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THE AUTHOR AND HIS PUBLIC IN THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

READERS of Monsieur Jusserand's delightful *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages* will not need to be reminded of the difficulties of travel in medieval England, and students of our early literature may well pause on reading his pages to reflect upon the results of such difficulties upon the creation and dissemination of literature at that time. We must, perhaps, be on our guard against exaggerating these difficulties, for when all is said, people did travel in medieval England, not only 'from every shires ende, The hooly blisful martir for to seke', but also on the more prosaic errands that the King's officers, the monastic authorities, or the desire for gain commanded. The roads of medieval England were thronged with a motley crew: we may see something of them in Langland's pages clearly enough, and need only remind ourselves of their existence. Every township and village saw the passing stranger: friars on their rounds, the plausible performing beggar, the haughty King's messenger, the trader upon his lawful occasions—a variety of men from whom they learned of what was happening in the great world—or at least, that fraction of what was happening which was known to the traveller, or which he was willing to divulge.

Among all these travellers few are of more importance to the student of literature than the wandering minstrels. Educated or ignorant, cleric or layman, these fellows were the transmitters, not only of political and social rumour and gossip, but also of songs, stories, romances, and a thousand and one items, of which only a fraction have survived for us. These men came into the village or township and employed all their arts to their own advantage. They could tell of Havelock the Dane and his doings, or of the adventures of Dame Siriz; they knew the fairy-lore of *Sir Orpheo*, or could

recite the amazing prowess of Gamelyn or the warlike achievements of Guy of Warwick. If their audience seemed to demand it, a more religious note would be struck; the way in which a violent king is brought to book by Holy Church, as in *Athelston*, or one of the great stories of sacred history would be related, as they are set down in the *Cusor Mundi*. If something shorter was required the minstrel would oblige with a hymn or carol, until he was forced to cry:

> I may noon more syngyn, my lyppis arn so drye . . .
> Geue us onys drynkyn er we gon henne.

The day-to-day lives of such men as these are still something of a mystery to us. True we can tell from the poems of a Rutebeuf or a Villon, or the *Carmina Burana*; from the charming pages of Miss Helen Waddell, or the erudite studies of Sir E. K. Chambers or Monsieur Faral something of their lives in broad outline. But the main problems are as yet unsolved. How did such men learn their craft? How did they obtain their vast repertories and keep them up-to-date? What were the reasons which encouraged some (usually) anonymous poet to trouble to make a translation from French into English, and for what audience? These and other questions seem to be worthy of detailed investigation; and, as a preliminary to an endeavour at a later date to answer some of them, the present study turns to consider the conditions in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries which influenced both authors and their public.

We may begin by noting how this lack of easy communication hampered the writer. He only knew by accident what was being written elsewhere, and had no certain means of any kind whereby he could find out if the work which he proposed to do was already done, or in process of composition. Hence it is that we find the story of the Passion related in both a northern and a southern version; no less than three versions of Mandeville's travels appeared within a brief period of one another; two versions of *The Seven Sages of Rome*, of *Parthenope of Blois*, of *Sir Launfal*, of *Octovian*—the list could be extended indefinitely. The medieval author,

it is clear, was working in the dark; but this did not matter so much then as it would now, for if his knowledge of what was happening elsewhere was limited, so was that of his potential audience, and therefore his vision of *Octovian* was *the* version, for all intents and purposes, in his part of England. Authors had a parochial outlook: few of them, I think, hoped for much more than a local reputation, and perhaps some of them were wise enough to understand the dilemma which beset Caxton at the end of the fifteenth century, when he came to print his materials and could expect to reach a much wider clientele. Caxton then found that what was easily understood in one part of England was hard reading or even unintelligible in another part. So it was to an even greater extent a century earlier. Writers could not hope for more than a limited area in which their works could circulate, or if they did, then their difficulties were manifold, as Chaucer notes:

> And for ther is so gret diversite
> In Englissh and in writyng of oure tonge,
> So prey I God that non myswrite the,
> Ne the mysmetre for defaute of tonge.
> And red wherso thow be, or elles songe
> That thow be understonde, God I beseche!

This verse, with its talk of the 'gret diversite' in English speaking and writing, and Chaucer's pious hope that his work would be understood by listeners or readers, is indication enough that a widespread circulation was only obtained at some expense—an expense of effort on the part of the public that even now it is not easy to obtain. Most writers, therefore, perhaps realizing something of all this, found themselves forced to write for an audience within a limited area, and in general for some one person or group of persons. Of these alternatives the single person was obviously the simplest problem to tackle, and so we find that the first thing for the medieval author to do was to get a patron; some one who would support him and whose tastes and desires he would study to satisfy. Unless he could get such a patron he was in the unenviable position of a Rutebeuf or a Villon, forced to make a living as best he could, and often forced to those

ignoble tricks and accomplishments so well recognized as part of the minstrel's stock-in-trade which called down on his head the vituperations of Holy Church. Rutebeuf voices the common experience of these authors without patrons when he writes:

> Chill are my loins when the east-wind blows; it comes and blows through and through me. God so tempers His seasons to me that black flies bite me in summer, and white flies in winter. I am like the wild osier, or like the bird on the bough; in summer I sing, and in winter I weep and make lament. The dice that we buy at the dicemakers have spoiled me of all my garments; dice are my death . . . I lack food and have lacked it long; no man offers, no man gives to me. I cough with cold, I gape with hunger, whereby I am consumed and maltreated; mattress I lack, bed I lack. My ribs know well the taste of horse-litter; straw bed is no bed, and on mine lieth naught but straw.

The life of an author who had a patron was immeasurably better than this, but even he had his difficulties, although they were of another kind. Even so great an author as Chrétien de Troyes found this was so when his good lady, Marie of Champagne, ordered him to write on a theme which (good moralist that he was) he found highly distasteful. Nevertheless, he took pen and begins his story of Lancelot thus:

> Since my lady of Champagne wishes me to write a romance, I shall very gladly do so, being so devoted to her service as to do anything in the world for her, without any intention of flattery. . . . I will say, however, that her command has more to do with this work than any thought or pains that I may expend on it. Here I begin my book about the knight of the chariot (Lancelot). The material and the treatment of it are given and furnished to me by the Countess, and I am simply trying to carry out her intention.

And as with Chrétien so with many a lesser man. His patron's desire was his driving force, and it may well be that much of the dreary pedestrian verse which disfigures these centuries would never have been written save to flatter the vanity, or to please the wretched taste of some rich patron.

Let us not be unduly hard on the patron, however, since in general he may be said to have exercised a beneficent influence, and to have ensured material comforts for his author. What patronage could mean may be seen in the career of Froissart. In his youth he found a patron in the Count of Namur, and later he came to England to the court of Edward III, bringing with him letters of recommendation to the Queen, who came from his own country of Hainault. She made him one of her *ditteurs*, and for some years Froissart stayed under her protection. After her death he was without a patron for a time and was forced, therefore, to return to his native Valenciennes, and to endure a bleak period of service *dans la marchandise* from which he was rescued by an old friend of his London days, who was a cousin of Queen Philippa, and who was able to bestow on him a vacant living at Lestinnes. There, in a comfortable rectory, Froissart had leisure and money enough to begin writing his imperishable chronicles. So we might continue the story of how his patron advanced him to the canonry of Chinnay, or sent him to visit the great Comte de Foix to get new materials for his chronicles, with the result that under such princely patronage his collection of materials grew apace. Let us hear him on some of his patrons:

> To the duke and duchess of Brabant owe I great thanks; for they have always been such to me that I have found them and their friends and their household liberal and courteous to me. The duke Albert hath always received me gladly, and also the lords of Blois, and the good lord of Beaumont and the lord of Moriaumé. I know not if I have named Amedeus, count of Savoy: but in Milan, in Lombardy, the good count gave me a cote-hardie worth twenty golden florins. Reason I have to tell the praises of the noble king of Cyprus, &c.

Happy the man with such patrons and such opportunities: not all authors had such good fortune, but whatever chances came their way, we of later times must remember with gratitude (exceptions notwithstanding) the services rendered to literature by the patron in the Middle Ages.

There were many writers, however, who could not give

their whole time to writing. Their main work lay elsewhere, and it was only for part of the day, or in leisure moments, that they could turn to their literary work. For the purposes of our investigation we may divide such men into two categories: ecclesiastics and laymen. For such men, the hermit's cell, the monastery, the counting-house, or the office stool was their daily lot—literature was reserved for leisure and 'off-duty' hours. The part played by the Church in providing a competence for authors can scarcely be overestimated. We have seen how Froissart was made free of money troubles by his livings at Lestinnes and at Chinnay, and we may take it that some ecclesiastical office was the support of the majority of medieval writers. Thus freed from the economic pressure which weighed on the ordinary man they were able to write in the peace of the monastic scriptorium, or the tranquil comfort of their parsonage. As they wrote their seemingly interminable lives of the saints, or devotional homilies, or turned into French or English the learning of the schoolmen and the Fathers, the days passed quickly enough, only disturbed by the ringing of the monastery bell for the daily offices or by the day-to-day duties which the parish priest had to perform. No doubt as soon as they had acquired some local reputation much of their work was done to meet an express desire, or at the command of an ecclesiastical superior; and, even when this was not so, the chances were that some devout soul would be glad to purchase the work, or that, if the worst came to the worst, the monastic library would be the richer by yet another volume. Yet even monastic bodies had limits to their patience, the space in their libraries, and the extent to which they were prepared to watch one of their number passing his days in endless composition. Hence, we sometimes find them seeking about for some one to relieve them of their burdens, and they encouraged their writers to obtain outside help and patronage.

John Lydgate, monk of Bury, may well serve as a horrid example of the worst that this system could evolve. Born at Lydgate, near Bury St. Edmunds, he entered the monastery as a novice while still a boy; in due time took the

monk's frock; and, for the remainder of his life, his time was spent within the cloister walls of Bury or of Hatfield Broad-oak. While we must remember that Bury was one of the most important monasteries in England, and that its library was immensely rich with its two thousand and more volumes of sacred and profane literature, yet we cannot but realize that Lydgate lacked that 'precious experience of life' of which Langland speaks, and a little reading will convince us that this is reflected in Lydgate's work. Unfortunately, he showed distinct powers of welding together words and phrases into collocations which had all the appearance of verse, and he must have had an intolerable glibness and an indomitable energy, which enabled him to essay tasks which a more sensitive man, or one 'charged with children and chief lordes rent', would not have dared to attempt. Hence, in the quiet of the monastic scriptorium he turned out works in the utmost profusion and of the greatest variety. Nothing seems to have been beyond him: 'a mumming by London merchants before the Lord Mayor', a 'letter' to accompany Christmas gifts to the King, an explanation of the Mass for a pious Countess to keep in her chamber, a set of stanzas to serve up as a 'subtlety' at a banquet, a complaint for a love-sick squire to offer his lady, the 'histories' to accompany figures in a fresco or in tapestry, a classical translation of Boccaccio's 'tragedies'—all went through the same process, and the same dreary tale of verses poured out. As M. Jusserand says, 'Rien que la mort ne put le faire taire; son dernier poème étant de 1446, ses biographes en ont unanimement conclu qu'il dut mourir cette année-là'. Lydgate's importance for us, it will perhaps be obvious, is not because of the quality of his work, but by reason of the conditions which enabled him to gratify his literary fecundity. In the first place it will be noticed that much of his work is not of a predominantly ecclesiastical nature, and a little investigation shows us that he was employed by a variety of patrons to write on various subjects. His translations, done to satisfy some patron's desire, were innumerable and voluminous. His history of the Trojan wars (the Troy book) runs to some

30,000 lines, and was commissioned by Henry V while still Prince of Wales. Again, his translation of Deguilleville's *Pèlerinage de la Vie Humane*, made for the Earl of Salisbury, occupied 25,000 lines, while his translation of a French version of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum*, made for that prince of patrons, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, had the correspondingly princely length of 36,000 lines.

Naturally works on such a scale could not be written in a day, and so busy a patron as Humphrey of Gloucester may well be pardoned if he lost touch with his poet. But poets must live—even if the bare necessities of life are provided by the monastery, and Lydgate reminded his patrons from time to time of his existence by a verse begging-letter, in which his financial debility is indicated by means of an elaborate series of images drawn from various sources; or in which, under the guise of a weary and parched pilgrim, Lydgate receives due refreshment; or in which he tells us of his enfeebled and impoverished state which so worked upon his ignorance and general wretchedness as

> Mi penne to arest, I durst not proceede,
> Thus bi my silff, remembring on this booke,
> It to translate how I had vndirtake,
> ffful pale of cheere, astonid in my looke,
> Myne hand gan tremble, my penne I felt quake,
> That disespeirid I had almost forsake . . .
> I stood ckek maate for feere whan I gan see
> In mi weie how litil I had runne.

The good duke was evidently moved by Lydgate's enfeebled financial condition, and thanks to his help the poet recovered sufficiently to write the remaining 25,000 lines of the poem. His smaller works, such as those already mentioned, were obviously *pièces d'occasion*, and no doubt were paid for by the London merchants, or the pious countess, or the love-sick squire at rates satisfactory to the poet. Hence in the course of an industrious lifetime Lydgate turned out something over 130,000 lines of verse.

Patronage did not often have such elephantine success, but Lydgate's career shows how a man with a safe harbour-

age, coupled with the support of rich patrons, was liable to increase the literary output of his time. And it must be remembered that Lydgate is only an outstanding example of what was a widespread practice. The fifteenth-century Augustinian friar, Osbern Bokenham, who translated into English verse a number of lives of the saints, furnishes us with another instructive example of how literature was evolved. Fortunately Bokenham tells us a good deal about his literary methods and about his patrons. For example, he says that the life of St. Margaret was written at 'the importune and besy preyere of oon whom I loue wyth herte entere, . . . whos request to me is a comaundement'. He did not, however, at first assent to this prayer and request, but finally on September 17, 1443, after pondering the matter, he decided to translate the life of the blessed saint. Another friend, the Lady Katherine Denston, and her husband John persuaded him to do the same for the life of St. Anna, and the humble supplication of John and Isabel Hunt produced yet another saint's life. He is even more explicit concerning the origination of the life of St. Mary Magdalene. He tells us that he was in the presence of the Lady Bouchier, and at a time when her four sons, all decked out in fresh array, like a meadow bedecked with blue and green flowers, were dancing with their friends in her chamber. At such a time the lady talked with him of the many legends which he had turned into English, and added that she long had had a peculiar affection for the blessed Mary Magdalene, and desired him to render her life in English. Bokenham was (or professed to be) doubtful of his poetic ability; but finally, after obtaining a respite while he made a pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella, agreed to do what she wished. It is evident that all these people had learned by popular report of Bokenham's poetic ability, and evidently persuaded him from time to time (no doubt for a suitable reward for himself or his friary) to write something for them. Their own special devotion to a particular saint furnished a subject, and thus provided the poet with a good reason to English yet another of these lives. When we find also that all these people whose

names are mentioned in the poems are friends, or relations, or live fairly closely together, the deduction is clear that here we have a local writer with a reputation, whose works were sought after, and whose fame was well appreciated within a certain area, and yet a writer whose livelihood was assured by none of these things but by his religious vocation.

Next we have to take into account in our survey of potential authors that growing body of men in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries who only indulged in literary composition 'out of hours'. We so constantly think of Chaucer solely as a poet that we are apt to forget that in the course of a very busy life he filled a variety of royal offices which must have exacted much time and energy for their discharge. Chaucer, the Controller of Customs and Subsidy on Wools, Skins, and Hides in the Port of London, who was appointed on the express condition that he was to write his rolls with his own hand, or Chaucer, the Clerk of the King's Works, with charge of buildings and repairs in the Tower, Westminster Palace, and eight other royal residences, together with lodges, mews, parks, and other belongings, must have been a very active man of affairs. Indeed, the wonder is how he ever found time to write the vast body of poetry that remains his, even after modern scholarship has done its worst. We may well think of him as one of the first of that long line of writers who have served the State by day and the Muses by night, and who have made such splendid contributions to scholarship and to letters in the intervals of a busy official career. And further, Chaucer's career illustrates the immense benefits to be gained by an eager alert mind as it moves from place to place on official business, and stores up impressions of men and manners, all of which are the raw material upon which the artist will work when the time comes to call them forth from their resting-place.

Thomas Hoccleve furnishes us with another good example of the 'part-time' literary man. He went into the office of the King's Privy Seal when he was about twenty years of age, and there he laboured for most of the rest of his lifetime. In his leisure he wrote a certain amount of verse,

much of it of an autobiographical nature, and from this we can learn much of the life of a gay 'young man about town' of the fourteenth century, but more to our purpose, we can learn something of the difficulties which beset a man who probably turned to literature as a means of ekeing out his slender salary. Hence we find him looking in all directions for wealthy and influential patrons, among whom he names in various of his works Henry IV, Henry V, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of York, John of Gaunt, and many others less important. Among his extant poems are a number which were composed (like similar works of Lydgate) solely to exhort various officials, such as the Lord Chancellor or the Under-Treasurer, or various patrons, such as Henry V, to make money payments to him. The desirability of having a patron or patrons, despite the fact that he had a permanent office, was, it is clear, constantly before Hoccleve's mind, and may help us to remember how dependent literature still was on the private generosity of rich patrons.

The next point in our inquiry is not so easy to establish with such certainty as what has gone before. We have seen that authors depended upon patrons, or else had to have some assured source of income or certainty of livelihood in order to be able to write. Our next problem is to consider whether or no they could rely on the same sources of support throughout these two centuries. There is abundant evidence in the fourteenth century to show that the author could confidently look to the aristocracy for patronage. Besides those instances already given, we may recall the existence of such magnificent manuscripts as the Auchinleck MS. or the Leominster MS., both of them evidence of the interest and wealth of patrons who could fee minstrels and scribes to enshrine for us in those volumes the wealth of romance, devotional story, lyric, &c., which they contain. Or again, at the other end of the century, we may recall how Gower while rowing on the Thames was met by no less a person than Richard II, who commanded him to enter the royal barge, and then after some talk ordered him to write a book.

As a result we have the *Confessio Amantis*, made, as Gower tells us, 'for king Richardes sake'. These, and many other instances, show the practice of the fourteenth century.

The coming of the fifteenth century brought no rapid change, and the Hoccleves, Lydgates, and Bokenhams were able to continue their poetic courses by the support of wealthy patrons. But a new clientele was slowly forming; a clientele produced by the interaction of a great many forces of which a number may be clearly discerned and discussed. First of these was the establishment of English as the recognized medium of official correspondence, of the law courts, and of our own literature. For a long time French had been the official language; it was only in 1356 that it was ordered that English should be spoken in all cases in the London sheriff's courts. Six years later the law courts followed suit; and in 1363 the Chancellor opened Parliament in English for the first time in history. Once the long drawn out battle between French and English had been settled, the rapid decay of French was most notable. Trevisa, in 1385, says that 'nowadays boys know no more French than their left heel', and in 1404 two ambassadors to France admitted that 'We are as ignorant of French as of Hebrew'! From about this time letters written in English begin to appear, and as the century progresses it becomes more and more evident that there is a growing body of people able to read or to write English.

