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ENGLAND IN JOHNSON'S DAY

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ENGLAND IN JOHNSON'S DAY

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CONTENTS

VIII. THE COURT

IX. THE STATE OF THE POOR

X. CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

PART II

I. MEN AND MANNERS

II. PREJUDICES, FOLLIES AND FASHIONS

III. THE THEATRE

IV. TRAVELLING

V. GARDENING

VI. SPAS AND WATERING-PLACES; THE SEA-SIDE

VII. SPORT

MONBODDO. ' **The history of manners is the most valuable. I never set a high value on any other history.**' JOHNSON. • **Nor I; and therefore I esteem biography, as giving us what comes near to ourselves, what we can turn to use.**' BOSWELL. ' **But in the course of general history we find manners. In wars we see the dispositions of people, their degrees of humanity, and other particulars.**' JOHNSON. ' **Yes; but then you must take all the facts to get this ; and it is but little you get.**' MONBODDO. ' **And it is that little which makes history valuable.**'

BOSWELL, ***Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides.***

JOHNSON **(1778).** " **I wish much to have one branch [of history] well done, and that is the history of manners, of common life.**"

BOSWELL.

INTRODUCTION

JOHNSON'S life (1709-1784) covers a period when literature, social life and politics were closely interrelated : classicism was being encroached upon by the forerunners of romanticism,—the return to nature was a social as well as a literary movement—the Age of Reason was merging into the Age of Feeling (in England as on the Continent), the dominance of the aristocracy was being undermined by the rising power of the middle classes. It is the age of the last two literary dictators, of Pope and of Johnson himself—the last age when a literary dictatorship was possible.

The period is dominated politically and socially by the rule of the aristocracy which has acquired the powers of the Crown and the prestige of the Court. The country was covered with great country houses, whose pictures and libraries bore witness to the owner's purse, taste and erudition. Connoisseurship in art and letters and the elaborate "improvement" of house and grounds were things expected of the rich and important—of the Great, in the language of the time—and were the subject of much literary comment, satirical and otherwise. George Primrose's cousin went to Paris " to collect pictures, medals, intaglios, and antiques of all kinds, for a gentleman in London who had stepped into taste and a large fortune ". George, surprised at the suddenness of this transformation into a " cognoscento ", was informed that nothing was more easy, "The whole secret consisted in a strict adherence to two rules: the one, always to observe that the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more

pains ; and the other, to praise the works of Pietro Perugino." The relations between Horace Walpole and his protege, the Swiss painter with " an astonishing genius for landscape" to whom he gave £100 a year, his "house, table and utmost countenance" are illuminating and amusing : " Poets and painters ", wrote the disgruntled patron, " imagine they confer an honour when they are protected—and they set down impertinence to the article of their own virtue, when you care to think that an ode or a picture is not a patent for all manner of insolence."

But, just as classicism was being undermined by the pioneers of romanticism, so the dominance of the aristocracy in every department of life was being invaded by the increase in numbers, wealth and importance of the middle classes. The change was most apparent in the substitution of the public for the patron as the support of literature. Under Anne men of letters had relied on the patronage of the Great, who disposed of appointments, sinecures and pensions. But as party politics developed under Walpole such rewards were kept for members of parliament, and their dependents and constituents. The race of " authors by profession " became so great that the possibilities of patronage were outstripped, patronage itself was discredited by the shifts and importunities of Grub Street. Authors came to depend directly on the publisher (who was then the bookseller), ultimately on the rapidly growing public. Patronage however still continued to dominate much of social life. It profoundly affected education and the church, and the relations of squire and parson.

However, since many of the squires were Tories, their influence tended to hold in check that of the Whig oligarchy. The squires, as landlords, as justices of peace, often as patrons of livings, not seldom as members of parliament, ruled the country-side, and they were always being recruited from the commercial classes. The general increase of wealth and comfort among all but the poorest is reflected in literature by complaints of decadence, luxury, and insubordination. Favourite topics of the day,

especially among the fashionable amateur journalists who contributed to *The World* and *The Connoisseur,* were the citizen's country box and the humours of the tradesman who apes the country gentleman.

Looking back, the age of Johnson seems the last age of old England—of a solid, stable, rural England, before scientific invention, industrialism and democracy had changed the face of the country. * But, naturally, this was not how it struck contemporaries. To them it was an age of disconcerting social change, of easy and rapid travel and intense modernity—emphatically it was the Age of Enlightenment, though to many it seemed also an age of decadence—when men were effeminate and women masculine. It was in fact an age when everywhere under the surface changes were going on which prepared the way for the modern world.

