represented. He tried to find and explain the truth contained in beauty, and to attain thereby what he conceived to be the only lasting happiness, that of the human spirit rejoicing in the fullness and the essential rightness of the great world. But humanity can achieve this happiness, or harmony between the world and itself, only through right living, which in turn demands the deliberate cultivation of the art of living. In an age of rapid change and turmoil Hudson advised cultivating "a sense of historical time" (*Afoot* 243). States of society are the work of humanity and never permanent; but we should measure their duration in terms other than the years of men, and rather against the entire time-scale of a people or group of peoples, something certainly which would give a better notion of the perpetuity of mankind and its varieties. This idea lies behind his frequent identification of racial types in the appearance and the personalities of people he met. In his search for the stability of eternal truth, he sees pain and war as inevitable features of life; but he describes the problem of pain as over-rated: "The 'struggle for existence,' in so far as animals in a state of

nature are concerned, is a metaphorical struggle; and the strife, short and sharp, which is so common in nature, is not misery, although it results in pain, since it is pain that kills or is soon out-lived" (*Birds in Town* 103). As for war, he remains similarly aloof, appearing not to have seen the approaching conflict of 1914-18 in terms of human suffering; the troubles of his boyhood in the Argentine had been on an entirely different scale — mostly cavalry skirmishes between undisciplined militia, almost as lawless off the battlefield as they were on it, and sorties by Indians upon frontier settlements. Danger had then occasionally threatened his own home, but never overwhelmed it.

His view of death is also rather curious, but we may see in it yet another manifestation of the struggle in his own mind to resolve the conflict between the concepts of survival and extinction. He accepts none of the fates to which more orthodox people would consign the folk long dead among whose barrows he meditated in *Hampshire Days*. Although we do not have to believe in any objective reality, beyond the barrows themselves, to his dreams there, he seems to think of the spirits of the dead as still inhabiting their ancient home. They are neither annihilated nor in a Christian heaven or purgatory, nor even in slumber till Judgment Day. For himself too he appears to want the same kind of consciousness in death, perhaps not so much as an individual personality as through the forms of life which will reside after him in the place where his body lies. He wants "to have always about me that wildness which I best loved — the rude incult heath, the beautiful desolation; to have harsh furze and ling and bramble and bracken to grow on me, and only wild creatures for visitors and company. The little stonechat, the tinkling meadow-pipit, the excited whitethroat to sing to me in summer; the deep-burrowing rabbit to bring down his warmth and familiar smell among my bones; the heat-loving adder, rich in colour, to find when summer is gone a dry safe shelter and hibernaculum in my empty skull" (*Hampshire Days* 49-50). Elsewhere he refers to our dead as being not in some distant stellar region, but still with us, "sleeping, no doubt, but not so soundly sleeping, we imagine, as not to see and hear us when we visit and speak to them" (*Traveller* 247); for they are part of "the beautiful multi-

tudinous life that has vanished" (*Traveller* 204) — a frequent regret — and yet, although gone, whatever their present fate they are by us unforgettable, even when memory itself fades at last, since through the way we experience the world of Nature around us they are still a part of us (*Traveller* 205).⁵

This nostalgic power in Hudson's writing brings to us the essence of his vision in expressing his intense awareness of harmony in the natural world, and between that world and man when man is the true protector of his ancient heritage. Hudson's ultimate desire is a civilization that recognizes the fullest use and expansion of sense-perception in order to identify us with that outer world in which all hope of our stability resides, and which one day may become in reality Hudson's idealization of the land of his youth.

NOTES

- ¹ The family moved to a new home when Hudson was almost five. (Tomalin 30, 59.)
- ² Hudson could distinctly recall 215 South American bird species to his mind's eye, and the calls of 154 such species to his hearing.
- ³ The Merriams had "emigrated to Massachusetts in the seventeenth century." Tomalin 112, 169.
- ⁴ Tomalin 202-5, 247-50. The correspondence appears here that was published in *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Hants and Dorset Magazine* from 1945 to 1953, and identified Caleb Bawcombe as James Lawes of the village of Martin.
- ⁵ The dead "are present in nature: through ourselves, receiving but what we give, they have become part and parcel of it and give it an expression." In a letter to Morley Roberts (*Men, Books and Birds*, No. 17, written in 1901), Hudson defines the "expression" of an object as its universally recognized quality, modified by its particular meaning for an individual: this would depend on his memory and imagination, or in other words on its associations for him. (See Hudson's *Men, Books and Birds*.)

WORKS CITED

- Hudson, William Henry. *Afoot in England*. London: Dent, 1923.
 ———. *Adventures Among Birds*. London: Dent, 1923.
 ———. *Birds and Man*. London: Duckworth, 1924.
 ———. *Birds in Town and Village*. London: Dent, 1923.
 ———. *Far Away and Long Ago*. London: Dent, 1923.
 ———. *Hampshire Days*. London: Dent, 1923.
 ———. *A Hind in Richmond Park*. London: Dent, 1923.
 ———. *Idle Days in Patagonia*. London: Dent, 1923.
 ———. *The Naturalist in La Plata*. London: Dent, 1923.

- . *A Shepherd's Life*. London: Dent, 1923.
- . *A Traveller in Little Things*. London: Dent, 1923.
- . *W. H. Hudson's Letters to R. B. Cunninghame Graham*. Ed. Richard Curle. London: Golden Cockerel Press, 1941.
- . *Men, Books and Birds*. Ed. Morley Roberts. London: Eveleigh Nash and Grayson, 1925.
- Roberts, Morley. *W. H. Hudson. A Portrait*. London: Eveleigh Nash and Grayson, 1924.
- Ronner, Amy D. *W. H. Hudson: The Man, The Novelist, The Naturalist*. New York: AMS Press, 1986.
- Tomalin, Ruth. *W. H. Hudson: A Biography*. London: Oxford UP, 1984.
- For the Dent edition of 1923 the following reprint has been used: New York: AMS Press, 1968.