The evidence on which such an opinion is based is too detailed to be fully discussed here, but it may be remarked that as the century progressed, facilities for rudimentary instruction in reading became more and more widespread. Indeed, Sir Thomas More, in 1533, assumed that over half the population could read. This seems to have been an overestimate, even in 1533, and certainly a century earlier would have been a gross exaggeration. Nevertheless, literacy was steadily on the increase in the fifteenth century, and we may accept Mr. C. L. Kingsford's considered view that

> there has been too much readiness to undervalue the culture and civilization of the age. Certainly capacity to read and write was no longer an accomplishment confined to the clerical

class. The wives and sisters of country gentlemen could often write as well as their husbands and brothers, and both they and their servants could and commonly did keep regular household accounts. In the merchant's office a capacity to read and write must long have been required.

Schools of various kinds multiplied in the fifteenth century, and a demand for English literature obviously arose from this new public who turned eagerly to read whatever was provided for them.

And further, it must be emphasized that this meant an almost entirely untouched field for writers to exploit. As we have seen, authors from the earliest times had written for a particular person, or public. Now things were changing. The minstrel or poet no longer was forced to depend mainly on the generosity of one person, or a small group of persons, but could begin to see vast possibilities before him as he surveyed the great rising middle-class bourgeoisie of England, who with money in their pockets and a little learning in their heads were asking to be instructed and amused. So by the mid-century wherever we turn the evidence is all of a piece: a new public has been created and writers are busy satisfying its needs. Take, for example, the career of John Shirley. He saw that there was a public who were scarcely rich enough to commission books to be written or to be copied for their exclusive use, but who, nevertheless, were eager to read whatever they could get hold of, especially the works of certain authors whose fame was a matter of common report. Hence Shirley set about to satisfy this demand, not by writing new books, but by diligently copying the works of older authors —Chaucer, Lydgate, and others. These he circulated among his customers, prefacing the several poems by what Henry Bradshaw called long 'gossiping' headings, in which he commended the poem to his readers. Thus he introduces a little collection of prose and verse works in these words:

> If þat you list / for to entende /
> Of þis booke / to here legende /
> Suche as is / right vertuous /
> Of maner of mirthe nought vicious /

As wryten haue / þees olde clerkes / . . .
þis litell booke / with myn hande /
Wryten I haue / ye shul vnderstande /
And sought þe copie / in many a place /
To haue þe more thank / of youre grace /
And doon hit binde / In þis volume /
þat bothe þe gret / and þe comune /
May þer on looke / and eek hit reede . . .

. . . .

And whane ye haue þis booke ouerlooked /
The right lynes / with þe crooked /
And þe sentence / vnderstonden /
With Inne youre mynde hit fast ebounden
Thanke þe þauctoures þat þeos storyes
Renoueld haue / to youre memoryes /
And þe wryter / for his distresse /
Whiche besechiþe / youre gentylnesse /
þat ye sende þis booke ageyne
Hoome to *Shirley* / þat is right feyne
If hit haþe beon / to your plesaunce
As in þe reedyng / of þe romance /
And alle þat beon / in þis companye
God sende hem Joye / of hir ladye
And euery womman of hir loue
Prey I to God þat sitteþe aboue /

Explicit.

Again, at the beginning of his collections there occurs a verse —Shirley's 'bookplate', as it has been called—which reminds his readers to read for pleasure and profit, and not to forget to return the book.

Yee þat desyre in herte / and haue plesaunce /
Olde stories in bokis / for to rede /
Gode matieres putt him in remembraunce /
And of the other / take yee none hede /
Bysechyng yowe of youre godely hede /
Whanne yee this boke / haue over-redde and seyne /
To *Johan Shirley* / restore yee hit ageyne. /

Not only was Shirley a copyist himself and an early lending library, but there is some evidence for the belief that we may regard the four shops which he rented from St. Bartholomew's Hospital as the head-quarters of an early 'publishing'

business. We need not press this further here, but may content ourselves with noting how all Shirley's activities illustrate that there was a vigorous demand for the writings of Chaucer and many others that Shirley served to satisfy.

But this new 'reading public' was not satisfied merely by borrowing books. Naturally, as the art of reading became more widespread, so did the desire to have books of one's own. The itinerant minstrel was much better than nothing: indeed he had been the most welcome of visitors, but large as was his repertoire, it was not always able to provide just what was wanted. The fifteenth century saw more and more copies being made of favourite works, and more and more demands being made on men like Bokenham to produce new works. Then again, this century was responsible for the dissemination of a very considerable body of practical works of devotion, such as the *Lay Folks Mass Book*, or of the origination and wide circulation of collections of sermons for the whole year, such as Mirk's *Festival*, or English versions of legends, such as those by John of Tynemouth, John Capgrave, and others, which were ultimately printed by de Worde in 1516. Lives of the saints were naturally much in demand in these times, and fifteenth-century writers were kept busy in satisfying this demand. For example, Dorothea is told of in Bokenham's *Lives* and in Caxton's *Golden Legend*. There is a prose account in a Lambeth MS. and another in a Chetham MS., and also a free translation of the *Golden Legend* version in two manuscripts in the British Museum. All these versions belong to the fifteenth century, and together with such things as the large number of versions in this century of such popular subjects as St. Alexius, St. Katherine, or St. Mary Magdalene go to show the widespread demand there was for devotional reading matter.

Literature, however, was not confined to the re-telling of romances, or to new versions of the lives of the saints. Everywhere new possibilities were before the author. To take one example: until the fifteenth century the history of England since the Conquest had been written mainly in Latin: the great works of such chroniclers as William of Malmesbury

were composed in Latin and far outweighed in historical importance Layamon's *Brut*, and Robert Mannyng's rhymed story of England in their English dress. The fifteenth century saw all this changed. Instead of the English chronicle being written in Latin and possibly translated for those who had no Latin, the only continuous chronicle of the fifteenth century was actually composed in English, and afterwards translated into Latin for those who clung to the ancient literary tradition. So great was the demand for the vernacular version that Dr. Brie has listed no less than 121 copies of the *Brut*, and tells us that the list is far from complete.

> 'The wide diffusion of the *Brut* in manuscript,' writes Mr. C. L. Kingsford, 'and the numerous printed editions which appeared between 1480 and 1530 would alone make it important. There is even greater significance in the fact that through the London Chronicle and the *Brut*, a narrative written in English speech for popular use for the first time takes rank as a leading contemporary authority. Viewed simply as a literary production it is of no great merit, though passages of a good, forceful kind are not lacking. However, the immaturity of its style is of small moment as compared with the fact of its existence.'

What the *Brut* did for national history a series of local chronicles did for the towns. The English chronicles of London were first put into the form in which we now have them about 1414, and various versions and additions continued to appear for the next half-century. In the same way a number of chronicles were written to set forth the history of various towns, and the many existing manuscripts of these and of the London chronicles all strengthen the evidence afforded by the *Brut* that there was a growing and widespread demand for such historical matter in English during the fifteenth century.

This demand for historical, devotional, and other kinds of reading matter is shown in another way. Bequests of books (and these not exclusively of a religious character) begin to occur in wills of laymen. Country gentlemen and rich merchants evidently began to feel that the possession of a few books at least was a thing demanded by their position. Old

Sir John Fastolf, who was no reader himself, possessed a considerable number of books, both in French and in English, while the Paston family, with a greater interest in books, collected many volumes. Anne Paston had a copy of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* of her own; Walter Paston had *The Book of the Seven Sages*, and John Paston was the owner of a book containing 'The Meeting of the Duke and Emperor'. His elder brother, Sir John Paston, was an enthusiastic bibliophile, and was ever anxious to acquire new works, or to have copies of old ones made for him. He had, for example, a volume in which had been assembled 26 pages of writing concerning the Coronation and the duties of Knighthood; then followed a 120-page treatise on War in four books; then an 86-page treatise on Wisdom, and then the rules of chivalry were set out in 28 pages. Finally, there came the *de Regimine Principum* in 90 pages. Among other composite volumes Sir John had one in which were *La Belle Dame sans merci*, *The disputation between Hope and Despair*, *The Parliament of Birds*, and *The Life of S. Christopher*. Many other works were in his possession, some bound up into collections as the above, some in single volumes, and some are mentioned as existing only in quires—that is just as they came from the scrivener. Finally, as soon as the new-fashioned printed book became available, Sir John bought one of these—*The Game and Play of Chess* 'in preente', as it says in the inventory of his library.

In view of facts such as this study has endeavoured to put forward may we not pause before we agree to the easy condemnation of the fifteenth century as 'empty' or 'barren' or 'futile'? Whatever may be said of some of its activities in constitutional and economic fields, we have reason to believe that for literature it was neither barren nor empty. Literary historians have not been over-kind to the century. They have over-emphasized its undoubted paucity of masterpieces while they have neglected what was before their eyes—the continuous process of trial and error which was going on all the time, and which threw off such exquisite fragments as *Quia Amore Langueo* or *The Nut Brown Maid*. And when all is said and done the fifteenth century did produce the

Morte D'Arthur. But even more important: all the mass of undistinguished writing, so boring and so dead to those whose souls adventure only among masterpieces, was the material on which a new body of lovers of literature was nourished, and who were crying out for fuller satisfaction when Caxton returned to England with his books 'in preente'.

The mention of print reminds us that we are at the limits of our inquiry. By the time that Caxton set up his printing press at Westminster there had been created this new body of people—interested in literature—a body of readers to whom authors found they could increasingly turn for appreciative support. Manuscript copies of their works were made in the scriveners' shops and obtained some considerable distribution, but do what they would author and scrivener could only reach a limited public. Once, however, the possibilities which the printing press could offer were available the whole problem was changed. Henceforward literary wares were at the command of purses of the most modest dimensions, so that little more than a hundred years were to elapse before the quarto editions of Shakespeare's plays were to be bought for sixpence apiece—the price of a draught of canary or a can of sack!

H. S. Bennett.

THE VOCABULARY OF COOKERY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

THE material for the following notes is taken from a cookery book of about 1430, preserved in MS. Harley 279 in the British Museum.[1] It is a fairly long document, occupying sixty-four pages in print, and containing in all 258 recipes.

The book is divided into three sections, headed respectively: (i) 'Incipit li Kalendare de Potages dyuers'; (ii) 'Hic incipit Kalendare de Leche Metys'; (iii) 'Here begynnyth dyuerse bake metis'. Then follow the menus for seven banquets: (i) the *convivium* at the Coronation of King Henry IV at Westminster, 1399; (ii) at his wedding at Winchester; (iii) for Lord de la Grey, '*incerti temporis*'; (iv) for Richard Flemming, Bishop of Lincoln; (v) at the funeral of Nicholas Bubwith, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1420; (vi) for John Stafford (who succeeded Nicholas Bubwith), '*in inductu suo ad Episcopatum Bathonensis et Wellensis*', 1425; (vii) at the wedding of the Earl of Devonshire, '*incerti temporis*'.

It would be quite possible to carry out many of the recipes in the modern kitchen, provided that the cook had imagination, common sense, and also a sense of proportion. Directions as to quantities are hardly ever given, though they occur in a few recipes: 'Take a quart of hony' (for Gingerbread), 'take fowre pound of Almaundys', 'take a potelle of Clarifiyd Hony, & a pounde of Pynys, & a pounde of Roysouns Coraunce [i.e. currants] . . . & ij galouns of Wyne or Ale, & a pound of Pepir'; and once, with a fine *abandon* which would have delighted the heart of Mrs. Beeton: 'Take a thousand eggs.' More usually the measurements are much more vague: 'Take a gret porcyoun of Haselle leuys', 'take an sethe a few eyron [i.e. eggs] in red Wyne', 'take Brede', 'take the whyte of Eyroun a grete hepe', 'take kowe mylke', 'take calfes fete an hepe', 'take whyte Wyne a god quantite', 'put Sugre y-now in-to the potte', 'Take Borage, Vyolet, Malwys [Mal-

[1] E.E.T.S. 91, ed. by Thomas Austin (1888).

lows], Percely, Young Wortys, Bete, Auence [Avens], Longebeff [Bugloss], wyth Orage'.

The first section is the longest, containing 153 recipes. The term *Potages* includes a great variety of dishes, meat, fish, and vegetables, cooked in various kinds of broths and sauces, as well as some sweet dishes, but there are few which we should now include under the title of 'soup'. The chief point about the *Leche Vyaundez* of the second section is that in each case the meat, or a solid cake made of minced meat, &c., is cut into long slices or *leches*, and then cooked, served, or decorated in this form. The third division contains 'bake metis', i.e. pies and tarts, baked custards, darioles and 'doucets', and other oven-cooked dishes.

Some information can be gathered as to the cooking utensils of the period, at least as to their names, and it would seem that the kitchen equipment was in essentials much like that of the present day, though certainly less finished and rougher to handle. We read of a *dysshe*, a *basyn*, a *vessel*, a *bolle*, a *potte*, a *platere*, a *chargeoure*, a *possenet*, a *panne*, most of which seem to have been used for serving as well as for cooking; sometimes the material of the vessel is mentioned: *a treen* [i.e. wooden] *dische, vessel, bolle*; also *a pot of erþ* (and *an erþen pot*), *a bolle of tre* [a wooden bowl], *a pewter dysshe*. Used especially for cooking: a *frying panne*, a *cauderoun*, a *lede* [i.e. a 'lead' in the sense of 'cauldron'], a *chafoure* (used for cooking pancakes, and also for a kind of thick fish-soup), a *gredelle* or *gredyre* [grid-iron], a *pecher* [pitcher] (used for a steamed pudding of minced pork, spices, bread-crumbs, and old cheese, and broken when the time comes for the *farsure* to be extracted); special kinds of food are contained in a *potelle* (of honey) and a *chesefatte* (of cheese); a *sefe* or *seve* [sieve] and a *straynoure* are used for straining liquids and eggs, and stewed fruit, vegetables, &c., are often rubbed through them; the back of a *sawcere* is recommended for flattening a mixture in its dish; a *morter* and *pestel* are used for *stamping* or *braying* or *grynding* meat, fish, &c., and a *bord* for *hacking* or *hewing* or *chopping* meat into *pecys* or *gobetts*; a *lynen* or *wollen clothe* or a *can(ne)vas* is hung on a

pin for draining the whey from sour milk and so forth, and a *canvas* also for covering the top of a vessel during cooking. The cook also has a *knyf*, a *ladel*, a *spone*, a *spete* or *broche* [spit or broach], a *skymoure*, a *pele* [peel] for removing pies from the oven, and a *schouel*. The last appears only in a recipe which involves heating the shovel burning hot, filling it with salt, making a basin-shaped hollow in the salt, and then heating the whole thing over the fire; eggs are broken into the hollow and baked lightly ('till it be half harde'), and then served in the *cofyn* of salt, which has to be carefully removed from the shovel with a knife.

Among the methods of cooking mentioned are *boylyng* (the commonest), *parboylyng*, *sethyng*, *frying*, *rostyng* (on a spit or a grid-iron), *bakyng*, *stewyng*, *broylyng*, and *tostyng* (the last of bread only).

The meat, for which the general term is *chare*, is much the same in variety as we have nowadays: *be(e)ff*, *vele* or *calf*, *mutoun*, *porke*, *bakon*, *venyson*, but also *kede* [kid], which is here given only as an alternative to veal or hen 'in Bokenade', but in contemporary cookery-books is also roasted, while a reference in a recipe for stuffed pig shows that the kid was sometimes served *endored* or gilded with yolks of eggs. A fair number of different joints, &c., are mentioned: *caluys fete*, *sydys of pyggys*, *howhys* [houghs] *of veal*, *buttys of vele*; *mary-bonys* are important, since *marwe* [marrow] occurs in a large number of dishes, sweet as well as savoury, and *rybbys*, *bonys*, and *swerd* 'skin' also appear. Moreover, the cook had at his disposal the *hertys*, *pypis* [lungs], and *nerys* [kidneys] of the pig, the *nombles* of venison, the *pawnche of a chepe* [paunch of a sheep] for 'Trype de Motoun', and the *roppis* [guts] for *hagws* [haggis]. The meat before cooking was cut into *gobettys*, *gobouns*, or *fylettys*, or, more commonly, *myncyd* or *ground* or *brayed* in a mortar, presumably as a cure for its medieval toughness.

Several varieties of *byrdys* are used: the *henne*, *capoun*, *polett* [pullet], *chykon* (with its *garbages*: the *hed*, *fete*, *lyverys*, *gysourys* [gizzards, Old French *giser*], *leggys*), and *gelyne* [OFr. *gelin*, from Lat. *gallina* 'hen']; also *gees*, *mawlards*

'mallards', *pertryches*, and *quystis* [cushats, OE. *cūscote*]. Both *conyngys* [coneys] and *harys* are used in stews.

Fish and shell-fish are used in considerable variety, and there are a number of special recipes for these for use in *lente* or on *fyss-days*. Freshwater fish are naturally the commonest, but sea-fish are also mentioned. *Stokfysshe* [i.e. dried fish] occurs several times, and the fresh fish include *pyke*, *luce*, *loches* [loach], *plays* [plaice], *perche*, *troutys*, *carpys*, *roche*, *dace*, *turbut*, *samoun*, *hake*, *gornard*, *storgeoun*, *reyȝe* [ray], *tench*, *lenge* [ling], *haddok*, *codlyng*, *millewell* [apparently either the haddock or the keeling], *lampreys*, *elys*, and *congere*. The *porpeys* or *purpaysse* is boiled and served with frumenty, or may be stuffed and then boiled. Other dishes require *oystres*, *crabbys*, *lopstere*, *muskelys*, *schrympe*, and *walkys* [whelks]. In some cases the *spaune*, *frye*, *lyuer*, *mawes*, and *pouches* [stomachs] of the fish are used. Stockfish is generally to be 'well watered' (i.e. soaked) before use.

Fruit when fresh is usually stewed, and often rubbed through a sieve or strainer, but may be sliced; dried fruits, such as dates, are chopped, or pounded in a mortar, sometimes after boiling. We find the following varieties: *appelys*, *perys* (*wardonys* are specially mentioned), *grapis*, *fygys*, *quyncys*, *chyryis*, *molberys*, *strawberyes*, *prunes*, *graynys* (i.e. seeds) *of pomegarnad* (for decoration), *bolas* [bullace, cf. OFr. *beloce*], *roysonys of coraunce* [raisins of Corinth, i.e. currants]. (The blackberry is not mentioned; the gooseberry is not recorded in English until 1532, and the raspberry is a seventeenth-century introduction.) Small nuts and almonds are blanched and sometimes fried.