The most significant change in the period is the establishment of Methodism. This was closely associated with the growing importance of the middle classes. At its first coming it was regarded with dislike and suspicion not only by squires and parsons, but by the literary and cultivated world in general, and Cowper, who received it sympathetically, is an exception among men of letters. This attitude is not surprising since (in the early years of the movement) the tenets and methods of the Methodists recalled the excesses of the sectaries of the last century which had so discredited " enthusiasm ". But the chief enemies of the Methodists were the populace—the mob—in many cases not discouraged by the local justice of the peace. Methodism became the chief civilizing agency with the poorer classes, especially among the miners and in the growing industrial towns. Wesley himself claims that it was the cause of a great improvement in the manners and morals of the people. By the sixties the stormy phase of Methodism was over, " neat chapels " were built all over the country—Horace Walpole describes the one at Bath. It was recognized that Methodism made for stability not disruption, its influence extended far beyond its own

congregations, and *it* was one of the channels through which the Age of Reason merged into the Age of Feeling.

There were many others ; and the old brutalities began to be questioned. If, in spite of the new spirit of the age, education and the criminal law kept their medieval character, they were subjected to criticism from a new standpoint, and their severities were modified in practice. " The domestic discipline of our ancestors ", wrote Gibbon, " has been relaxed by the philosophy and softness of the age." While Johnson was in advance of his time in regard to the ferocities of the criminal law, he was conservative in the matter of school discipline. " There is now less flogging in our great schools," he said in 1775, " but then less is learned there ; so that what the boys get at one end they lose at the other."

The England of Johnson's later years was a different England from that of his youth. Literature was no longer dominated by the little world of wits and fine gentlemen who met in clubs and coffee-houses and as " the Town " had constituted themselves arbiters of taste. There had been a great development of the newspaper and of periodical literature. The magazine and the critical review had established themselves. With Richardson and Fielding the novel had come into its own. Circulating libraries had become common. Cheap editions of standard works were published and works of instruction (for instance, Smollett's *History of England)* were issued in sixpenny parts, aimed at the new reading public and popularized by advertisement, the art and practice of which had greatly developed. The status of the professional classes had improved and the careers of Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and of Johnson himself are familiar examples of the change. The growing literary taste for rural life and romantic scenery was reflected in the art of gardening and in **the** increasing popularity of visits to the sea-side, which **after 1750** competed with the fashionable inland spas. To **the sea the** middle classes went in increasing **numbers—indeed, the far** from aristocratic crowds at Margate in **August**

offended Gray as early as 1766. " One would suppose ", he writes, " it was Bartholomew Fair flown down from Smithfield to Kent in the London machine . . . "

Even the citizen's country box was part of the movement;

> **Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,**
> **That dread th' encroachment of our growing streets,**
> **Tight boxes, neatly sashed, and in a blaze,**
> **With all a July sun's collected rays,**
> **Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,**
> **Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.**[1]

All this was a stage in the democratization of life, and the changes were hardly likely to commend themselves to Johnson, the supporter of classic tradition, to whom London gave " all that life could afford ". Yet in many ways, and in spite of conversational outbursts about the decay of subordination, he was surprisingly tolerant of the new state of affairs. In the rout of the patron of letters he was of course a protagonist. He could see compensations even for insubordination, and when Boswell propounded the theory that " mankind were happier in the ancient feudal state of subordination, than . . . in the modern state of independency ", he answered, " To be sure the *Chief* was : but we must think of the number of individuals. That *they* were less happy seems plain. . . . " He played an important part in the growing admiration for Shakespeare, indeed, in his justification of Shakespeare's disregard of the unities he anticipated the Romantic school. In his journal of the Welsh tour with the Thrales in 1774 he records that he found in the precipices of Hawkstone, " not the tranquillity but the horror of nature ; a kind of turbulent pleasure between fright and admiration," a phrase that almost sums up the new-fashioned attitude to romantic scenery and the spirit of Gothic Romance which began its career ten years earlier with Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto.*

And in his own person Johnson is significant of a changed

[1] **Cowper, *Retirement,* 1782.**

world. The age which made Pope its literary dictator would never have accepted the supremacy of Johnson. That the uncouth son of a Lichfield tradesman, who for years had slaved in Grub Street in bondage to the booksellers, should have held the position he did is striking evidence of the democratization of life and letters, and of a respect for truth, piety and humanity not characteristic of the age of Pope.

In accordance with the rule of the series the spelling has been modernized, with one or two exceptions in the case of verse. All extracts from foreign writers have been taken from contemporary translations.

