THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
(POST-ROMANTIC)

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1. General

Précis de littérature française du XIXe siècle, ed. Madeleine Ambrière, PUF, 641 pp., has some distinguished contributors, including C. Becker and G. Sagnes, but would have benefited from an even greater diversity of specialist input. Newly thriving research areas, such as popular fiction, vulgarization of science, political satire and caricature, book production, la petite presse, are given their due in survey sections which are the most satisfying component of the portion of the book devoted to this period. Literary correspondences and the vogue for contemporary biographical portraits receive rewarding attention too. In sections devoted to individual authors, textual quotation is generous; respective allocation of space seems unfair in certain cases: less for Rimbaud than for Verlaine; more for Bloy than for the Goncourt. La Promenade du critique influent: anthologie de la critique d'art en France 1850-1900, ed. Jean-Paul Bouillon et al., Hazan, 434 pp., a superbly conceived and crafted outil de travail, gathers texts by some 70 critics. Specialist essays heading the four chronological sections identify currents of opinion and dissension. Very useful digests of each critic's career, chronological tables, and bibliographies are also supplied. Philippe Hamon, Expositions: littérature et architecture au XIXe siècle, Corti, 1989, 205 pp., is a monograph, both illuminating and indigeste, on the interpenetration of these two arts, which produced 'le texte-monument', 'le texte-exposition', 'le texte-magasin', characters such as the badaud and the blagueur, settings such as la ruine et la serre. Particular attention is devoted to Baudelaire, Flaubert, Zola, and Verne. Daniel Pick, Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c. 1848-c. 1914, CUP, 1989, viii + 275 pp., reads works including Taine's Origines de la France contemporaine and Zola's Germinal and Le Docteur Pascal in relation to contemporary medico-psychiatric discourse. Notions of degeneracy are also discussed by Ruth Harris, Murders and Madness: Medicine, Law, and Society in the 'fin de siècle', Oxford, Clarendon, 1989, viii + 366 pp., who offers valuable information on the dominion and demonstrations of J.-M. Charcot, and analysis of ways in which 'discourse about crime and madness overlapped with issues of class, gender and politics' in Paris. Romantisme, 58, a special no. on private life, includes: A. Daumard, 'Affaire, amour, affection: le mariage dans la société bourgeoise au XIXe siècle' (33-47) (arguing that documentary evidence confounds