There are not many varieties of what we should now refer to as 'vegetables', but we find *grene pesyn* (in a recipe for green pea soup, with shredded onions, fish stock, saffron and salt, and sliced 'worts') and *whyte pesyn*, *oynonys* (sometimes *fryid*), *bete*, *lekys* (used in a sauce to be served with salted eels); *caboges*, after being washed and 'picked clean', are parboiled, chopped, and boiled again with *goode freysshe broth* and *mery-bonys*, thickened with bread-crumbs, and then 'served in' with the marrow knocked out of the bones and

arranged on top of it—two or three *gobettys* in each dish, 'as thee seemeth best'.

A good many kinds of *erbys* and sometimes flowers are used for flavouring and sometimes for colouring or decoration. Blades of *barlyche* [barley], and also *percely* give a green colour; *saunders* [sandalwood] and *alkenade* [*alkanet*], red; the flavour of *safroun* was so common that one might imagine the medieval *gourmet* growing tired of it. *Borage*, *garleke*, *sawge* [sage], *anise*, *comyn*, *pynys* [apparently the seeds of pine-cones], *sauereye* [savory], *malwys* [mallows], *isope*, *auence* [avens], *orage* [orach], *longe beff* [i.e. *langue de bœuf* = the small bugloss], add to the interest of many of the stews, broths, and sauces. *Cyuey* [chives, from Fr. *cive*, Lat. *cēpa*] is popular, and gives its name to certain dishes—rabbits, hares, tench, and mallard may all be served *in cyuey*. The juice of *tansye* is used in an omelette. Less common ingredients are *box leves*, stuck on to gingerbread with cloves; *haselle levys* 'ground' in a mortar and forming the basis of one stew; *vyolette*, *flowerys of hawthorn*, *rede rose*, and *prymerose*, have their petals boiled and crushed, and cooked with milk thickened with rice flour or bread-crumbs, and *red rosys* are also used with loaches; *gelofres* [gillyflowers] appear among the flavourings.

Spices (the general term being *spycery*) are used very freely, to make the dishes *poynaunt*. *Pepyr* is sometimes *hole pepyr* and sometimes *pouder pepyr*. *Pouder Canelle* [cinnamon] (OFr. *canele*, Med. Lat. *canella*, diminutive of *canna*) is one of the commonest; then come *maces* and *clowes* [cloves] (OFr. *clou*), the latter used sometimes as flavouring, sometimes as decoration, *pouder of gyngere*, *quibibes* [cubebs, OFr. *cubèbe*, from Arabian *kabābah*), *galyngale* [made from the aromatic root of an East Indian plant; OFr. *galingal*, Arabian *khalanjān*, apparently ultimately Chinese]. The term *synamoun* [from Hebrew, through Greek, Latin, French] is very rarely used in place of *canel*. Sometimes instead of a list of spices the recipes call for *blawnche pouder*, which was a mixture of cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg, or *pouder Marchaunt*, which may also have been a blend of spices.

For sweetening *hony* is much used, though sometimes *sugre* is given [OFr. *çucre*, probably through Medieval Latin from Arabian *sukkar*. Sugar can be traced as being in use in England from the late thirteenth century]. *Whyte sugre* and *black sugre* are both mentioned, and the place of origin is sometimes indicated: *sugre of Alysaundre, sugre of siprys.*

The liquid ingredients include both milk and cream; sometimes *swete mylke* is stipulated. *Ale* is used in a number of recipes, sometimes *stale ale*. *Wyne*, both red and white, appears constantly; the variety is not often mentioned, but now and then we read of *clareye*, *vernage* [a white wine of Italy; OFr., from Ital. *vernaccia*], *bastard* [a sweet Spanish wine]. *Venegre* (OFr. *vin*+*egre* 'sour') or *eisil* is ordered less frequently, but is sometimes used even in sweet dishes; other similar ingredients are *ale-egar* 'malt vinegar' (*ale*+OFr. *egre*) and *verjous* [acid fruit juice; OFr. *ver*(*t*) 'unripe'+*jus*]. *Oyle*, or *oyle of olyffe*, and *grece* are used for frying. *Mylke of almaundys* is often mentioned; this was made by steeping almonds in water.

For dry mixtures and for thickening the medieval cook used *flowre* (sometimes called specifically *whete floure*), *otemele*, *flowre of rys*, and often *whyte brede* (usually *grated*), *wastel* or *paynemaynne* (*brede of payndemain*, Anglo-Norman *pain demeine*, from Medieval Lat. *panis dominicus* 'lord's bread', the finest kind of white bread). *Amidon* is also used for the same purpose; this was a preparation of wheat dried in the sun and pounded in a mortar.

A few examples of individual recipes (with a modernized form appended) will show the compiler's method. The numbers prefixed are those given in the book itself.

.x. *Wardonys in syryp*: Take wardonys, an caste on a potte, and boyle hem till þey ben tender; þan take hem vp and pare hem, and kytte hem in to pecys; take y-now of powder of canel, a good quantyte, an caste it on red wyne, an draw it þorw a straynour; caste sugre þer-to, an put it [in] an erþen pot, and let it boyle: an þanne caste þe perys þer-to, an let boyle togederys, an whan þey haue boyle a whyle, take pouder of gyngere an caste þerto, an a lytil venegre, an a lytil safron; an loke þat it be poynaunt an dowcet.

= *Wardens in Syrup*: Take wardens and boil them in a saucepan till them are tender; then peel them and cut them in halves. Take plenty of powdered canel and sprinkle it on red wine; put it through a strainer, add sugar, and boil it in an earthenware jar. Add the pears, and let all boil together for a little while. Add powdered ginger, a little vinegar, and a little saffron. It should be both piquant and sweet.

Except for the vinegar and the saffron, this is a quite ordinary and simple recipe.

.xiij *Creme Boylede*: Take creme or mylke, & brede of payne-mayn, or ellys of tendyr brede, an breke it on þe creme, or elles in þe mylke, an set it on þe fyre tyl it be warme hot; an þorw a straynour þrowe it, and put it in-to a fayre potte, an sette it on þe fyre, an stere euermore: an whan it is almost y-boylyd, take fayre ȝolkys of eyron, an draw hem þorw a straynowr, and caste hem þer-to, and let hem stonde over the fyre tyl it boyle almost, an till it be skylfully þikke; þan caste a ladel-ful, or more or lasse, of boter þer-to, an a good quantıte of whyte sugre, and a litel salt, an þan dresse it on a dysshe in maner of mortrewys.

= *Boiled Cream*: Take cream or milk, and paindemain, or soft bread, and crumble this into the cream or milk. Warm it and strain it; then set it on the fire again, stirring it constantly; when ıt is almost boiling add yolks of eggs passed through a strainer; let it stand over the fire till it is thick enough and nearly boiling. Add about a ladleful of butter, plenty of white sugar, and a little salt. Serve it on a dish as you would mortress.

Presumably it is intended that the stirring should continue after the eggs are added. The mortress referred to is a kind of thick, almost solid, pottage, usually made with pounded meat or fish. The word is from OFr. *mortreux*, plural of *morterel*; cf. the form *mortariolum* given by Ducange, from Latin *mortar-ium*. Here is an example made with pork:

.xliiij. *Mortrewys de fleyssh*: Take Porke, an seþe it wyl; þanne take it vppe and pulle away þe Swerde, and pyke owt þe bonys, an hakke it and grynde it smal; þenne take þe sylf brothe, & temper it with ale; þen take fayre gratyd brede, & do þer-to, an seþe it, an coloure it with Saffroun, & lye it with ȝolkys of eyroun, & make it euen Salt, & caste pouder gyngere, a-bouyn on þe dysshe.

= *Mortress of meat*: Boil some pork well, remove the skin and the bones; chop and pound the meat. Mix the broth with ale; take breadcrumbs and add them [and the meat] to the broth, boil it, and colour it with saffron. Bind it with yolks of eggs, salt it evenly; sprinkle powdered ginger over the dish.

Another dish made with fruit is *Apple Muse* (i.e. *Mousse* = moss):

.lxxix. Take appelys an sethe hem, an serge hem þorwe a sefe into a potte; þanne take Almaunde Mylke & Hony, an caste þer-to, an gratid Brede, Safroun, Saunderys, & Salt a lytil, & caste all in þe potte & lete hem sethe; & loke þat þou stere it wyl, & serue it forth.

= *Apple Mousse*: Stew apples and rub them through a sieve; add almond milk and honey, breadcrumbs, saffron, sanders, and a little salt. Let them boil all together; stir it well. Serve.

There are various dishes the names of which show their fruit basis, e.g. *applade, quynade* (made of quinces), *fygeye*, or the use of flowers, e.g. *roseye, spyneys* [from Lat. *spīna*; made of hawthorn flowers], *prymerose, chyryoun*. The ending *-ade* appears also in *Herbelade*, a pie made of pork flavoured with chopped herbs, and of course also in *crustade* 'custard', i.e. a dish with a crust. (The modern *custard* corresponds to the *boiled cream* of this period.) The fifteenth-century custard has meat or fruit mixed with eggs, and usually milk, baked in a shell of pastry.

.xvij. *Crustade lumbard*: Take gode Creme, & leuys of Percely, & Eyroun, þe ȝolkys & þe whyte, & breke hem þer-to, & strayne þorwe a straynoure, tyl it be so styf þat it wol bere hym-self; þan take fayre marwe, & Dates y-cutte in .ij. or .iij. & Pruneȝ, & putte þe Datys an þe Pruneȝ & Marwe on a fayre cofynne, y-mad of fayre past, & put þe cofyn on þe oven tyl it be a lytel hard; þanne draw hem out of þe ouyn; take þe lycour & putte þer-on, & fylle it vppe, & caste Sugre y-now on, & Salt; þan lat bake to-gederys tyl it be y-now; & ȝif if be in lente, lef þe Eyroun & þe Marwe out, & þanne serue it forth.

= *Lombardy custard*: Take good cream and parsley; break eggs, the yolks and the whites, into them; strain them through a strainer till the mixture is stiff enough to stand. Take marrow, and dates cut into two or three pieces, and prunes;

put these into a shell of pastry, and bake it until it is partly cooked. Remove it from the oven and pour in the eggs, &c., until the shell is full; sprinkle sugar and salt on it; bake till set. In Lent leave out the eggs and marrow.

.xxxiv. *Crustade ryal*: Take & pyke owt þe marow of bonys as hool as þou may; þen take þe bonys, an seþe hem in Watere, or that þe broþe be fat y-now; þen take Almaundys, & wayssche hem clene, & bray hem, & temper hem vppe with þe fat broþe; þan wyl þe milke be broun; þen take pouder canelle, Gyngere, & Sugre, & caste þer-on; þan take & make fayre cofyns, & lat hem hard in þe ovyn; þan take Roysonys of coraunce, & ley in þe cofynne, & taylid Datys, y-kyt a-long; þen take Eyroun a fewe, y-straynid, & swenge a-mong þe Milke þe ȝolke; þen take the botmon of þe cofynne þer Marow schal stonde, & steke þer gret an long gobettys þer-on vpperyȝt, & lat bake a whyle; þen pore þin comade þer-on halful, & lat bake; & whan yt A-risith, it is y-now; þen serue forth.

= *Royal custard*: Pick out the marrow from marrow-bones, keeping it as whole as possible. Boil the bones in water until the broth is fat enough. Wash and pound almonds and moisten them with the fat broth; the liquid will be brown; add powdered canel, ginger, and sugar. Bake shells of paste; put a layer of currants at the bottom of each, and dates, tailed, and cut lengthwise. Take a few eggs, beat the yolks and whites together and strain them. On the bottom of the 'coffins' lay the marrow in long pieces; bake them for a time. Add the eggs, so that the 'coffins' are half-full, and bake again. When the mixture rises it is ready to serve.

Eggs are very common as ingredients in the 'bake metis' in this manuscript. They have usually been beaten or strained. In the next recipe the yolks are kept whole and cooked in a coat of pastry. It is called *Pety pernollys*:

.xiiij. Take fayre Floure, Safroun, Sugre, & Salt, & make þer-of past; þan make smal cofyns; þen take ȝolkys of Eyroun, & trye hem fro þe whyte; & lat þe ȝolkys be al hole, & noȝt to-broke, & ley .iij or .iiij. ȝolkys in a cofyn; and þan take marow of bonys, to or .iij. gobettys, & cowche in þe cofynn; þan take pouder Gyngere, Sugre, Roysonys of coraunce, & caste a-boue; & þan kyuere þin cofyn with þe same past, & bake hem, & frye hem in fayre grece, & serue f[orth].

= Make a paste of flour, saffron, sugar, and salt, and make it into small 'coffins'. Take yolks of eggs, separating them care-

fully from the whites so that they are not broken; put three or four yolks in each coffin, and lay two or three pieces of marrow on top of them. Sprinkle powdered ginger, sugar, and currants on the marrow and eggs. Put a lid of the paste on each coffin and bake or fry them.

The recipe for pancakes leaves one hoping that the cook's hands were clean. It is surprising to find *berme* included among the usual ingredients.

.lj. *Cryspeȝ*: Take Whyte of Eyroun, Mylke, & Floure, & a lytel Berme, & bete it to-gederys, & draw it þorw a straynoure, so þat it be renneng, & not to styf, & caste Sugre þer-to, & Salt; þanne take a chafer ful of freysshe grece boyling, & put þin hond in þe Bature, & lat þin bature renne dowun by þin fyngerys in-to þe chafere; & whan it is ronne to-gedere on þe chafere, & is y-now, take & nym a skymer, & take it vp, & lat al þe grece renne owt, & put i on a fayre dyssche, & cast þer-on Sugre y-now, & serue forth.

= *Pancakes*: Beat together whites of eggs, milk, flour, and a little yeast; pass it through a strainer, so that it is running and not too stiff; add sugar and salt. Take a pan of boiling fat; dip your hand into the batter, and let this run down your fingers into the pan. When the batter has run together in the pan, and is cooked, take it up with a skimmer, let the fat drain off, and place it on a dish; sprinkle sugar on it, and serve it.

A number of the names of the dishes look fairly familiar, especially such phrases as (*oystres*) *en grauey*, (eggs) *en poche*, *fylettys en galentyne*, *goos en hoge potte*, *mawlard in gely*, *peris in syrippe*, *en composte*; less reminiscent of a modern menu are (brawn) *en peuerade* [from Anglo-Norman *pevre* 'pepper'], (*vele*) *en bokenade*, (*gelyne*) *in dubbatte*, (tench, &c.) *en bruette*, (*hennys*) *in Gauncelye*, and many others.

Here is the recipe for *Vele, kede, or henne in Bokenade*:

.xxxvj. Take vele, kede, or henne, an boyle hem in fayre Water, or ellys in freysshe brothe, an smyte hem in pecys, an pyke hem clene; an þan draw þe same brothe þorwe a straynoure, an caste þer-to Percely, Sawge, Ysope, Maces, Clowys, an let boyle tyl þe flesshe be y-now; þan sette it from þe fyre, & a-lye it vp with raw ȝolkys of eyroun, & caste þer-to pouder Gyngere, Veriows, Safroun, & Salt, & þanne serue it forth for a gode mete.

= Take veal, kid, or hen, and boil them in water or fresh broth; cut them in pieces and pick them clean [i.e. remove the bones, skin, &c.]. Strain the broth, add to it parsley, sage, hyssop, mace, cloves; let the broth boil until the chopped meat is cooked. Take it off the fire, mix yolks of eggs with it, and add ginger, verjuice, saffron, and salt. Then serve it as a good dish.

Many of the dishes have curious names, the etymology of which is doubtful in a number of cases. *Joutes* is from OFr. *joute* 'vegetable or pot-herb', from Med.L. *juta, jutta*:

.iij. Take Borage, Vyolet, Malwys, Percely, Yong Wortys, Bete, Auence, Longebeff, wyth Orage an oþer, pyke hem clene, and caste hem on a vessel, an boyle hem a good whyle; þan take hem and presse hem on a fayre bord, an hew hem ryght smal, an put whyte brede þer-to, an grynd wyth-al; an þan caste hem in-to a fayre potte, an gode freshe brothe y-now þer-to þorw a straynowr, & caste þer-to .ij. or .iij. Mary bonys, or ellys fayre fresche brothe of beff, and let hem sethe to-gederys a whyle; an þan caste þer-to Safron and salt; and serue it forth in a dysshe, an bakon y-boylyd in a-noþer dysshe, as men seruyth furmenty wyth venyson.

=Take borage, violet, mallows, parsley, young herbs, beet, avens, bugloss, with orach, &c.; pick them clean, put them into a pot, and boil them for a good while; then take them off the fire, press them together on a board and cut them very small, add white bread and mash all together. Put them into a pot, stirring in enough good fresh broth (put through a strainer); add two or three marrow-bones or else beef-broth, and let them boil together for a time. Add saffron and salt. Serve it in a dish, with boiled bacon in another dish, as venison is served with frumenty.

Other names are: *bowres*, *papyns*, *blandissorye* [probably Fr. *blanc+de soré* 'of sorrel (red) colour'], *coleys* [OFr. *coleïs*, from Late L. *cōlātīcius*, from *cōlāre* 'to strain'], *blawnche perry* [fr. OFr. *blanc(he)+porrey*, from Med.L. *porrecta* 'leek'], *pommes* or *pumpes* [minced meat in round rissoles], *tayleȝ* [cf. OFr. *taillis*, a kind of hash, from *taill-er* 'to cut'], *bryndons*, *gyngaudre*, *rapeye*, *iuschelle* [Late L. *iuscellum*, a kind of soup], *charlette* [OFr. *char* 'meat'+ *let* 'milk'], *fauntempere*, *murrey* [so called from its red colour, imparted

by the *saunderys*, i.e. sandalwood, used in it], *talbottys*, *brasele*, *salomene*, *maumenye* [perhaps from Fr. *malmener* 'to tease'; made of shredded meat], *sturmye*, *egredouncye* [cf. Fr. *aigre-doux*], *mange moleynne* [a kind of chicken cream], *yrchouns* [with almonds stuck on end like a hedgehog's bristles], *fraunchemyle*, *pokerounce*, *raynolleȝ*, *meselade*, *rys-cheweȝ* [rissoles], *hanoney* [perhaps Fr. *oignoné*], *chawettys*, *rastons*, *potrons*, *flampoyntes*, and so forth.

As examples of these, we will give the recipes for *coleys*, *pumpes*, and *pokerounce*. The first is a kind of chicken broth:

.xxvj. Take a gode Capoun an boyle hem tendere, an pyke a-way clene þe bonys an þe skyn, an bray hym in a morter, an tempere hym wyth þe same brothe, an strayne hym þorw a straynoure; þenne take þe brawn an þe fleysshe, an a lytil whyte brede, an bray hem alle to-gederys in a morter; þen take þe lycowr of þe bonys, an þe skyn, an þe brothe þat þe capoun was sothyn ynne, an with al tempere it, but nowt to þicke; þen put it in a potte, an let it be al hote, but let it boyle for no þing; an caste þer-to a litil powdere of Gyngere, Sugre an Salt.