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LONDON M. D. G.
February, 1928

ENGLAND IN JOHNSON'S DAY

PART I

I

THE ENGLISH SCENE

Heavens I what a goodly Prospect spreads around.
Of Hills, and Dales, and Woods, and Lawns, and Spins,
And glittering Towns, and gilded Streams, till all
The stretching Landskip into Smoke decays I
Happy BRITANNIA I where the Qusss OF ARTS,
Inspiring Vigor, LIBERTY abroad
Walks unconfin'd, even to thy farthest cotts,
And scatters Plenty with unsparing Hand.

THOMSON, *Summer,* 1727.

I. THE CHARACTER OF ENGLAND, PERSONIFIED AS JOHN BULL

J. ARBUTHNOT, *Law is a Bottomless Pit,* 1712 (the first part of *The History of John Bull).* [A famous Tory pamphlet.]

For the better understanding of the following History, the reader ought to know, that Bull, in the main, was an honest, plain-dealing fellow, choleric, bold, and of a very inconstant temper. He dreaded not old Lewis either at back-sword, single-falchion, or cudgel-play; but then he was very apt to quarrel with his best friends, especially if they pretended to govern him. If you flattered him, you might lead him like a child. John's temper depended

very much upon the air; his spirits rose and fell with the weather-glass. John was quick, and understood his business very well: but no man alive was more careless in looking into his accounts; or more cheated by partners, apprentices, and servants. This was occasioned by his being a boon companion, loving his bottle and his diversion: for to say truth, no man kept a better house than John, or spent his money more generously. By plain and fair dealing, John had acquired some "plumbs"; and might have kept them, had it not been for this unhappy law-suit.[1]

IL ENGLISH TRADE AND ENGLISH MERCHANTS

VOLTAIRE, *Letters concerning the English Nation [Lettres Philosophiques]*, 69-71. Trans. 1733

As trade enriched the citizens in *England*, so it contributed to their freedom, and this freedom on the other side extended their commerce, whence arose the grandeur of the state. Trade raised by insensible degrees the naval power, which gives the *English* a superiority over the seas, and they are now masters of very near two hundred ships of war. Posterity will very possibly be surprized to hear that an island whose only produce is a little lead, tin, fuller's earth and coarse wool, should become so powerful in its commerce, as to be able to send in 1723, three fleets at the same time to three different and far distanced parts of the globe. One before *Gibraltar*, conquered and still possessed by the *English*; the second to *Porto Bello*, to dispossess the King of Spain of the treasures of the *West Indies*, and a third into the *Baltic*, to prevent the *Northern* Powers from coming to an engagement.

At the time when *Lewis* XIV made all *Italy* tremble, and that his arms, which had already possessed themselves of *Savoy* and *Piedmont*, were upon the point of taking *Turin*, Prince *Eugene* was obliged to march from the middle of

[1] The war of the Spanish Succession.

Germany to succour *Savoy*. Having no money, without which cities cannot be either taken or defended, he addressed himself to some *English* merchants. These, at an hour and half's warning, lent him five millions, whereby he was able to deliver *Turin*, and *to* beat the *French* ; after which he wrote the following short letter to the persons who had disbursed him the above mentioned sums : " Gentlemen, I have received your money, and flatter my self that I have laid it out to.your satisfaction." Such a circumstance as this raises a just pride in an *English* merchant, and makes him presume (not without some reason) to compare himself to a *Roman* citizen ; and indeed a peer's brother does not think traffic beneath him. When the Lord *Townshend* was Minister of State, a brother of his was content to be a city merchant; and at the time that the Earl of *Oxford* governed *Great Britain*, his younger brother was no more than a factor at *Aleppo*, where he chose to live, and where he died. This custom, which begins however to be laid aside, appears monstrous to *Germans*, vainly puffed up with their extraction. These think it morally impossible that the son of an *English* peer should be no more than a rich and powerful citizen, for all are princes in *Germany*. There have been thirty highnesses of the same name, all whose patrimony consisted only in their escutcheons and their pride.

III. A DAY IN LONDON

STEELE, *Spectator*, No. 454. Monday, August II, 1712

It is an inexpressible pleasure to know a little of the world, and be of no character or significancy in it.

