

deal checked my ardour for locomotion ever since.) . . .
Our uncle-tommy, spirit-rappery (*vilest* of brutalities
yet risen from Chaos), our table-turnery, and all our
other deliriums, run their triumphant course,— I think
almost a little rifer this year than usual. All which the
Devil, in his own good time, will comfortably swallow,
let us never doubt!

TC to Robert Browning, 8 February 1845. Offered for sale in 2005 by Sotheby's, New York, New York. The holograph is not available for transcription but is described as 3 ¹/₃ pages on 4 ⁵/₈ by 3 ³/₄ inch sheets, and as a letter discussing the forthcoming publication of TC's *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*.

Conferences at Philadelphia and Dumfries

THE 12–13 JULY 2007 CARLYLE STUDIES CONFERENCE HOSTED BY Villanova University focused on two themes: placing Carlyle in new or revitalized intellectual contexts, and restoring Carlyle to the classroom.

With regard to the former, panelsessions explored expanding the range of Carlylean topics, including Islam, democracy, anti-capitalism, racism, Marxism, education, and even late-twentieth century game show host Chuck Barris. Jane Welsh Carlyle was also featured in a panel on biographical writing. The two most prominent subjects addressed by members of the conference were variations on Carlyle and Victorian politics and Carlyle and History, with particular emphasis on *Past and Present*. Carlyle's often controversial and sometimes problematic critiques of Victorian society offered opportunities for vigorous discussion during each session, which further added to the intellectual excitement of the gathering. Finally, the wonderful mingling of an impressive group of younger scholars with already-established Carlyleans suggests that we are embarking on a promising new era of Carlyle studies.

The topic of restoring Carlyle to the university curriculum was addressed by scholars in roundtables, special lectures, and papers. The discussion focused on how Carlyle, at one time an icon of the university curriculum, had now by and large

disappeared from the syllabus. This development is particularly surprising during a time of unprecedented major projects such as the Duke-Edinburgh *Collected Letters* or the University of California Strouse Edition of his works. The invigorating roundtable touched on several problems such as the length and density of Carlyle's works for modern college students; the initial stylistic challenge that students and colleagues encounter when reading his writing for the first time; the lack of warm embrace he has received from Scotland's otherwise active heritage industry; the recent deaths of major university professors who had been influential Carlyle scholars and advocates; and the frequently reductive and dismissive assessment of his politics when seen through the lenses of race, class, and gender. However, during the course of the discussion, it became evident that there is cause for hope, not least because of the emerging generation of scholars represented at the conference who find Carlyle stimulating even in (and perhaps because of) his difficulties. Suggestions for making Carlyle's works more accessible were exchanged, as were many concrete tips for pedagogical strategies.

Plans for a conference in Dumfries, Scotland are already underway, fueled in large part by the enthusiastic and supportive gathering at the Villanova conference.

Paul Kerry and Marylu Hill
2007 Conference Organizers

The Intellect of a Sick Rabbit

A DELICIOUS CARLYLEAN ANECDOTE, CIRCA 1860, HAS BEEN BROUGHT to the attention of the editors by Professor Owen Dudley Edwards of Edinburgh University. In the 17 March 1917 issue of *Notes & Queries* (12th ser. 3.64), Stapleton Martin, of The Firs, Norton, near Worcester, asks: "Is it true that Carlyle said of Newman that he had the intellect of 'a sick rabbit'? If true, when, and under what circumstances, was it said?" (211).

With the assistance of Google, one finds that Stapleton Martin (1846–1922) was a frequent submitter of queries to