= Boil a good capon until tender; remove the bones and skin and pound the meat in a mortar, moistening it with the broth. Pass it through a strainer. Pound the brawn and the meat and a little white bread all together in a strainer. Add to it the liquor from the bones and the skin, and the broth in which it was boiled; it should not be too thick. Put it into a pot and make it very hot, but it must not boil on any account. Add a little ginger, sugar, and salt.

.cxxxviij. *Pumpes.* Take an sethe a gode gobet of Porke, & noȝt to lene, as tendyr as þou may; þan take hem vppe & choppe hem as smal as þou may; þan take clowes & Maces, & choppe forth with-alle, & Also choppe forth with Roysonys of coraunce; þan take hem & rolle hem as round as þou may, lyke to smale pelettys, a .ij. inches a-bowte, þan ley hem on a dysshe be hem selue; þan make a gode Almaunde mylke, & a-lye it with floure of Rys, & lat it boyle wyl, but loke that it be clene rennyng; & at þe dressoure, ley .v. pompys in a dysshe, & pore þin potage þer-on. An ȝif þou wolt, sette on euery pompe a flos campy flour, & a-boue straw on Sugre y-now, & Maces; & serue hem forth. And sum men make þe pellettys of vele or Beeff, but porke ys beste & fayrest.

= Boil a good piece of pork, not too lean, as tender as

possible; cut it up as small as you can, and chop cloves, mace, and currants with it. Roll it into balls, as round as possible, like small pellets, two inches round; put them aside on a dish. Make good almond milk, mix it with rice-flour; let it boil well, but be thin enough to run. At the time of serving, put five *pommes* in a dish, and pour the sauce over them. And if you wish, put a flower on to each *pomme*, and sprinkle sugar and mace on them. Some people make the pellets of veal or beef, but pork is most satisfactory.

.xxxvj. *Pokerounce*. Take Hony, & caste it in a potte tyl it wexe chargeaunt y-now; take & skeme it clene. Take Gyngere, Canel, & Galyngale, & caste it þer-to; take whyte Brede, & kytte to trenchours, & toste hem; take þin paste whyle it is hot, & sprede it vppe-on þin trenchourys with a spone, & plante it with Pynés, & serue f[orth].

= Cook honey in a pot till it is stiff enough. Skim it. Add ginger, cinnamon, and galingale. Cut two large slices of white bread and toast them; take your paste while it is hot, and spread it on the bread with a spoon. Decorate it with pine-seeds, and serve it.

The overwhelming proportion of French technical terms is very noticeable. In the lists of words given in the first few pages above, English words are mostly the names of birds, beasts, fishes, and vegetables used as the basis for many dishes, or of some of the commoner cooking-utensils. The words which denote methods of cooking, and the names of the finished dishes are almost exclusively French. So also are very nearly all the non-indigenous materials, e.g. spices, some of the fruit, the wine; these words have come to us through French, though some are ultimately of remoter origin. It is a pity that some of the more picturesque names have disappeared from the vocabulary of the present-day cook.

M. S. SERJEANTSON.

A COLONY OF JEWS IN SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON

ALL things Elizabethan seem to turn into a commentary upon Shakespeare. The historical problem of the condition of the Jews in his day involuntarily becomes a side-light upon the critical problem of Shakespeare's great portrait of a Jew in *The Merchant of Venice*. Shylock usurps the interest due to the living records of the race which he incarnates. The imaginative transcends the real.

The limited scope of this paper, however, forbids expansion upon this aspect of its theme, which must be reserved for another occasion. Its purpose is historical, and self-denial must be exercised. It may suffice to say, for the present, that such men as stand out in the records of the time as examples of Jews of note and quality were Christians by conversion or at least by observation, and accepted in the commonwealth for that reason. Dr. Lopez was a Christian, baptized, a regular communicant, with a son at Winchester College. So was Hector Nunez. They were Jews only by race, to all appearance at any rate, very different from that Shylock who was first and last a Jew, by religion as by race, obstinate and challenging in his faith, vindicating his nation before all men. As with Lopez and Nunez, so it was, outwardly at least, with the London Jews of lesser note whose affairs are now to be reported.

It is well known how, three hundred years before *The Merchant of Venice* was written, the Jews had been expelled from England by Edward I in 1290. There remained in London only the *Domus Conversorum* or House of Convertites, occasional sojourners from abroad, and individual men of some distinction who had, as Christians, taken their place in English society. Until recently, very little was known of any considerable colony of Jews by race in England during the reign of Elizabeth. Sir Sidney Lee had little to produce in evidence of his belief that there was such a colony. But the

late Lucien Wolf, a great student of Jewish history, carried his researches further into archives in England, in the Low Countries, and in Spain and Portugal.[1] To the information collected by him may now be added a more detailed and intimate picture of a London colony of Jewish merchants, in their commercial and private life and even in their religious observances. It has been interesting to find some of the same persons figuring both in the documents to which the fortunes of research led me in the first place, and in Mr. Wolf's pages.

It is well to remember that the ancient prejudice against Jews in England was based not only on religious differences, which made them a race accursed, but also on commercial jealousy, which recognized in them inconvenient competitors. The commercial activities of the Jews, however, were not always inconvenient to their hosts in European countries. During the last decades of the sixteenth century they served English trade in good stead. England and Spain were at war, and during most of the time trade between these two countries was forbidden on both sides. In 1580, moreover, Spain had conquered Portugal, which remained a province of Spain until 1640. Portugal was therefore involved in the embargo. Yet English trade with Spain and Portugal was important and profitable. It was necessary to carry it on. All manner of devices were resorted to. I find records of English merchants trading under French aliases, such as Anthony and Jacques de Bois, a surname known to us from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. But it could better be done by means of intermediaries, preferably men who knew the foreign country and had a foot both there and in England.

When John of Portugal followed the example of Spain in his anti-Jewish policy, he either forced his Jewish subjects into a pretence of conversion, or he drove them out of the country. Practically all the Jews by race of whom we hear

[1] *Jews in Elizabethan England*, 1926 (Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, vol. xi); and upon a colony of Jews in Bristol, *The Case of Thomas Fernandes before the Lisbon Inquisition*, 1556. From the papers of the late Lucien Wolf. By Cecil Roth. (Miscellanies of the Jewish Historical Society of England, Part ii. 1935.)

in Elizabethan England are of Portuguese nationality: their names are Lopez, Nunez, Leavis or Luiz, Alvarez, Lima, Viega, Fernandes, and the like, to quote those which have come to my notice; and Mr. Wolf's list points to the same conclusion.

Portuguese refugees to England, permitted to reside there as conforming to the religion of the State, were used by Elizabeth as sources of intelligence upon Spanish and Portuguese affairs. The peculiar position which made such service possible also made these Portuguese Jews apt for carrying on trade with Spain. They knew the country, its languages, and the conditions of its commerce. They were in touch with members of their own community, or even of their own family, resident in Portugal. Some had indeed partners whose residence was interchangeable between Lisbon and London, and who between them owned an English and a Portuguese nationality. A cargo, therefore, which would be confiscated at Lisbon if it belonged to an English owner, or at London if to a Portuguese owner, could pass the customs freely if it were proved to belong to a Portuguese or an English subject respectively. The device was obvious, but it worked. And it was probably winked at.

So an English trader, or syndicate of traders, would use a Portuguese Jew as their intermediary or agent for trade with Spain. For the purpose of exporting goods to Spain, the Portuguese would be the declared owner. For the second part of the transaction, the importation of Spanish goods into England, they would be the property of the Englishman. The Portuguese Jew was in fact, as it were, the useful neutral serving as a channel for trade between two belligerent countries. It is perhaps too much to call such trading illicit. It did not defy the law, but merely circumnavigated it. It was certainly useful to the country. But it no less certainly contained the seeds of a crop of legal debates. One such debate furnishes much precious information upon the intimate private life, and the religious observances, of a group of Jews in London in the last decades of the sixteenth century.

The case was tried, and evidence taken, in the Court of Chancery in 1596, between Mary May, widow and executrix of Richard May, a merchant, formerly of Bow Lane in London, and two Portuguese Jews who for a time were resident in the same street, though formerly of Fenchurch Street. Their names are Ferdinand Alvares and Alvaro de Lyma. It is a question of a debt which Mrs. May is claiming as due from them to her husband's estate, and of the settlement of accounts for a series of ventures in trade to Portugal and Spain, the first of which dated back to the end of 1586. Richard May died during the course of the ventures. The ships engaged in the traffic were the property of a syndicate of Portuguese Jews, including Bernard Leavis and Hector Nunez They took cargo from London to be sold or traded in Spain, bringing back Spanish produce to be sold in London. English merchants contributed to the finance of the expeditions, after the manner of the time, sharing in the profits or loss in proportion to their contributions. May was the chief English venturer. The importance of this trade may be seen from the finance involved in one voyage alone, the cost of the cargo amounting to £25,000, a great sum indeed in 1586.

The goods were consigned to Lisbon, to Bernard Leavis and Pedro Frere as owners, both claiming Portuguese citizenship. Trouble arose on the arrival of the ships. Their cargo was confiscated, and the ships seized, under suspicion of being the property of English subjects, on behalf of the King of Spain. To Leavis fell the task of seeking a remedy to this situation. He travelled to Madrid, to petition the great Cardinal, and was there arrested as a Jew, but was released. He appealed to the Viceroy of Portugal, the Marquis de Santa Cruce, who was sympathetic and was, indeed, a friend of Leavis. At every stage in the negotiations, heavy bribery was involved, and the preliminaries to trade were a notable addition to the cost of the venture. Finally the ships and cargo were released, and the trading could proceed. So the English goods exported thus were bartered for Spanish goods carried to London and there consigned to Alvaro de Lyma and Ferdinand Alvares, who claimed English citizenship. It was Mrs. May's

view that her husband's estate had not received his due share of the profits.

There is nothing in this, so far, of any especial interest. But when we proceed further in the interrogations, we find strange matters intervening.

Alvares and de Lyma, in making their accounts for the last voyage, included items that Mrs. May wished to challenge. The costs of the expedition were excessive, not least upon the count of compensation to be paid to the agents of the adventurers engaged in carrying out their transactions. A heavy item was compensation paid to agents in Portugal who had suffered from tortures in the cause of their business.

A great deal of trouble and expense was incurred, in general, which arose solely out of the fact that Bernard Leavis and Pedro Frere and other agents were known and declared Jews. And Mrs. May maintained that her husband and she could in no way be held responsible for any share of such expenses.

On the arrival of the *Gift of God* at Lisbon, great trouble was caused by an accusation made against Leavis and Frere that they, their sisters, and their kinsfolk were Jews, and practised their religion,

> and did live in Jewish and infedilish ceremonies and superstitions which were punishable by the Laws of Spaine and Portugall with Confiscačon of goods and losse of life.

This was the real cause of all the trouble and expense, and it was a private matter of the unfortunate Jewish agents.

Indeed, there was a question of blackmail. At Lisbon there were two Portuguese Jews, converted and permitted to reside there, who formerly lived in London, knew the whole colony, and had been intimates of Leavis in his house in London. Upon the arrival of the ship these two scoundrels, Anthony de Viega and John Ferdinandes, went to Leavis accusing him of 'judaism and other haynous crymes', and threatened to report this to the Spanish Inquisition. Had they done so, they knew, and Leavis knew, that death and the confiscation of his goods were the inevitable sequel. Leavis met the threat in the only way open to him. He paid heavy blackmail to Viega, and charged it as costs to the

adventure: a lamentable business—enemies not only declared, but among familiar friends.

Pedro Frere, again, had a sister Gratia, wife of Alvaro Gramaxo, who resided in Villa Nova in Portugal. She was accused of Judaism and of practising her faith, was imprisoned, and stood in great danger of 'the holy house'. Bernard Leavis and Pedro were long occupied in getting her released, and were driven to spend great sums of money on this account also.

This example is given to confirm the general and main point which Mrs. May seeks to establish, namely, that her husband's Portuguese partners and agents were Jews, and practising Jews, that their services as agents were interfered with by this fact, and that the costs of the trading venture were swollen beyond all reason by expenses arising out of this disability, or, as Mrs. May puts it, 'this and other heinous crimes'. The opposing theory, which she has to disprove, is that the chief troubles of the ventures were due to the suspicion that the goods were owned by English traders; and that Leavis, and Leavis alone, could and did overcome this objection by his visits to the Cardinal's Court and to the King's Court, and by lavish bribery. The rest of the evidence bears upon the allegation that Leavis, Alvares, and de Lyma were practising Jews, and no Christians in truth, whatever their pretences. And this evidence refers to their life in London, given by servants in their households.

One might indeed be prepared to consider it probable that Mrs. May's contention was just, and that part of the troubles of the ventures to Spain were due to the Judaism of the venturers. The Jews in Portugal had been offered the choice between conversion to Christianity and massacre. Most chose conversion. And their children were taken from their parents to be baptized and brought up as Christians. These 'Nuevos Christos' were the body from which came those Portuguese who survived to become accepted citizens in Portugal or in England, in such colonies as those at Bristol or London. They are known in Jewish history as 'Marranos'. Their formal submission to Christianity was not based upon

conviction or even acceptance, but upon expediency. Below this submission moved the strong tide of their deep-rooted, unshakeable attachment to their race and their religion. But they submitted. In 1582 I find, in the *Register of Aliens*, that in the Tower Ward of the City of London there is the record of the residence there of Bernard Lewes or Leavis, a merchant, as belonging to the Italian Church, that is, no doubt, to the Italian Reformed Church; also of a group headed by Dr. Hector Nunez and his wife, with his servants, Francis Alvares, Francis Zappia, Ferdinand Alvares, Gratia, and Elizabeth Anegro—all of them members of the English Church; that is, of the Established Church. Strong evidence was needed to establish Mrs. May's contention that they were nevertheless practising Jews. The evidence was, in fact, sufficient. Some of it was given unwillingly, I think. And it came from the employees of the members of this colony who were concerned in these transactions.

John Dingley of London, a grocer, and a servant of Leavis, did all he could for his employer. He knew Lisbon, and had stayed at Pedro Frere's house there on Leavis's business. The trouble, according to him, was the suspected English origin of the cargo. But for Leavis, nothing would have been achieved. And as for the alleged Jewish observances, there is nothing in the notion. Indeed, he and William Wilson, a fellow servant, have often attended the family to service in Fenchurch Street parish church. William Wilson himself, a cloth-worker, is less guarded, though he has much to say for the Jewish side, and for the value of the friendship of Leavis and Frere with the Marquis de Santa Cruce. The trouble came, he said, when Leavis was betrayed by a Lisbon Portuguese, who accused him of Judaism. Frere was imprisoned on similar suspicion. And Leavis was heavily blackmailed by Anthony de Viega and John Ferdinandes, who were intimate with the family in London. They knew, as every one in Lisbon knew, that Jewish ceremonies were practised regularly in London. Wilson, indeed, has seen them, and so has his son Thomas.

Thomas himself, now eighteen, was formerly a servant of

Ferdinand Alvares, but left his service two years ago, and is now apprenticed to a London wool-drawer, Thomas Whitacres. He thus left Alvares in 1594, the year of the trial and execution of Lopez. And it is difficult not to see in this action some reflection of a sense of insecurity in the mind of this young Londoner serving in a Jewish family at the time of these events. Alvares was then, I think, as he certainly was in 1598, living in Duke's Place in the parish of Creechurch, in Aldgate. With him were his wife Philippa, a widow Anne Alvarez, Alvares de Lima and his wife, his servant Thomas Wilson, two other servants, Lewis Alvarez and Grace Anegro, and several blackamoors. And they lived in the closest touch with Leavis and his two sisters and with the family of Hector Nunez, among others.

It was in this house that young Wilson saw what he described as long-standing practices which are still continued in the family. We have, in his account, a record of a Jewish household practising its observances in secret, and with a good deal of solemnity.

> They did comonly towards Easter (as their blackmores which they kept told me) light a great wax candle and sett the same in a basen with 4 white loaves about the Candle in the myddest of a great roome in Fardynandos house and that done and the window curtens spredd wold come or steale secretly into the room barefoote and there stay a certen tyme looking for Christ this being yerely at euery of their Easters which they did use to keep a week before our Easter. Also they during that tyme did make Saterday their Sunday being fyne and best apparelled on Saterdayes and wold not worke nor do any busynes on Saterdayes but contrarywise on Sunday they wold go and do as if any workeyday and the women the 4 sisters did use their godds about their necks and made sweete breadds and such things but their supersticious ceremonyes they kept as secretly as they cold from me and others that were not of their relygyon.

These practices, he continued, they still maintain, the more so

> because they have not been troubled about their Relygyon or use of superstycyous ceremonyes since they came to dwell there as they now do, where before they were constrayned to come and heare servyce at Fanchurche when they dwelt in Fan-

> church streete and this I say they used to do more that, when any there children were sicke they wold hang one of their golden godds about the childs neck what their reason or purpose was therein I know not For they prayed by themselves and used theis other ceremonyes so pryvately that I cold see little of their doings.

I know of no parallel to this intimate description of Jewish ceremonial in actual use at such an early date in England. The nearest approach to it is a description by Pepys in his *Diary* of a visit he paid to a Jewish Synagogue on October 13, 1663, when he saw a ritual for which he showed the utmost contempt. Young Wilson's observations were at second hand mainly. It is obvious that he did his best to see for himself, but the doors were closed and every precaution was taken to ensure secrecy in the celebration of these rites. But something he saw, and something he learned from the Negro servants. And his account is, in fact, reliable enough.