To be ever unconcerned, and ever looking on new objects with an endless curiosity, is a delight known only to those who are turned for speculation: nay, they who enjoy it must value things only as they are the objects of speculation, without drawing any worldly advantage to themselves from them, but just as they are what contribute to their amusement or the improvement of the mind. I lay

one night last week at Richmond; and being restless, not out of dissatisfaction, but a certain busy inclination one sometimes has, I arose at four in the morning, and took boat for London, with a resolution to rove by boat and coach for the next four-and-twenty hours, till the many different objects I must meet with should tire my imagination, and give me an inclination to a repose more profound than I was at that time capable of. . . .

The hours of the day and night are taken up in the cities of London and Westminster by people as different from each other as those who are born in different centuries. Men of $ix o'clock give way to those of nine, they of nine to the generation of twelve; and they of twelve disappear, and make room for the fashionable world, who have made two o'clock the noon of the day.

When we first put off from shore, we soon fell in with a fleet of gardeners bound for the several market-ports of London; and it was the pleasantest scene imaginable to see the cheerfulness with which those industrious people plied their way to a certain sale of their goods. The banks on each side are as well peopled, and beautified with agreeable plantations, as any spot on the earth; but the Thames itself, loaded with the product of each shore, added very much to the landscape. It was very easy to observe by their sailing, and the countenances of the ruddy virgins who were supercargoes, the parts of the town to which they were bound. There was an air in the purveyors for Co vent Garden, who frequently converse with morning rakes, very unlike the seeming sobriety of those bound for Stocks Market.

Nothing remarkable happened in our voyage; but I landed with ten sail of apricot boats at Strand-bridge, after having put in at Nine Elms, and taken in melons, consigned by Mr. Cuffe of that place, to Sarah Sewell & company, at their stall in Covent Garden. We arrived at Strand-bridge at six of the clock, and were unloading, when the hackney-coachmen of the foregoing night took their leave of each other at the Dark-House, to go to bed before the day was

too far spent. Chimney-sweepers passed by us as we made up to the market, and some raillery happened between one of the fruit-wenches and those black men, about the Devil and Eve, with allusion to their several professions. I could not believe any place more entertaining than Covent Garden, where I strolled from one fruit-shop to another, with crowds of agreeable young women around me who were purchasing fruit for their respective families. . . .

The day of people of fashion now began to break, and carts and hacks were mingled with equipages of show and vanity ; when I resolved to walk it, out of cheapness ; but my unhappy curiosity is such, that I find it always my interest to take coach, for some odd adventure among beggars, ballad-singers, or the like, detains and throws me, into expense. It happened so immediately; for at the corner of Warwick-street, as I was listening to a new ballad, a ragged rascal, a beggar who knew me, came up to me, and began to turn the eyes of the good company upon me, by telling me he was extremely poor, and should die in the streets for want of drink, except I immediately would have the charity to give him sixpence to go into the next alehouse and save his life. He urged, with a melancholy face, that all his family had died of thirst. All the mob have humour, and two or three began to take the jest; by which Mr. Sturdy carried his point, and let me sneak off to a coach. As I drove along, it was a pleasing reflection to see the world so prettily chequered since I left Richmond, and the scene still filling with children of a new hour. This satisfaction increased as I moved towards the city; and gay signs, well-disposed streets, magnificent public structures, and wealthy shops adorned with contented faces, made the joy still rising till we came into the centre of the City, and centre of the world of trade, the Exchange of London. As other men in the crowds about me were pleased with their hopes and bargains, I found my account in observing them, in attention to their several interests. I, indeed, looked upon myself as the richest man that walked upon the Exchange that day; for my benevolence

made me share the gains of every bargain that was made. It was not the least of the satisfactions in my survey, to go upstairs, and pass the shops of agreeable females; to observe so many pretty hands busy in the folding of ribands, and the utmost eagerness of agreeable faces in the sale of patches, pins and wires, on each side the counters, was an amusement in which I should longer have indulged myself, had not the dear creatures called to me to ask what I wanted, when I could not answer only,' To look at you/ I went to one of the windows which opened to the area below, where all the several voices lost their distinction, and rose up in a confused humming; which created in me a reflection that could not come into the mind of any but of one a little too studious; for I said to myself, with a kind of pun in thought, ' What nonsense is all the hurry of this world to those who are above it ?' In these, or not much wiser thoughts, I had like to have lost my place at the chop-house; where every man according to the natural bashfulness or sullenness of our nation, eats in a public room a mess of broth, or chop of meat, in dumb silence, as if they had no pretence to speak to each other on the foot of being men, except they were of each other's acquaintance.