Wilson's evidence clearly refers to the ceremonies of the Passover, which coincides in date fairly closely with the Christian Easter. Wilson calls it 'their Easter', and dates it precisely a week before Easter. The stage is set for the ceremony in a large room in Alvares's house—a great candle burns, standing in a basin, surrounded by four white loaves, upon a table. The whole family of adults, men and women, enter the room, stealthily and barefoot, and then Wilson cannot say what follows, except that, whatever they do, the intent of their meeting there is to await the coming of the Messiah, 'looking for Christ', as Wilson put it. It is evident even to one unfamiliar with orthodox Jewish ceremonial that there is some remarkable confusion of ritual here, and I have sought learned advice in attempting to comment upon these indications.[1]

'Looking for Christ' is, of course, the inevitable interpretation by a young Christian, ignorant of the Jewish faith, of a well-known feature of the Passover festivities. For at the Passover four cups of wine are filled to the brim, and one

[1] The Rev. Dr. Adler and Dr. Rosenthal kindly allowed me to consult them in these matters.

of these cups is set aside for the prophet Elijah, for whom also the door is left open, in the expectation of his coming, as forerunner to the long-awaited Messiah. For Thomas Wilson, of course, there was no Messiah but Christ, whose second Advent had often been considered imminent in the Christian world. But the four white loaves correspond to nothing in Jewish ritual. At Passover there are three flat pieces of unleavened bread: *matzoth*. On the Sabbath Eve, on Friday nights, two white loaves are set out for the family. I can only suggest the possibility that two loaves for each of the two families, Alvares and de Lyma, were prepared in this case, and that the Sabbath ritual is here confused with the Passover. So with the 'great candle', which would seem to correspond with the memorial light, in the shape of a large candle, set burning at the Kippur ceremony in the autumn, in memory of the dead. Another element of the Kippur or Atonement Day is reflected in the 'barefoot' entry of the family into the room. For on that day no leather is worn on the feet, the ordinary practice being to use felt slippers. And it may well be that the London celebrants practised what was possibly a more ancient custom. The 'sweet breads' referred to are, of course, again a feature of the Sabbath preparations, when bread is baked with caraway seeds, and is called the *challah*. But the 'golden gods' are more difficult to reconcile with perfect orthodoxy, though they are of ancient usage. The term reflects clearly the use of amulets, called *kemeah*, in the nature of talismans, which bore the name of God, *Shaddai*, and in well-to-do families would be of gold. They were especially for the use of women, and also were placed round the necks of children after their birth, as a protection against evil, especially against sorcery and curses. They might take the form of a necklace with a locket in the shape of the star of David. The *kemeah* was possibly worn by the women on the Sabbath because adornments are permitted on the Sabbath, and it would moreover be safe to wear it on that day when they stayed within doors. They could, obviously, not be worn outside where they would cause dangerous comment and inquiry. To use them especially in

illness, as here for their children, was a natural corollary to their magic quality, which was as it were ensured further by the formal blessing imparted to them by rabbis who practised such unorthodox but ancient mysteries of the Cabbala.

The confusion of ceremonies to be noted here, together with the stressing of such practices as have no part in orthodox Judaism, might seem to point to the debasement of the true traditions of the religion. After all, it was a hundred years since the practice of Judaism had been forbidden in Portugal, and two hundred in England. During this time the Jews had been obliged either to intermit the ceremonies of their faith, or to carry them on in secret and in fear, and without the guidance of their rabbis. It is true, however, that much of the priestly office in Jewry devolves upon the head of the house, who continued to exercise his function, to the best of his memory and ability. We know, also, that the Jews in England were in constant touch with those of the Low Countries, where a flourishing synagogue existed at Antwerp. Some part of the confusion may arise out of the inadequacies of Wilson's account. It was, at all events, a strange situation for the Jewish householder in London, clinging to the faith of his fathers within the safety of his own house, yet to all outward appearance, and to official eyes, a conforming Christian—Shylock after the end of *The Merchant of Venice*.

Dr. Hector Nunez, himself a notable parishioner of the parish of St. Olave's, Hart Street, in his will proclaims himself a Jew, in words which, though not explicit, are readily understood by a fellow-Jew. Yet Nunez had for twenty-five years at least been an observing Christian in his parish-church, in which he was married in 1566, to Elenor Frere. There is not a word or phrase in the exordium to his will which is not familiar and consecrated to Jewish ears instructed in their sacred writings, or which is not expressive of their personal religion. All is a plain declaration of his adherence to his ancient faith, and in this, Nunez's last and most solemn pronouncement, there is no reference to the Christ whom he had worshipped publicly for so many years in

London. He was brother-in-law to both Ferdinand Alvarez and Bernard Leavis, and a friend of Roger Lopez. It may well be believed that the whole colony of Portuguese Jews, and not only those whose customs are here called in question, did in fact practise their true religion in secret, throughout the Tudor period. It was Hector Nunez who, in the reign of Mary, being then resident at Bristol, where a similar colony flourished, sent out to the faithful in Portugal a correct calendar of dates for the chief Jewish ceremonies. It may well seem, further, that the house in Duke's Place was something of a centre and focus for the colony and its religious celebrations, already in Shakespeare's day. No better instance of the tenacity of Jewish tradition could be found than the striking fact that at this day the chief Synagogue of London Jewry stands in Duke Street, it may be upon the very site of the secret synagogue described by Thomas Wilson. Yet the very memory of these observances in Elizabethan London has long since perished even in Jewry.

Dr. Nunez, who was born in Portugal, died in 1591, at the age of 69 or 70, and his burial is recorded in the Parish Register of St. Olave's on September 13. It is further recorded that all burial dues at St. Olave's having been paid, he was 'carried to Stepney to be buried'. So, indeed, his will directs. There lay, since 1574, his sister-in-law Grace Frere, who also had been a parishioner of St. Olave's. So with yet another of the colony, in 1572. Yet the Gentile servants of Dr. Nunez were buried in the ordinary way in St. Olave's. It might well seem that a special Jewish burial-ground had long been established at Stepney, and had been established for nearly a hundred years at least before Cromwell, in 1656, upon the re-settlement of Jews in England, granted them permission to have their own cemetery. For that cemetery was to be in Mile End, in the parish of Stepney.

It is a significant fact that we can readily find, in Parish Registers, the record of marriages and deaths of members of the Jewish colony in London. But I find no record of the baptism of any of their children there.

All the facts point to one conclusion. There was no oppression

of the Jews in Shakespeare's London, provided that they would outwardly conform to the minimum requirements of the law which governed all Englishmen in their relation to the State and to its Church, which was a part of the State, and provided that they did not flaunt their real nonconformity. There were differences in the stress laid upon conformity according to the parish concerned. St. Olave's, in Tower Ward, with its numerous body of aliens from all countries, was more tolerant than Fenchurch Street or Lombard Street in Langbourne Ward, the centre of the city's financial affairs. But there was no parallel in England to the curious and dangerous inquiries of the Holy Office in Spain, except by the odd chance of a legal inquiry such as that here described.

Full toleration, certainly, was not yet achieved. But the Jews in London had the immense comfort of communal life, undisturbed, with full freedom to carry on their trades and professions, and even the further solace of the regular practice of religious rites in the home, even if in secret. The Jewish problem was, in truth, no problem in London in the reign of Elizabeth. The Jews that London knew, and Shakespeare might have met, were not Shylocks. They were men like Nunez or Leavis or Alvares, contented, prosperous citizens, who reaped the rewards of compromise and submission to the law.

Shylock was not a Londoner, but a Jew of Venice, as indeed all must have known who saw the play.

Nor did the Court of Chancery indicate, in its execution of justice as between Portuguese Jew and English Christian, any hint of prejudice against the heretic stranger in London. On the contrary, the long series of its pronouncements, before the affair was settled, vindicates its scrupulous concern for impartial and equitable treatment of both parties. To ensure absolute fairness, it added to a committee of two London experts, charged with the duty of reporting to the Court as umpires, a foreign merchant, Dutch, Italian, or Portuguese. A great Italian merchant, in fact, served with two aldermen of London, seeking an amicable and just settlement of the

matter. In the end, not only was justice done, but the Court pressed for relief to be given beyond the limits of pure equity. For the Court, 'beinge moved with the losses and trobles which the poore Straungers indured perswaded M[rs] May being present to deale charitably with Alvares in regarde thereof', and indeed pressed Mrs. May to forego some part of her just claims. So the matter was settled with the agreement of both parties.

It was an eminently fair decision, arrived at after careful inquiry, with the help of unprejudiced expert advice, and was a credit to every one concerned. It tempered justice with mercy. The Court could not admit Mrs. May's liability for the misadventures of Leavis and Frere. But it could, and did, invoke the compassion of Mrs. May. From the Court of Chancery and its judges came the plea for mercy, the quality of which is not strained, addressing it to Mrs. May in such terms, it may be, as those in which Portia addressed Shylock. The trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice* is completely alien to the spirit in which the Court of Chancery, soon after this play was written, treated a dispute between a London citizen and an alien Jew, a known Jew, who came to seek its protection and its help, and not in vain.

C. J. Sisson.

NOTES ON TWO MANUSCRIPTS OF THOMAS GRAY

1. CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES OF GREEK HISTORY

IN December 1746 Gray wrote from Cambridge to Thomas Wharton:

> We are in the midst of Diog: Laertius and his Philosophers as a Procemium to the Series of their Works, and those of all the Poets and Orators, that lived before Philip of Macedon's death: we have made a great Chronological Table with our own Hands, the Wonder and Amazement of Mr Brown; not so much for Publick Events, tho' these too have a Column assign'd them, but rather in a literary Way, to compare the Times of all great Men, their Writeings and Transactions. it begins at the 30th Olympiad, and is already brought down to the 113th, that is 332 Years. our only Modern Assistants are Marsham, Dodwell and Bentley.

Mason, in his *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. Gray* (p. 205), after quoting part of the letter (in a garbled form and misdated by more than two years), describes the Chronological Table: 'Every page consisted of nine columns; one for the Olympiad, the next for the Archon, the third for the public affairs of Greece, the three next for the Philosophers, and the three last for Poets, Historians and Orators. I do not find it carried further than the date mentioned.'

And there knowledge of the Tables ended for eighty years after Gray's death. They do not appear in the catalogue of the sale of Gray's manuscripts in 1845; they may (as Professor W. P. Jones has suggested in his book *Thomas Gray, Scholar*) have been in a lot of 'Miscellaneous Papers', which included 'Notes on Greek Chronology'. If so, the lot was sold and the contents dispersed, for in a sale of manuscripts by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson on 19 May 1851 Lot 174 was described as follows: 'GRAY (Thomas) 11 pp. folio of Chronological Tables from the XXX to the CXXI Olympiad, in the neat and beautiful autograph of the poet. Some of the pages

are very closely written, and demonstrate the varied learning and scrupulous accuracy of the poet.' The description shows that the Tables had survived, probably in a complete form, for they covered eight Olympiads more than Gray had reached, when he first wrote to Wharton. Mason's statement: 'I do not find it carried further than the date mentioned', was therefore mistaken. Gray had written in a second letter to Wharton: 'the Chronology is growing daily.'

The description gives the scale of the Tables: 92 Olympiads (368 years) were compressed into 11 pages of foolscap paper, over 30 years to a page.

In 1933 Dr. Rosenbach sent me photographs of two pages of Tables in Gray's hand from the 73rd to the 87th Olympiad. These were obviously part of his Chronological Tables, but in a rough and incomplete form; for there are only five columns on one page and six on the other: some columns have no entries for many years and there is only one reference to any author other than philosophers. I have recently learnt that two pages of the actual Tables are in the Harvard College Library and of these I have procured a photostat which enables us to realize the scale and contents of Gray's work.

The paper measures 12½ × 8 inches, the size of the paper which Gray used in his Commonplace-book; the two pages cover the period from the third year of the 88th Olympiad to the second year of the 105th, or 36 years to a page, some few years more than the average of the Tables, as described in the sale catalogue. The handwriting is as minute as in any of Gray's writings: the letters are correctly formed, but there are passages that cannot easily be read without a magnifying glass.

The pages are divided into ten columns, not of uniform breadth, the divisions marked by dotted lines, which run vertically down the page: the first column gives the Olympiad and the victor in the stadium, the four years of the Olympiad are marked, and the next column has the Athenian Archon: two columns deal with public events, the fifth and sixth are concerned with philosophers, with the events of their lives

and references to their works, the other four with other writers, tragic and comic poets (with the dates of the production of their plays), with orators and historians.

Two specimen years are here given to illustrate Gray's plan: the third year of the 93rd Olympiad (in which there are entries in every column) and the first year of the 101st Olympiad (in which there is an error of fact connected with the battle of Tanagra, which it is unnecessary to discuss). The upright rules indicate the divisions of the columns:

XCIII Sotas Cyren: 3 | Callias. | Battle of Arginusæ. Ruin of Agrigentum. | Condemnation of the Generals. Athens deserted by all ye Allies, but Samos. | Socrates refuses to condemn the Commanders at Arginusæ. æt: 65 | Socrates' Conversation with Axiochus about now (Æschines) | Sophocles' Antigone [*Antigone struck through*] play'd now in Macedon | Sophocles dies. æt: 91. (M. Par: Dodw: ad Thucyd:) | Aristophanes' Ranæ wins the Prize from Phrynichus and Plato (Schol:) | Philistus' first History ends.

CII Damon Thurius | 1. Chariander | sive rectius Charisander. m: Sandvic: | Chabrias defeats Pollio at Naxos. Thebans subdue all Boeotia. Their Success at Tanagra. Timotheus' Victory at Alyzia. Embassy of Polydamas the Pharsalian. Timotheus at Zacynthus. | Plato in the Action near Tanagra æt: 52. (Aristox ap. Laert:) | Hippocrates dies at Larissa in Thessaly. æt. 85. | (*space blank*) | Araros: the Son of Aristophanes, writes Comedy as does Epicrates (Athen.) | Eubulus, the Comic famous (Suid:) | Hermeas of Methymna ends here his Sicilian History. (Diod:)

For some of the statements references are given to authorities, original or secondary: such references occur more frequently in other years, not in general for public events, but for the lives and works of philosophers and poets. Gray had read much Greek literature in the years before he planned the Tables: he worked through Diogenes Laertius with the Tables in view. While he was engaged on them he read Athenæus and Pausanias, and may have made additions, as there are many references to these authors. Many other writers were laid under contribution: Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, Strabo, Photius, Suidas, the Scholia to Aristophanes, the Parian Marble, and the Sandwich Marble

are all quoted. He refers to Dodwell's *Ad Thucydidem*, and he may have been indebted to Dodwell for some of his references, but it was a principle with Gray not to accept knowledge at second hand.

The Tables were made for his own purposes with no idea of publication; they were probably in constant use during the years in which he continued his studies of Greek literature.

Gray anticipated Clinton, who in his *Fasti Hellenici* combined 'Civil and Literary Chronology'. He knew of Gray's plan from Mason's *Memoirs*. 'A literary Chronology', Clinton wrote in the Preface to his second volume, 'was projected by Gray. Had the work been completed by a writer of Gray's taste, learning and accuracy, it would have undoubtedly superseded the necessity of any other undertaking of the same kind. But since no part of the compilation appears to exist, the fact of its having been designed only serves to show the need of such a work.'

Clinton's work was on a far more elaborate scale; he could not know how concisely Gray had carried out his scheme, but he did justice to Gray's qualities as a scholar.

2. GRAY'S OWN COPY OF *A LONG STORY*

A manuscript of *A Long Story* in Gray's hand, which may be regarded as his earliest version, has recently come to light. In the final sale of Mr. Penn's collections of Gray's books and manuscripts, which took place in 1854, it was sold in one lot with 'the little note written by Lady Schaub and left on Gray's table . . . also Miss Speed's complimentary letter, acknowledging the "performance"'. At one time the poem and letters were owned by Henry Labouchere (Baron Taunton, 1869). They are now in the possession of Mr. John W. Garrett, of Baltimore, whose father acquired them at a date that is not known. Mr. Garrett has kindly sent me photostats of them.

The events which led to the writing of the poem are too well known to need any detailed recital. Gray had sent the completed *Elegy* to Walpole in June 1750; 'it was', as Mason says, 'shewn about for some time in manuscript.... Amongst

the rest of the fashionable world, Lady Cobham, who now lived at the mansion-house at Stoke-Poges, had read and admired it. She wished to be acquainted with the author; accordingly her relation Miss Speed and Lady Schaub, then at her house, undertook to bring this about by making him the first visit.' The account of this visit and of Gray's visit in return is given in mock-heroic style in the poem which he wrote 'for the amusement of the ladies in question'.

Mr. Garrett's copy of the poem must have been Gray's fair copy (there is only one correction in it) written as soon as he had finished the composition. At some later time he transcribed it in his Commonplace-book. The poem was published in 1753 in the edition of Six Poems with Bentley's Designs.

Apart from differences of spelling, capital letters, and punctuation there are few variations in the texts of the two manuscripts and in the printed version. In line 91 'explain'd' of the two manuscripts becomes 'prefer'd' in print, and in line 97 for the 'Prisoner' of Gray's first copy both the transcript and the book have 'Culprit'. The most important difference is that the second stanza of the printed version is missing in Gray's first copy: in the Commonplace-book it is written in the margin of the page, with an asterisk to mark where it should be inserted. It is probable that its omission was an oversight, when Gray wrote his fair copy, and again when he first transcribed it in his Commonplace-book; it is necessary to complete the sense of the first stanza, as Gray showed in his printed version, in which there is no stop between the two stanzas.

There are greater differences in the notes: some of these in the first copy are Gray's own reflections rather than comments to explain allusions to others. Thus Mr. Purt is described as 'a Clergyman . . . who had first mentioned me to them': the note to Macleane 'hang'd last week' could only fit the time of writing, and was altered in the later versions to: 'A famous Highwayman hang'd the week before.' Macleane was executed on October 3, and the note dates the poem as written in the first half of October. Lady Schaub and Miss Speed probably paid their call in September; the

poem may have been sent to Lady Cobham about October 12 and Miss Speed's letter of acknowledgement dated 'Sunday evening' may have been written on Sunday, October 14. It is clear that the date attached to the poem in the Commonplace-book, 'August 1730', was a mistake of memory.

To the line

> Melissa is her Nom de Guerre

Gray added a note in his own copy

> She had been called by that Name in Verse before.

It is interesting to note that Gray after what must have been a brief acquaintance should have known this; it would be still more interesting to learn what other poet had celebrated the charms of Miss Speed.

LEONARD WHIBLEY.

BOSWELL'S ORIGINAL JOURNAL OF HIS TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES AND THE PRINTED VERSION[1]

I am most scrupulously exact in this Journal. Mr. Johnson said it was a very exact picture of his life.—*Boswell*, 3 Oct. 1773.

THE original manuscript of Boswell's journal of his Tour to the Hebrides, all of it, with one or two gaps, that was actually read by Johnson, survives. It was found in 1930 in a croquet box at Malahide Castle, the seat of Lord Talbot de Malahide, Boswell's descendant, and is now owned by Lt.-Col. Ralph H. Isham. The journal itself was, as is well known, printed in 1785, but by no means in its original form. It is proposed in the present paper to discuss very briefly the relationship of the original journal to the printed book and to show some of the differences between them.

Johnson and Boswell were together in Scotland in 1773 from Saturday, 14 August, late in the evening, to the morning of Monday, 22 November. During the greater part of this period Boswell kept his journal, actually from 18 August[2] to 26 October. Up to 22 October the journal was written at the time;[3] the entries for 22 to 26 October were written some

[1] This paper was based on a typescript copy of the journal courteously supplied to me by Professor F. A. Pottle and Dr. C. H. Bennett. The journal has now been edited by these scholars and published by Messrs. Heinemann under the title: '*Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* Now First Published from the Original Manuscript. Prepared for the Press, with Preface and Notes by Frederick A. Pottle and Charles H. Bennett. London: William Heinemann, Ltd. 1936.' I am greatly indebted to the editors and publishers for their generous permission to reproduce the numerous quotations.

[2] Boswell made rough notes for the previous four days on loose sheets, which have survived. He started to write his journal in a notebook on 18 August, but did not begin to keep a 'regular full journal' till 21 August. See Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., pp. vii, 32 n. 1, and 56 n. 9, Boswell's *Hebrides*, 14 August (ed. Chapman, 1924, p. 174), and *Boswell Papers*, vi, pp. 174 ff.

[3] Under the date 20 September Boswell notes: 'This day (half an

years later, in 1779, 1780, and 1782, apparently from rough notes made at the time.[1] The record of the remaining days of the tour was not compiled till 1785, when Boswell was preparing his journal for publication.

The original journal was read by Johnson, and not only read, but commended and corrected. Boswell's statements of Johnson's reading are as follows:

> 18 August: 'My Journal, from this day inclusive, was read by Dr. Johnson.'[2]
>
> 19 September. 'He came to my room this morning before breakfast to read my Journal, which he has done all along. He often before said, "I take great delight in reading it". Today he said, "You improve: It grows better and better". I said there was a danger of my getting a habit of writing in a slovenly manner. "Sir", said he, "it is not written in a slovenly manner. It might be printed, were the subject fit for printing."'[3]
>
> 27 September. 'He read tonight, as he sat in the company, a great deal of this volume of my Journal, and said to me, "The more I read of this, I think the more highly of you".'[4]
>
> 12 October. 'He read a good deal of my Journal in the little book which I had from him, and was pleased; for he said, "I wish thy books were twice as big". He helped me to supply blanks which I had left in first writing it, when I was not quite sure of what he had said; and he corrected any mistakes that I had made.'[5]
>
> 26 October. 'Having mentioned more than once, that my

hour past three) I have brought up my Journal to a minute, at least to this very forenoon'; but he was not always so up-to-date: the record for 9 September was not posted till the 15th of the month. Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., pp. 193 and 135.

[1] At the beginning of the entry for 22 October Boswell noted 'Here I begin in 1779', but he wrote no more than a page and did not complete the entry till 23 August 1780; the entries for 23 to 26 October were not posted till 23, 24, and 27 August 1782. Ibid., pp. 345 n. 1, 346, 347, 349, and 356 n. 6. See also p. vii.

[2] Note written in 1785 at the end of the day's record.

[3] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 188. See also p. 193.

[4] Ibid., p. 226. The original journal was written in two large notebooks and one small one; the latter was supplied by Johnson in Coll.

[5] Ibid., p. 293.

Journal was perused by Dr. Johnson, I think it proper to inform my readers that this is the last paragraph which he read.'[1]

References to Boswell's journal in Johnson's letters from Scotland to Mrs. Thrale are very few, but there is one of importance:

> 'I keep a book of remarks, and Boswell writes a regular journal of our travels, which, I think, contains as much of what I say and do as of all other occurrences together: "for such a faithful chronicler as Griffith".'[2]

Boswell read the greater part of his manuscript to two friends, one of whom was Dr. Hugh Blair, on 21 February 1785, and fortified by their opinion that 'it might be printed with little variation' resolved to set himself down quietly in London and get the work executed easily.[3] He arrived in London on 30 March and after a month's dissipation settled down to work. He undertook little research; but his revision was thorough, and he had the skilled assistance of one of the ablest critics of the eighteenth century, Edmond Malone. The story that Boswell first met Malone over the proof-sheets of this book was, in 1924, shown by Prof. C. B. Tinker to be false.[4] When we remember that the book was dedicated to Malone, it is astonishing that it should ever have been believed; moreover, Boswell in the Dedication says that Malone took the trouble to peruse the 'original manuscript'. We now know that the original manuscript was revised by Malone; a very large number of the corrections and additions are, so Professor Pottle informs me, in his hand; and it was in his house, unless I am greatly mistaken, that most of the editing was done.[5]

[1] Given in 1785 in a note to the second paragraph of the entry for 26 October. The surviving manuscript of the original journal ends with this paragraph.

[2] In the long letter begun on 30 September and finished on 3 October. *Letters*, No. 329 (ed. Hill, i. 271). Boswell made very good use of this felicitous quotation: see *Life*, i. 24.

[3] *Boswell Papers*, ed. Pottle, xvi, p. 70.

[4] *Letters of Boswell*, 1924, ii. 349, n. 3. It was first told by Boswell's second son, James, in 1813. *Gent. Mag.* 1813, i. 518.

[5] The evidence is supplied by Boswell himself in his diary. Two

Boswell in a note, printed in the first edition, apologizing for the brevity of his record of a particular conversation, makes the following statement:

> As I have resolved that *the very Journal which Dr. Johnson read*, shall be presented to the publick, I will not expand the text to any considerable degree, though I may occasionally supply a word to complete the sense, as I fill up the blanks of abbreviation in the writing.[1]

This is not, and was not, I think, intended to be a full explanation of his editorial method; but the emphasis laid on the words italicized is misleading. A collation of the 'very Journal which Dr. Johnson read' and the version of it which was 'presented to the publick' will show the nature and extent of the difference between them.

It must first be stated that the original journal, although it does not cover the whole of the tour, is about one-fifth longer than the printed version. The original arrangement is generally preserved, but Boswell sometimes in the printed book rearranges his material, e.g. the particulars of Prince Charles's adventures, which are collected from three different places.

That Boswell should polish the diction of a journal written in such exciting circumstances, and sometimes in the distracting company of the ladies,[2] can well be understood. Single words and phrases are freely altered throughout. A few examples of the different types will suffice. 'Excursions' replaces 'agreeable schemes of curiosity' and Johnson's conversation from being 'majestick' becomes 'energetick'; Sir Alexander Gordon is more politely designated a 'quiet benevolent man' than a 'worthy harmless man'; Boswell

quotations will suffice: 'The press had stopped for want of copy, went to Malone and brought forward some' (11 July 1785); and 'Malone devoted the whole of this day to me, that we might get forward with my "Tour". I breakfasted, dined, drank tea, and supt with him, and sat till near two in the morning' (11 Aug. 1785). See *Boswell Papers*, ed. Pottle, xvi. 110 and 119. See also Prof. Pottle's description of the manuscript in *Papers of the Bibl. Soc. of America*, 1933, xxvii, pt. ii, 69.

[1] *Hebrides*, 21 Aug. (1924), p. 208 n.

[2] 'By degrees I accustomed the ladies to let me sit at my Journal, and not mind me' (28 Sept.). Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 227.

preferred to appear before the public as 'a civil decent young man' than as 'a gentle mild-looking youth'. Scotticisms or colloquialisms are corrected:[1] 'a grave, worthy [worthylike] clergyman'; 'I employed [put off] a part of the forenoon in writing [bringing up] this Journal'; 'we had a dram of excellent brandy served [filled] round'; and 'Goldsmith was excessively [prodigiously] hurt by [with] this'.

There are scores of alterations of this kind; they are, of course, quite legitimate. But Boswell did more than this: he altered, and altered freely, the words of others, including Johnson. The landlord of Ellon's description of Johnson is famous: 'They say he is the greatest man in England, except Lord Mansfield.' Johnson's comment as printed in 1785 is: 'I like the exception: to have called me the greatest man in England, would have been an unmeaning compliment: but the exception marked that the praise was in earnest; and, in Scotland, the exception must be Lord Mansfield, or—Sir John Pringle.'[2] There is certainly the true Johnsonian ring in this, but we cannot be certain that it is entirely Johnson's. The journal records merely: 'He said he liked the exception, for that in Scotland must be Lord Mansfield or Sir John Pringle.'[3]

Boswell sometimes in his revision makes Johnson speak in a more elevated style than he did in his original report. 'Suppose that flattery to be true, the world has nothing to say to a man' becomes 'Suppose that flattery to be true, the consequence would be, that the world would have no right to censure a man';[4] and 'Swift tells that Stella had a trick, which she learnt from Addison, to encourage a very absurd man in absurdity, rather than strive to pull him out of it' is altered to 'Swift tells, that Stella had a trick, which she learned from Addison, of encouraging a man in absurdity,

[1] The rejected words are given in brackets.

[2] *Hebrides*, 24 August, ed. 1924, p. 220.

[3] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 69. It should be mentioned that Boswell very frequently changes reported speech into direct speech and in doing so often introduces alterations not demanded by grammar.

[4] Ibid., p. 192; *Hebrides*, 20 Sept., ed. 1924, p. 314.

instead of endeavouring to extricate him'.[1] Sometimes Boswell softened a harsh saying out of kindness to Johnson's victim. In the *Tour* he wrote 'Dr. Johnson is often too hard on our friend Mr. Garrick. When I asked him, why he did not mention him in the Preface to his Shakspeare, he said, "Garrick has been liberally paid for any thing he has done for Shakspeare"': what Johnson really said was 'Garrick has been liberally paid for mouthing Shakspeare'.[2] The word or the phrase written at the time, or shortly after, it was uttered is much more likely to be authentic than one substituted for it twelve years later. Boswell himself insisted that 'no man's memory can preserve facts or sayings with such fidelity as may be done by writing them down when they are recent'.[3]

In the note previously quoted[4] Boswell asserts that he 'will not expand the text to any considerable degree'. His expansions are neither numerous nor extensive. There is no mention in the original journal of Boswell's remarks on the difficulty of uniting 'a due attention to this world and that which is to come' and Johnson's apt quotation of Dr. Cheyne's rule on the problem.[5] The sentence with which Johnson is made to conclude the account of his rapidity of composition, 'I have also written six sheets in a day of a translation from the French', was almost certainly uttered in 1781 and not in 1773.[6]

Boswell's omissions are very numerous. His original journal is extremely full and detailed—he was forbidden by Johnson to contract it—and when he came to prepare it for the printer it had to be severely pruned. I note, for instance, that the details of the fare at the numerous and abundant meals to which the travellers were invited by their hospitable hosts are invariably deleted. At Corrichatachin they 'had for supper a large dish of minced beef collops, a large dish of

[1] *Hebrides*, 23 Sept., ed. 1924, p. 322; Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 206.

[2] *Hebrides*, p. 323; Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 207.

[3] Ibid., 11 Nov., ed. 1924, p. 426. See also App. No. 1, p. 446.

[4] *Ante*, p. 61.

[5] *Hebrides*, 5 Sept., ed. 1924, p. 259.

[6] Ibid., 19 Aug., p. 201; *Life*, iv. 127, 494; *Boswell Papers*, xiv. 244.

fricassee of fowl, I believe a dish called fried chicken . . ., a dish of ham or tongue, some excellent haddocks, some herrings, a large bowl of rich milk, frothed, as good a bread-pudding as I ever tasted, full of raisins and lemon or orange peel, and sillabubs made with port wine': this was reduced in the printed version to the single sentence 'we here enjoyed the comfort of a table plentifully furnished'.[1]

The journal was also written with great freedom and many passages were suppressed entirely or greatly modified. Some of these dealt with the simplicity of manners or the primitive conditions in the Hebrides, some related the weaknesses of people still living or contained Johnson's strictures on them,[2] others were of no great interest or were inappropriate to Boswell's purpose.[3] Many of the suppressed passages relate to Boswell himself. There is, for instance, in the published *Tour* no mention of a gruesome experience, which impressed Boswell 'with a degree of gloom', suffered when the travellers drove over the very heath where Macbeth met the witches,[4] or of the real state of Boswell's mind on the crossing from Mull to Iona: 'I yielded so much to fear as to ask if it would not be better that we should go ashore for that night on Mull and cross the Sound in the morning with daylight. Sir Allan [MacLean] was for going on. Mr Johnson said, "I suppose Sir Allan, who knows, thinks there is no danger". "No, sir", said Sir Allan. Mr. Johnson was satisfied. I therefore had nothing to say, but keep myself calm . . . I put up a petition to GOD to make the waves more still.'[5] In the *Tour* Boswell was content to describe the sail as 'tedious'.[6] Another relation which Boswell greatly modified was the story of his own

[1] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 120; *Hebrides*, 6 Sept., ed. 1924, p. 261.

[2] At the end of his *Tour* Boswell wrote: 'I think it proper to say, that I have suppressed every thing which I thought could *really* hurt any one now living.' Ed. 1924, p. 442.

[3] Professor Pottle and Dr. Bennett point out (op. cit., p. x) that Boswell's 'topographical observations were generally deleted, since Johnson had published a topographical account, and Boswell . . . was sceptical as to his powers of "expressing visible objects"'.

[4] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 84.

[5] Ibid., p. 330.

[6] *Hebrides*, 19 Oct., ed. 1924, p. 385.

discomfiture when Johnson, talking *ex cathedra* of keeping a seraglio, caused him, as we are told in the *Tour*, to be the object of 'a variety of degrading images'. We now know exactly what happened, but not all that was said: 'To hear Mr. Johnson, while sitting solemn in arm-chair, talk of his keeping a seraglio and saying too, "I have *often* thought", was truly curious. Mr. Macqueen asked him if he would admit me. "Yes", said he, "if he were properly prepared; and he'd make a very good eunuch. He'd be a fine gay animal. He'd do his part well." "I take it", said I, "better than you would do your part." Though he treats his friends with uncommon freedom, he does not like a return. He seemed to me to be a little angry. He got off from my joke by saying, "I have not told you what was to be my part"—and then at once he returned to my office as eunuch and expatiated upon it with such fluency that it really hurt me. He made me quite contemptible for the moment. Luckily the company did not take it so clearly as I did. . . . But I am of firmer metal than Langton and can stand a rub better.' In the published account of the incident Boswell says: 'Though I can bear such attacks as well as most men, I yet found myself so much the sport of all the company, that I would gladly expunge from my mind every trace of this severe retort.'[1] It is remarkable that he allowed so much of the story to appear in print.

The *Tour* does not contain so many anonymous personages as the *Life*; but there are a number: the original journal generally discloses their identity. At Raasay 'one of our company', Boswell was told, 'had hurt himself by too much study'. This over-studious gentleman was none other than the Laird of Mackinnon:

> The Laird of Mackinnon was a young man of small size, delicate constitution, feebleness of voice and nearness of sight, but I was told had great knowledge, and hurt himself by too

[1] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., pp. 176–7. *Hebrides*, 16 Sept., ed. 1924, p. 304. It is not certain that Johnson read this passage as Boswell 'heavily inked it over in a style quite different from that of his deletions for the printer'.

much study, particularly of infidel metaphysicians. . . . It was strangely offensive to hear infidelity from a Highland chief. It was like finding him toupé'd and essenced like a French fop. I was sorry for the young gentleman, who I heard was a worthy lad.[1]

Another Highlander who did not reach Boswell's ideal of chieftainship was the young Laird of Coll, one of the most attractive characters of the *Tour,* to whom Johnson was prepared to erect a statue. Boswell's private account of him is:

> It was very agreeable, as we went along, to see all the people come from their work and shake hands with the young Laird. Mr. Johnson wished that he had more conversation than that of a mere farmer; and indeed he seemed to be just a young country lad who had been a while in England. He had worked there with his own hands, while he lived at farmers' houses in Hertfordshire, in order to learn to improve his maternal acres . . . Mr. Johnson said that was like the Czar of Muscovy. By this, however, his manners were not those of a chieftain in point of dignity. But if he had not reverence from his people, he had their affection. I could find no traces of learning about him; though he had been educated under the care of his uncle, the professor at Aberdeen.[2]

Unlike his uncle's colleagues of Aberdeen he had no awe of Johnson.

> He . . . was not afraid to talk to Mr. Johnson; informed him as to many particulars, and stuck to his point when Mr. Johnson opposed what he said, until very handsomely driven off. With all this he had as much civility as could be wished, and very great attention to have everything right about Mr. Johnson.[3]

But the Highland chief who caused the revisers the greatest trouble was Sir Alexander Macdonald.

The story of Johnson's and Boswell's visit to Sir Alexander Macdonald at Armadale in Skye is not a pleasant one; much that is new has been told by Professor Pottle in his edition of the *Boswell Papers,*[4] much more is revealed by this journal. The following passages, of which there is no trace in the pub-

[1] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 136.
[2] Ibid., p. 258.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Vol. xvi, pp. 219 ff.

lished *Tour*, show the nature of the reception given to the visitors and their opinion of it. Whether the inadequacy of the one justified the violence of the other is a question which I do not propose to answer. In the first edition of the *Tour* there is the following passage, one of three cancelled by Boswell as 'passing the bounds of a strict decorum': 'Instead of finding the head of the Macdonalds surrounded with his clan, and a festive entertainment, we had a small company, and cannot boast of our cheer. The particulars are minuted in my Journal.'[1] Here are some of the particulars:

> The house is a very good tenant's house, having two storeys and garrets, but seemed very poor for a chief. Mr. Johnson and I were to have had but one room. But I made the plan be altered. . . . We had an ill-dressed dinner, Sir Alexander not having a cook of any kind from Edinburgh. I alone drank port wine. No claret appeared. We had indeed mountain and Frontignac and Scotch porter. But except what I did myself, there was no hospitable convivial intercourse, no ringing of glasses. . . . There was no wheat-loaf, but only a kind of bannock or cake, raw in the head as it was so thick. Sir Alexander himself drank punch without souring and with little spirits in it, which he distributed to those men who were accustomed even in their own houses to much better. He gave it with a pewter dividing-spoon which had served the broth. At tea there were few cups and no tea-tongs nor a supernumerary tea-spoon, so we used our fingers. I was quite hurt with the meanness and unsuitable appearance of everything. I meditated setting out the very next day. . . . When Mr. Johnson and I retired for rest, he said it grieved him to see the chief of a great clan in such a state; that he was just as one in a lodging-house in London. However, he resolved that we should weather it out till Monday.[2]

On the next day, Friday, 3 September, Boswell noted:

> Sir Alexander's piper plays below stairs both at breakfast and dinner, which is the only circumstance of a chief to be found about him.[3]

Dr. Chapman, many years before it was known that the original journal had survived, divined that the entries in the

[1] *Hebrides*, 2 Sept. 1785, p. 165; ed. 1924, p. 482.

[2] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., pp. 114–15.

[3] Ibid., p. 115.

Tour for this day and the next were 'full of possibilities'.[1] It was in fact on the first of these days that the storm broke:

> After dinner the Knight and I met in Mr. Johnson's room, where I was looking for pen and ink. I fell upon him with perhaps too great violence upon his behaviour to his people; on the meanness of his appearance here; upon my lady's neither having a maid, nor being dressed better than one. In short, I gave him a volley. He was thrown into a violent passion; said he could not bear it; called in my lady and complained to her, at the same time defending himself with considerable plausibility. Had he been a man of more mind, he and I must have had a quarrel for life. But I knew he would soon come to himself.[2]

He did—the very next day, 4 September. Boswell records:

> Sir Alexander was in my room before I got up, with a bowl of buttermilk, of which I drank. Our quarrel was already evanished.[3]

But Boswell could not leave his host alone. He continues: 'I set Mr. Johnson upon him this morning, who said that in seven years he would make this an independent island. . . .' In the published account he says: 'we attempted in vain to communicate to him a portion of our enthusiasm. He bore with so polite a good-nature our warm, and what some might call Gothick, expostulations, on this subject, that I should not forgive myself, were I to record all that Dr. Johnson's ardour led him to say.'[4] This is what he did record: 'It was in vain to try to inspirit him. Mr. Johnson said, "Sir, we shall make nothing of him. He has no more ideas of a chief than an attorney who has twenty houses in a street and considers how much he can make of them. All is wrong. He has nothing to say to the people when they come about him".'[5]

Lady Macdonald, formerly Miss Bosville, with whom Boswell had fancied himself in love, did not escape: 'Indeed, I was quite disgusted with her nothingness and insipidity. Mr. Johnson said, "This woman would sink a ninety-gun ship. She is so dull—so heavy".'[6]

[1] *Hebrides*, 1924, p. 483. [2] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 116.
[3] Ibid., p. 117. [4] Ibid., cf. also *Hebrides*, 4 Sept., ed. 1924, p. 256.
[5] Pottle and Bennett, ed. 1924, p. 117. [6] Ibid.

Throughout the rest of the tour Boswell never missed an opportunity of speaking slightingly or abusively of Sir Alexander. At Corrichatachin he remarked: 'I observed to Mr. Johnson that if Sir Alexander was a fierce barbarian, there might be something grand in observing his ravages; but that so much mischief should be produced by such an insect, really vexed one.'[1]

The changes that Boswell made or sanctioned in his journal were, it will be seen, numerous and extensive: they were necessary, expedient, and, I think, generally justifiable: they were made with great skill and judgement; the resultant work was certainly a conspicuous success. The original journal is a document, a very valuable document, that should be consulted and studied: the *Tour to the Hebrides* is a book that will be read.

L. F. POWELL.

[1] Pottle and Bennett, op. cit., p. 125.

THE TECHNIQUE OF CRITICISM: CLASSICAL

I

ON September 16, 1762, Captain Gibbon of the South Hants Grenadiers—*falces conflamus in enses*—started his verbs in μι and his first chapter of Longinus. Loitering on the way to read the *Ciceronianus* of Erasmus, by October 11 he had reached Chapter IX, on which he enters this judgement in his journal:

> Till now, I was acquainted only with two ways of criticizing a beautiful passage: the one, to show by an exact anatomy of it, the distinct beauties of it and whence they spring; the other an idle exclamation or a general encomium, which leaves nothing behind it. Longinus has shewn me that there is a third. He tells me his own feelings upon reading it; and tells them with such energy that he communicates them.

Generalize this pronouncement, or extend it from passages to books, and you have an excellent instruction to critics. We do not want idle exclamation. We do want exact anatomy, and when, by your anatomy, you have secured our confidence in your professional skill, then we shall be very glad to know your feelings on the whole matter. But not before.

Something lately set me reading Lysias, and I went on to see what Dionysius of Halicarnassus had to say about him. I do not mean to match Dionysius against Longinus, or to weigh their gifts in the balance. But the *Judicium de Lysia* is certainly an admirable example of professional competence in the critical field. If you read it first, you would know exactly what to expect in the author. If you read Lysias first, you would find in Dionysius your own general view articulated, and your appreciation clarified, and grounded on precise observation.

Dionysius has a practical object in view. He is thinking of pupils going out into a world when they will have to appear in courts, draft letters from one city to another, or

petitions to the Roman Senate, and deliver addresses of welcome to Caesar or his legates. If otherwise inclined, they may compose philosophic diatribes, or write on history or public affairs. And Dionysius wishes them to make a good figure in the world: to write and speak in a way which will approve itself to the cultivated but masculine taste of the Roman authorities, and the governing class which modelled itself on Rome, the

> *δυναστεύοντες, κατ' ἀρέτην καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ κρατίστου τὰ κοῖνα διοικοῦντες, εὐπαιδευτοὶ πάνυ καὶ γενναῖοι τὰς κρίσεις γενόμενοι.*

Therefore, in considering the several excellences of Lysias, or what, as he says, 'is to be got from him', he places first his *καθαρὰ διάλεκτος*: the purity of his idiom. Atticism is returning, victorious over Asia, and of Attic speech and manner Lysias is the canon, the exemplar and master in one.

II

Like most people who read or write at all seriously, I am somewhat concerned with the poor quality of much of our current criticism, especially that part of it called reviewing. I apply the Dionysian standard: and, too often, if I read the the review first, it does not tell me what I shall find in the book: if I have read the book, the review rarely helps me to crystallize my own judgement on it. The reason, I believe, is that we have no technique of criticism, no orderly mode of approach. We do not know where to start. A civil servant is taught how to handle an incoming letter: he must master the contents, examine the precedents, consider the statutes or regulations in the case, and, having collected all the relevant information, he has to lay the result in the most intelligible form before his superior officer. But where is the reviewer to begin?

A stranger comes into your room. What you notice first about him is his face and his voice: later you learn his purpose in coming, you gather his interests, you make a provisional judgement on his character. Of a writer, Dionysius would say, you must begin with the diction: and you must

start with a canon, from which, as it were, to set off his personal habit of writing. Of course, the ancient critics had in some ways an easier task than we, because they were writing when the epoch of creation was over, and the books were set. Yet in every age there is, even in a language which is still growing and changing, a canon of speech which might be illustrated, if not defined, in this way. A foreign diplomat, looking forward to a long residence in England, does not aspire to be an English stylist, and does not wish to disguise his origin. He merely wants to be right; to speak such English as educated Englishmen speak without thinking about it. Only when he has mastered this idiom is he able to see if a speaker is being, let us say, eloquent, ironic, pungent: or merely inflated, facetious, aggressive; and only then can he afford to venture on pungency, irony, or eloquence himself.

I wish at this point to guard against a misunderstanding. I am not suggesting that all books should be written in the common speech of educated men, a topic on which I have elsewhere said my say. I regard that speech rather as a datum, above which the writer may raise himself if the theme and his mood require; but below which he is forbidden to fall: and to my ear, its outstanding characteristics are two: a careful observance of the distinction between the language appropriate to general, and to special, discourse; and a not less careful avoidance of phrasing which will attract attention to itself by any quality except that which Dionysius knows as *καιρός*, appropriateness to the thought and the occasion. Jargon on one side, and deliberate phrase-making on the other, are proofs that the writer has not the Courtly and Illustrious Vernacular at command, that he cannot make his language subserve his thought, and so must let his words take charge.

The other day, for example, I noticed in a critical journal a review which opened:

> The drab futility of the machine age is implementing a very understandable reaction towards a more human and colourful ideology.

Clearly the writer had not the vernacular, or he would have known that 'implementing reactions' and 'colourful ideo-

logies' have no place in serious speech. They require the satiric inflexion; they are to be delivered with the tongue in the cheek. Translated into English the sentence might run thus:

> One can well understand that people who have to lead a rather mechanical and featureless life will let their fancy stray towards the Middle Ages, where everything seems so highly coloured and personal.

That is not a good sentence. Neither is it a bad sentence. It is just the ordinary unnoticeable English, out of which literary prose has to be made.

III

And here I ask, are our universities doing all they can to foster and inculcate this vernacular? Of the two infections, phrase-making is the less mischievous: words do go to the head, and no one minds young people flinging up their heels a bit when they are first let loose in the fields of literature. Jargon is more offensive and more insidious: whenever I see the word *emotive* in a review, I pass on to the next: it brings with it a whiff of the laboratory, disflavouring the entertainment. But I have sometimes played with the notion of a Guild of Reviewers, serving a turn of apprenticeship to their craft, and only allowed to sign their criticisms when they were out of their time. One would naturally turn to the universities to staff the profession. But could they? I ask, not knowing the answer. If they can, I wish they would. If they can't, must there not be something wrong? And that there is something wrong, I infer from the despairing cries which sometimes reach my ears from editors. 'I know it is badly done, but you can hardly find any one under thirty to do it properly.' Well, if you couldn't find any one under thirty to draft a dispatch or write a minute, our Public Administration would be in a bad way.

I return to Dionysius and his δυναστεύοντες. The vernacular of which I am speaking is the language of responsibility, of men who—Dionysius uses almost the exact phrase—'make a conscience of their work'. And with this clue between our

fingers the way may be easier to find. The critic who feels his responsibility towards his readers will begin by familiarizing himself, as it were, with the author's voice: observing his vocabulary, his imagery, his cadences: noting when, and why, in what directions and with what success, he departs from the standard, the language of educated conversation: whether, for example, to use an excellent distinction of Dionysius, he can raise himself and his subject in pure prose or whether 'he has to lay hold of the poetic apparatus'. And I do not see how any young critic is to achieve this kind of discrimination, without a previous knowledge of what the vernacular is—how it sounds in the mouths of people who use it, not for literary purposes, but in the ordinary course of the day's work.

If a young man asked me how he could best form his style and train his literary judgement, I should say: 'Avoid literary groups: shun "criticasteries". Talk as much as you can to educated women older than yourself: and listen, whenever you have a chance, to men whose profession requires them to use common words exactly—officers, civil servants, lawyers—talking about common things.' Two of the aptest remarks on books I have ever heard were dropped casually, *obiter*, in any but literary circles. Of a much recommended history, a lady said: 'It is the sort of thing you can read with the gramophone on.' And it was! Across a dinner-table I heard a magistrate remark to his neighbour: 'Extraordinarily unworth reading, but quite good of its kind', and how well one knows that kind of book too. And a doctor, whom I consulted as to the management of my voice before a lecture, used a phrase which Aristotle might have borrowed for the *Rhetoric*. 'It is very important', he said, 'to watch the rate of cerebral percolation in an audience.'

IV

In fact the fundamental presupposition of classical criticism is that literature is a communal affair: that, in prose at least, great writers are only doing with exemplary skill what we are all necessarily doing all the time, in the way of argu-

ment, explanation, narrative, or persuasion. Of course, the skill may be so exquisite as to have a kind of autonomous beauty, a projection of the delight, and (as Longinus finely and profoundly suggests) of the pride, which we all feel at the sight of a faultless performance. This the great classical writers have always recognized as heartily as the romantics: no one more amply than Dionysius himself in his praise of the χάρις of Lysias. But they would say, I think: in criticism this is the last refinement—to appreciate the ἐπιγιγόμενόν τι of style. You must not try to short-circuit it: and you can only earn the right to say O Altitudo! by practising yourself among the lower crags. Otherwise, you may point and you may declaim; you may lose yourself in general exclamations; you may feel and perhaps make others feel. But you will never understand and therefore you will never make others see.

In other words, classical criticism is a form of public service—and therefore always veering towards rules and regulations and red tape: that is its weakness—while romantic criticism is rather a private indulgence—with its moments doubtless of inspiration and rapture, such as are believed sometimes to follow on indulgence of another sort. The classical critic is didactic: he wishes to raise the common level of appreciation, to make better readers, better writers, better speakers. Therefore he must be methodical, working inward from without. It is not his business to expatiate on the result, but to show how it was brought about, because by studying that you may be able to produce something like the same result yourself. You have, he says, the same means at your disposal as the great writers had: words and phrases and the syntax of your native speech. See what they made of them. You take delight in the product? Then take some pains to observe the process.

It is most characteristic of the classical approach that Dionysius, having disposed of the diction of his author, proceeds first, among his remaining excellences, to his lucidity, his self-explanatory clarity of thought and language. Underlying his praise is the same antique conception of literature,

and particularly of oratory, as something ἐν κοινῷ κείμενον, your business and mine as much as the speaker's, because we are the audience before whom he is pleading. It is we who are to be persuaded, instructed, or convinced, and first of all therefore we must know exactly what he is talking about. But here the greater range of modern literature, and its specialisms, impose caution on a critic. That a book, a paragraph, a sentence, does not yield its whole meaning at once, does not prove that it is obscure, or the writer confused in mind. He may, of course, have an imperfect mastery of his instrument. On the other hand, it is quite possible that his point of view is novel, his ideas still unfamiliar, and the critic, like the rest of the public, has not yet picked up the tune. Of all charges that can be brought against a contemporary, the charge of obscurity or difficulty is the one which I should feel most hesitation in advancing. But on the obscurity which comes of affectation, pretentiousness, or negligence, the classical critic will have no mercy: and when he reads, for instance, in Carlyle, that Goethe's *Helena* is

> not a type of one thing, but a vague fluctuating fitful adumbration of many

he will reply with Matthew Arnold—then it must be thoroughly bad.

V

But here I think I could make a distinction which the ancients, when our circumstances had been explained to them, would have approved. I should say: 'You recognized the difference between the esoteric and the exoteric discourse in your philosophic schools; we have to enlarge and subdivide it. We have among us three orders of intelligence which may be called without offence, the High, the Middle, and the Low Brow. And so great is the number of subjects which we may study, that almost every man of any intelligence and curiosity will be High, Middle, or Low in some of them. Your notion of lucidity therefore has with us to be further refined: and the critic must say to himself, not, is this clear? (and you yourself, my dear Dionysius, confess that

you could not follow Thucydides without a commentary) but —is it clear at the level for which it was written? Because at each of these levels, a book may be good, bad, or indifferent.'

'That I follow,' the man from Halicarnassus replied: 'in fact, it rather resembles the distinction we used to make between the agonistic speech, intended to secure a positive result, where the reasoning must be close and the facts compactly arrayed; the panegyric, where large assemblies are to be moved; and the epideictic, like those pieces which Lysias wrote for fun and over which Plato chose to be so cattish. But are you not laying a somewhat heavy burden on your critics if you require them to tell you whether a book is good, bad, or indifferent in point of substance and in its own kind? Are they all omniscient? Or do you arrange it so that only historians criticize historians, philosophers philosophers, and so on through the Encyclopedia? And have you not a division in your libraries, prettily called Belles Lettres? Who criticizes that? I have heard all about your specialist, or esoteric, publications, in which experts claw experts, scholiasts scholiasts, on dates, and readings, and equations. But we are talking of criticism addressed to the public. How is that managed with you?'

I should like to answer somehow thus: 'It is with us a fixed principle that, confronted with a new book, the critic should ask himself, "Do I know enough about the subject to place this book in its right category? And to say whether, within its class, it is good, bad, or middling?" If he cannot answer yes, he must refer it to some better equipped brother in the craft, who in turn will ask himself for which of the three orders is it written? Having thus adjusted himself, and mastered the personal idiom of the writer, he proceeds in your manner to consider first of all whether he writes well or ill with regard to the matter in hand: and then, whether the work as a whole is lucid, well reasoned, compact, and free from superfluous or inactive matter. These you have taught us to regard as the fundamental excellences, and from these he might go on as you would, to consider

whether, for example, the writing has a more pictorial or mathematical quality, whether the narrative is fluent or abrupt, the characters clearly blocked out or minutely particularized. And so forth. But all the time he will have in mind an imaginary friend who has strolled into the workshop, picked up a book and asked: Is this book for me? His duty is to answer that question as fairly as he can; neither obtruding himself, his likes, his dislikes, or his opinions on other matters; nor leaving his friend in any doubt of the meaning of his answer. That', I should say, 'is how our young critics are trained. Later, when they have learned the method of their art, they are allowed to cross swords with the author, to challenge his views, to point out his errors. Only we scrupulously observe the distinction between a critic and a scholiast: and unless the error is one of substance, or indicates some persistent weakness in the writer against which the reader ought to be warned, we usually prefer to pass it unnoticed.'

'What use', he asked, 'do you make of quotations? I have some interest in the question, because I earned the gratitude of posterity by quoting in full one ode of Sappho which would otherwise have been lost.'

'We hold', I said, 'that quotations are essential to good criticism, and serve two purposes. They illustrate the critics' decisions, and therefore they should be of three kinds: one to display the writer's average manner, his base-line, as it were: one to show him at his characteristic best: and one to illustrate his weaknesses. Besides which, they give the reader an opportunity of testing the critic's judgement, and setting his own against it. As you yourself used to say: "I have given my opinion; if any one thinks otherwise let him say so."'

G. M. Young.

VARIATIONS OF FORM IN THE NOVEL

IT is sometimes argued, nowadays, when the matter seems important, that one cannot be a 'first-class' novelist, writing 'first-class' novels, unless one is for ever experimenting in a technical mystery called 'form'. Well, I cannot hope to attain 'first-classness' by this or any other method; but I sometimes wonder whether those who so argue are not special pleaders, using a verbal facility which conceals great inexperience. They seem to me to regard 'art', 'form', and 'technique' as synonymous terms; originality and ingenuity as identical; and 'first-classness' as a specific quality which can be isolated by analysis. If I am right, all these assumptions are distressingly wrong.

Fortunately the novel is the last sort of literary performance to be ruled by dilettanti, for it is alive; and its form, in the correct meaning of that word, is the least susceptible to authoritarian influence. It began as a narrative entertainment the interest of which was nourished by successive roughly associated inventions; it became important as soon as it subordinated invention to character and emotion; and it has proved itself, ever since, elastic and capacious enough to hold all that mankind has yet discovered about human nature. I hope I shall not be thought disagreeable if I suggest that those who suppose otherwise have not been of late or at any time persistent novel-readers. I believe them to be unacquainted with the resources of the craft they discuss.

The form of the novel, in my view, has not materially changed since the days of Samuel Richardson, who may be said to have invented the novel as we know it. But naturally its taste and its ingredients and their arrangement have fallen, and are still delightfully falling, into the most varied kaleidoscopic patterns. Having become, in the hands of Richardson, extremely intimate in its description of amorous pursuits and the emotions of its dramatis personae, the novel remains as intimate in those respects in the hands of Henri

de Montherlant. The history of the Richardsonian novel, indeed, especially in France, would afford any writer of taste a theme of great interest; for it might show that whereas in England, owing to the pressure of a robuster and less subtle convention, the influence of Richardson has been intermittent, in France it has been almost continuous. Sexual love, in France, has been subjected to close scrutiny; in England it has been veiled as a private delight. Furthermore, since we are here dealing with the novel as a form of literary craft, it must be mentioned that in England, since Richardson, the device of story-telling by means of letters has not been a favourite with authors (see how Scott abandons it in *Redgauntlet*); and the exploratory psychological novel has, perhaps, made relatively little progress. It was not again written until Henry James, early nurtured on Hawthorne, and subsequently much influenced by Turgenev, reintroduced it.

Following Richardson, Fielding's less domestic wisdom and the coarse vigour of Smollett revived the masculine tone of what many people consider the first true English novel to be written, Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller*. But the novel remained largely feminine until the end of the eighteenth century, when Scott contributed his own grandeurs; and within the next fifty years it attained a larger and more generous scene, structure, and array of characters when Dickens wrote the greatest English novels of all time. Such novels, which are great enough to contain many faults, the faults resulting, in chief, from exuberance in the writer and what at times is an out-moded taste, cannot be reproduced, and they are not reproduced. But at least the non-polemical tales of H. G. Wells, the generously proportioned tales of J. B. Priestley, and the large and humorous tales of Georges Duhamel show kinship, and continue the invention and exemplification of comic character upon the scale which a relishing Dickens made larger than life. The Dickensian novel—such a cause of shuddering to aesthetes whose notion of Art is the Lord's Prayer on a threepenny piece—is the crowded, ample, big-framed, idiosyncratic comedy, in which there is no meanness, none of the fastidious mastication

which betokens digestive disorder, and nothing spinsterish. It is lavish, hearty, un-subtle, English, and at its best magnificent. It is not, of course, 'first-class', and yet by extraordinary chance it surpasses the 'first-class' as a real man surpasses the diagram of an ideal man. It cannot be written to-day in its original fullness because few modern novelists have Dickens's bursting vitality; but there is another reason, also, which is that—as is the case with the female figure—generous curves are no longer in fashion.

Dickens, in turn, inspired two great novelists of Russia, Gogol and Dostoevsky, who dealt grandly with a kind of society far different from that of industrial England, and who reached, in the case of Dostoevsky, a wildness and sometimes a passionate intensity wholly outside the range of Dickens. George Moore said that Dostoevsky was 'Gaboriau with psychological sauce', an opinion based exclusively upon *Crime and Punishment*, retracted in a preface to *Poor Folk*, and allowed to stand for ever in its first setting. But Dostoevsky, whatever may be the fluctuations of his fame and status, and whatever may be his shocks for those who prefer the fine to the ferocious, gave the novel something it had not previously possessed. He melodramatized the souls of suffering human beings. There are no scenes in fiction quite like those in which his characters open their hearts to one another in love and hate, and so reveal the author's knowledges of spiritual agony. D. H. Lawrence had some of this gift of passionate intensity, and there are scenes in his books of poignant beauty; but Lawrence was not in the same sense as Dostoevsky a creator of character, since he hammered at one or two notes, one or two situations, one or two positive ideas, in all his works, and was invariably his own hero, surrounded by malignant pigmies. Dostoevsky floundered; he was coarse and he was pressed for time; but he was a great novelist: Lawrence was a poet. And among living writers Liam O'Flaherty uses a Dostoevskian vehemence, without Dostoevsky's vision or range of psychological experience; and the Dostoevskian novel is still unsurpassed in gigantesque, nightmarish magnificence.

Meanwhile, to return from Purgatory, Balzac, fired in the first place by an instinct for quite ordinary or Sunday-newspaperish melodrama (such early novels of his as I have read are sensational), piled book upon book into the most grandiose attempt ever seen to create in fiction the replica of a human society in which the dominant characteristics of men were love, greed, and ambition. Balzac's estimate of human nature was not high; his genius was concentrated upon materialistic vraisemblance. But he took every phase of life deliberately for his province. The *Comedie Humaine* as we have it is a fragment; but its conception and its mundane execution, without Dickensian sportiveness, without the flights and grovellings of Dostoevsky, without the panoramic immenseness of such a novel as *War and Peace*, show an unparalleled creative energy. Balzac was pre-eminently the professional novelist. He has inspired many subsequent professional novelists, and he is a great model for them. Few dare to emulate him, in part because they do not pretend to his vitality or his knowledge of multitudinous affairs, but in part because they suspect his knowledge of having been bogus and because amid a scientific and ridiculing modernity they dare not expose themselves to expert laughter. Balzac was indifferent to laughter: he was a toiling creator. The description of him (by D. H. Lawrence) as 'a gigantic dwarf' contains a terrible grain of destructive truth; and yet it means possibly only that he was not a poet with a transcendental metaphysic. In prose, and out of grime and avarice and jealousy and ambition and love, he built a practicable world of his own. If we had nowadays a Balzac he would not come amiss. We have no Balzac; although, in France, he has had conscious followers, from Zola to Jules Romains, and although he had little to learn of normal psychology from the post-Freudians.

I am not attempting to survey the history of the novel, for that would be a life task; but I wish, for illustrative purposes, to add that while these writers powerfully influenced the development of the novel, and brought it to such splendours as it has attained, others, still working recognizably in

the same medium, greatly enriched or decorated it. In England, plain narrative was quite early enlivened by the oblique or skilfully whimsical narrative of Sterne, which has been copied and varied ever since. It was condensed, domesticated, and made demurely witty by Jane Austen. It was spread again, and sentimentalized, but with power, by Thackeray. It walked through Barsetshire under the guidance of Trollope, whose rich conversational humour and shrewd perception of character kept it upon the main road of English fiction. It was brilliantly polished by George Meredith, and made the tale of tragic fate by Hardy. In Russia, Turgenev with melancholy refinement made it the restrained and beautifully tender picture of sorrows and failures. Flaubert and George Moore caused it scrupulously to record the fortunes of the small, the piteous, and the repressed; and Arnold Bennett, finding these same people still small and still self-absorbed in the English Potteries, anglicized the treatment of them with his peculiar loving-kindness, and made them profoundly amusing.

Now what Flaubert and George Moore had done for individuals had been done less exquisitely and more dispersedly by a series of English writers for the urbanized industrial population of England; and while some of the books written by these writers are pedestrian it must not be forgotten, by those who suppose the English novel to be what Thackeray called it, a 'sweet', that all through the nineteenth century (strictly speaking, from 1794, when *Caleb Williams* was published) novelists were deliberately engaged in the critical representation of social conditions. By way of the tales of Mrs. Gaskell, George Eliot, Disraeli, Charles Kingsley, George Gissing, and Mark Rutherford (I do not include Charles Reade in this list because while Reade was an ardent reformer he was first of all, in his tales of contemporary life, a writer of picturesque melodrama), men and women were made aware, as they are to-day, of what was called by Disraeli 'the condition of the people'. Disraeli portrayed the political world long before Mrs. Humphry Ward. Mrs. Ward, in turn, showed the influence of current moral, theological, and political

ideas long before our present-day expositors determined to use the novel for political propaganda. But it is H. G. Wells's *Tono-Bungay*—alas! it has still to receive from the Fashionable Few all the credit due to its greatness—which needs mention here. Other novelists had criticized the Poor Laws, the Lunacy Laws, and the Truck system, had portrayed the characteristics of the Industrial Revolution and the spread of radicalism and rationalism, had assailed Victorian morality and taken over the Darwinian Theory. Mr. Wells restored light and air to what may be called the sociological novel. He knew an astounding number of things, about biology, about transport, about business, and about the politics of daily life; and in *Tono-Bungay,* which epitomized in all its teeming preoccupations the England of 1880–1908, the novel regained something approaching Dickensian proportions.

The form of the novel, as one follows it through these manifestations, has shown development, new strength, no violent changes. It has progressed from a restricted scene to a scene as wide as the world; but it has always been ready to return to the restricted scene, and however wide its ostensible range it has always focused dramatic interest upon two or three or half a dozen persons in their natural environment. It has told a story of greater or less complexity, with greater or less continuity, with an eye to close verisimilitude or a more romantic coloured impressionism. It has been miniature or gigantic, domestic or roving, materialistic or psychological, subjective or objective or both by turn. But one can successively read *Clarissa, Emma, Les Rivalités, Le Rouge et le Noir, David Copperfield, The Possessed, Evan Harrington, Fathers and Children, Madame Bovary, The Mayor of Casterbridge, Born in Exile, Esther Waters,* and *Whom God Hath Joined* without feeling that the essential preoccupations of the novelist have altered. All these books—even *David Copperfield*—are novels of character. Story arises from character and circumstance in a nice mixture. And each is highly typical of its writer, which means that each is an original and not a derivative or purposely 'different' work. It will be

necessary to remember that one author was a woman and another an epileptic; that conditions of life upon a Russian country estate do not correspond with conditions of life in a French provincial town or an English village; and that English moral assumptions, for quite good reasons, differ from the moral practice of other nations. Such matters are incidents of time, place, and sex. But the constants, which are subject only to the genius and temper of every original novelist, remain.

Nevertheless, there have been changes in the art and the technique of the novelist. He has always obeyed the law of his own genius in choosing a theme and in developing that theme. He has also been decidedly ready to adapt his technique to the theme and the successful development of the theme. And as I wish to be absolutely clear I shall repeat in this place a distinction I have already made elsewhere.[1] The difference between art and technique resembles that between Strategy and Tactics as defined by Colonel Henderson in his great biography of Stonewall Jackson. 'Strategy,' says Colonel Henderson, 'that is, by combinations made out of the enemy's sight . . . Tactics, that is, by manœuvres executed in the enemy's presence.' Art is Strategy; Technique is Tactics; the Enemy is the Reader. Art involves taste, temper, and proportion, or the relative importance assigned by the author to the elements of his tale. Technique is applied ingenuity. It is technique, rather than art, which of late years has taken the eye of the aesthetic theorist.

Let us consider briefly some of the artistic changes which have been made in the novel, the changes in taste, temper, and proportion. They all, I think, impress themselves upon us as being purposeful changes in scale; for while *Clarissa* is a very long and wonderfully sustained work the author's aim and range of feeling was relatively restricted. That is true, also, of Richardson's plain successors; but as soon as Laurence Sterne began to draw the portrait of My Uncle Toby he made a change in the art of the novel. There had been portraits before; but this one, with its tender finesse, its returns and

[1] *Swinnerton: An Autobiography*, p. 224.

graces, the lights and shades of the author's laughter, was the first to be so modelled. Sterne was the original whimsical novelist, and none of his successors has produced a rival to My Uncle Toby: the character has been surpassed in fiction only by one created long previously.

The next most important artistic change was made, for English readers, by Jane Austen, who was the first critical novelist of manners. Earlier writers, embracing the moral standards of their times, had approved or disapproved individuals upon general grounds of conduct. Jane Austen brought such a sharpness of judgement to the particular that each peculiarity, each trait, of her persons was made mischievously to arraign those persons. Her very titles were critical. Her very heroines were laughed at and taught lessons in patience or taste or courage. She said, speaking through one of them, 'I hope I never ridicule anything that is wise or good. Whims and inconsistencies, follies and nonsense, *do* divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can.' By laughing, she diminished the size of the novel until it could be kept within the focus of her bright glance; but though she diminished its size she made it perfect.

When the French novelists, who introduced certain subsequent changes in the novel, came to exercise their gifts upon its art, they were less amused than Jane Austen, who was a lady, and less amused than Charles Dickens, who could not resist his own characters. Owing to the realistic morality of their country, they came far closer than the English to the unconventionalized naturalness of human nature. They did not ridicule, and they did not create huge characters by means of the cartoonist's great strokes; they created them strictly, ruthlessly, in their own closely studied environment. It was as if Jane Austen's sedentary characters, one of whom you may remember was sufficiently entertained by the sight of an empty village street, had gone to live in continental cities, had lost their fastidiousness and their manners, and had submitted to observation more microscopic and less amused than that of their first inventor. Balzac and Stendhal, using traits still, piercing through them to the gnawing pre-

occupations of adult and greedy men and women, welcomed larger horizons and greater intricacy of intrigue. The novel lost comedy; but it rivalled the life of cities in heterogeneous assembly, and it became what has ever since been called realistic.

It continued to be realistic; but the scale again changed as soon as the great Russian authors arose. Whereas Dickens set moving a crowd of individuals who moved freely in a free England where tyrannies were but shameful accidents, and Balzac turned the fabric of a practical French life to show the threads of ambition in its seamy side, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, living in a Russia where thought was dangerous, and where belief in Christianity was a passion, were concerned with suffering humanity as a whole. They could, and did, sometimes write what are almost conventional novels; but when they engaged in battle with the Spirit of Evil their novels swelled quite beyond normal proportions. Supernatural realism was developed.

At the same time another Russian writer, whose visions were less vast, but who was to leave a firm impression upon the art of the novel, was engaged in a contrary direction. Turgenev's aim was not to give immensity the rein, but quietly to choose among its evidences those which were most significant, leaving the rest to be inferred from a silence, a gesture, or an English phrase. The art of Turgenev was that of suggestive elimination. One has only to return to a scene in one of his novels which has been deeply affecting in its place to find that, removed from its place and read alone, it has lost the power it held in that place. Turgenev, that is, was the first novelist who consciously subordinated every part of a book to the whole of it. In that sense he was the first modern 'artist', and those of an older generation who have spoken of 'the art of the novel' have always so thought of him.

One consequence of Turgenev's preoccupation with this degree of propriety was that he became the first easel novelist. One withdraws from his work as a connoisseur (or would-be connoisseur) withdraws from an impressionist painting.

And that withdrawal was precisely the act performed by Henry James, to whom the art of the novel, those 'combinations made out of the enemy's sight', was the most wonderful thing in the world. It was Henry James who used the critical terms of painting in reference to the novel—foreground, chiaroscuro, and the like—and who progressively influenced the thought of non-practitioners and dilettanti, both by his theory and his enchantingly expert practice. He eliminated, he suggested, he employed his 'blest law of successive aspects'. And he was the apostle of taste, proportion, and propriety. He also, for a time, influenced novelists themselves—for example, Joseph Conrad—but with the passage of time his practical influence has receded farther and farther from the needs of the day. The recession, I think, is due less to wrongness in his theory than to disproportion between the essential triviality of his work and its beautiful, elaborate, fascinating execution; and a Jacobean revival would be an excellent stimulant to those who love the craft of the novel for its own sake. Meanwhile, there have been revivals of the kind of novel he deplored, the kind that he described as being raw, or 'not "done"', strange eccentricities, perfectly dreadful banalities; and the Jacobean principles have faded. Nevertheless, he has left a kind of solemnity in the aesthetics of the novel from which we shall probably never escape.

Of those later developments in the novelist's art which I described above as eccentricities I shall speak very briefly, because in my opinion they are largely technical—'manœuvres executed in the enemy's presence'—and not artistic at all. Modern psychological theories have been swallowed whole; the frightful pace of current life has telescoped time and impressed the easily impressible with a sense of simultaneous happenings everywhere at every moment; the subconscious is being dredged; Communist propagandism has made an assault upon art, and now insists that art must be social and political propaganda or nothing at all; and so on. We have seen the novel which tries to record the stream of consciousness and the novel which compresses all life into a single day. We have seen the novel in which every character arrives at

a given point simultaneously and the novel in which all the characters, starting from the same point, reach different goals; the flicking novel which seeks by a thousand jumps to portray working men in mass, and the novel in which a single character, in an atmosphere of hallucination, gropes his way through impalpable difficulties towards what may be the farthest point of consciousness or the heart of a particular theological system. All such novels are described as experiments in form; all are considered by their devotees to be advances in the art of the novel; all seem to me to impress, solely or almost solely upon technical grounds, those who are not historically aware of what the novel has contained in the past.

There is no doubt that the mind has been explored very systematically by psycho-analysts. We are all much more aware than ever before that consciousness may proceed simultaneously upon several planes, and that what happens at levels below the attention may have very significant meanings for doctors. But a novel which aims at expressing the stream of consciousness is but a poor approximation to the truth. It bundles together a collection of thoughts supposed to be experienced by one or more persons in a single hour, and it emphasizes their irrelevance and inconsequence. It does not attempt to discover the essential link between these thoughts. And yet the discovery of significance is in reality the artist's chief concern—the elimination of the insignificant the condition of his art. Indeed, the stream of consciousness novel is the negation of art; for upon the childish notion that this is the way men and women really think it bases a shapeless narrative, the invention of which is less excellent than it would need to be if the reader were not stupefied by multiplicities of mental detail.

But in the technique of the novel extraordinary ingenuity has been at work in this century. It shows itself in almost morbid avoidance of familiar novel conventions. The novel of restricted time-table, for example, which sometimes covers an action of only a few hours, has made a most remarkable impression upon certain minds. It has been used in the form

of a plain dramatic narrative and as a means of gathering people together to hear and comment upon the recital of ancient happenings. It has lasted a week, a week-end, and a day; and far too often has given forcible shape to what was organically without coherence. The novel which begins with its climax and works back to the origins of its crisis has been among the least successful of inversions. I have discovered one novel, apparently normal, which came to a situation and then divided into two parts, the first showing what happened, the second showing what *might* have happened. Mr. J. W. Dunne's theory of continuous time has inspired more than one writer, and is as capable of being used in melodrama as in a modern *Time Machine.* In a single book I remember the simultaneous thoughts of the protagonists being printed in parallel columns (an obvious appeal to double sight and duplicity); while numbers of novelists have —I think with effect—used roman type for speech and italic for concurrent thought.

Many attempts to suggest the furious passage of time and the frantic interference of external events with personal affairs have utilized news-reels, flash-backs (derived from the technique of the film), and either a railway or a street junction as a meeting-place for agonized sufferers. Henry James's device of a story pieced together by a telegraphist or a child has reached its climax, one would think, in a brilliant, decadent novel in which the understanding of an idiot governs the significance of every event. A bridge, a liner, many hotels, the Orient Express (used with tremendous effect by Mrs. Christie in a murder story), a lodging-house or block of flats, and a dozen other small or movable centres have assembled the chief actors, whose lives or histories have then been explored. Inside out, sideways, through one character's eyes, through the eyes of a dozen persons who add their own fragments to the observational mosaic (Joseph Conrad's series of contributions in *Lord Jim* having been much too subtle for the newer mechanics), and by way of a dissolving view of twenty years or three centuries, the tales have been told, one after the other and several at once.

This variety of technical experiment all goes to indicate, one might say, a richness, a readiness to adopt the scientific method of trial and error. Or it may indicate a kind of novel-writing undertaken by those who, blasé to familiar gambits, have no taste for imaginative effort. Or possibly it arises from that same love of ingenuity for its own sake which drives weary brain-workers to read nothing but detective mystery stories. Or it may indicate that the novel is dead. But I do not think the novel is dead. It may be dead, for those who do not write novels often say that novels no longer interest first-class minds; but my impression is that all these technical experiments are signs of two things.

The first of these things is that the novel has attracted far too many writers incapable of story-telling. And since we are all apt to disdain what we cannot do ourselves they have disdained the story and have written despitefully about story-telling as an inferior branch of the literary craft. And the second thing is that we are living in a highly provisional age. What is new to-day is old to-morrow; and those novelists who have not the obstinacy to stand firm for their craft tend to slip into either the topical or the occasional. I cannot promise that the age will slow, or that technical experiment will cease; but I am pleased to observe that there seems to be a return to the story, not merely as a diversion, but as an illustration of the time and of the emotions of human beings in all ages, including the present. This cannot fail to bring renewed vigour to a craft based upon invention, imagination, and character.

But I must not allow this paper to end with any air of scorn for technical experiment. No novelist worth his salt ever fails to experiment in technique in every book he writes. No novelist worth his salt ever fails to experiment in art in every book he writes. Owing to the existence of a strain of priggishness in many of our more cultured reviewers such experiments, being outside the range of immediate perception, are assumed to be negligible; but they are there. I find them constantly, not so much in the work of the Fashionable Few, as in that of the born novelists. And it is from the born

novelists that good novels come: the works of the Fashionable Few have their hour and are forgotten; but it is astonishing, and delightful, to find that books containing life as well as technique move steadily towards a modest immortality.

FRANK SWINNERTON.

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