I went afterwards to Robin's, and saw people who had dined with me at the five-penny ordinary just before, give bills for the value of large estates; and could not but behold with great pleasure, property lodged in, and transferred from such as would never be masters of half as much as is seemingly in them, and given from them, every day they live. But before five in the afternoon I left the City, came to my common scene of Covent-garden, and passed the evening at Will's in attending the discourses of several sets of people, who relieved each other within my hearing on the subject of cards, dice, love, learning and politics. The last subject kept me till I heard the streets in the possession of the bell-man, who had now the world to himself, and cried, ' Past two of clock.' This roused me from my seat, and I went to my lodgings, led by a light, whom

I put into the discourse of his private economy, and made him give me an account of the charge, hazard, profit, and loss of a family that depended upon a link, with a design to end my trivial day with the generosity of sixpence, instead of a third part of that sum. When I came to my chamber I writ down these minutes ; but was at a loss what instruction I should propose to my reader from the enumeration of so many insignificant matters and occurrences; and I thought it of great use, if they could learn with me to keep their minds open to gratification, and ready to receive it from any thing it meets with. This one circumstance will make every face you see give you the satisfaction you now take in beholding that of a friend ; will make every object a pleasing one; will make all the good which arrives to any man, an increase of happiness to yourself.

IV; A COUNTRY GIRL'S IMPRESSIONS OF LONDON —RANELAGH AND VAUXHALL

SMOLLETT, *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker,* 1771

The cities of London and Westminster are spread out into an incredible extent. The streets, squares, rows, lanes, and alleys, are innumerable. Palaces, public buildings, and churches rise in every quarter; and, among these last, St. Paul's appears with the most astonishing pre-eminence. They say it is not so large as St. Peter's at Rome ; but, for my own part, I can have no idea of any earthly temple more grand and magnificent.

But even these superb objects are not so striking as the crowds of people that swarm in the streets. I at first imagined that some great assembly was just dismissed, and wanted to stand aside till the multitude should pass; but this human tide continues to flow, without interruption or abatement, from morn till night. Then there is such an infinity of gay equipages, coaches, chariots, chaises, and other carriages, continually rolling and shifting before your eyes, that one's head grows giddy looking at them; and the. imagination is quite confounded with splendour

and variety. Nor is the prospect by water less grand and astonishing than that by land: you see three stupendous bridges, joining the opposite banks of a broad, deep, and rapid river, so vast, so stately, so elegant, that they seem to be the work of the giants; betwixt them, the whole surface of the Thames is covered with small vessels, barges, boats, and wherries, passing to and fro; and below the three bridges, such a prodigious forest of masts, for miles together, that you would think all the ships in the universe were here assembled. All that you read of wealth and grandeur in the Arabian Night's Entertainment, and the Persian Tales, concerning Bagdad, Diarbekir, Damascus, Ispahan, and Samarkand, is here realized.

Ranelagh looks like the enchanted palace of a genie, adorned with the most exquisite performances of painting, carving, and gilding, enlightened with a thousand golden lamps, that emulate the noon-day sun ; crowded with the great, the rich, the gay, the happy, and the fair ; glittering with cloth of gold and silver, lace, embroidery and precious stones. While these exulting sons and daughters of felicity tread this round of pleasure, or regale in different parties, and separate lodges, with fine imperial tea and other delicious refreshments, their ears are entertained with the most ravishing delights of music, both instrumental and vocal. . . . .

At nine o'clock, in a charming moonlight evening, we embarked at Ranelagh for Vauxhall, in a wherry so light and slender that we looked like so many fairies sailing in a nut-shell. My uncle, being apprehensive of catching cold upon the water, went round in the coach. . . . The pleasure of this little excursion was, however, damped, by my being sadly frightened at our landing ; where there was a terrible confusion of wherries, and a crowd of people bawling, and swearing, and quarrelling : nay, a parcel of ugly-looking fellows came running into the water, and laid hold of our boat with great violence, to pull it a-shore ; nor would they quit their hold till my brother struck one of them over the head with his cane. But this flutter was

fully recompensed by the pleasures of Vauxhall; which I no sooner entered, than I was dazzled and confounded with the variety of beauties that rushed all at once upon my eye. Image to yourself, my dear Letty, a spacious garden, part laid out in delightful walks, bounded with high hedges and trees, and paved with gravel; part exhibiting a wonderful assemblage of the most picturesque and striking , Objects, pavilions, lodges, groves, grottoes, lawns, temples, and cascades ; porticoes, colonnades and rotundos; adorned with pillars, statues, and painting : the whole illuminated with an infinite number of lamps, disposed in different figures of suns, stars, and constellations ; the place crowded with the gayest company, ranging through those blissful shades, or supping in different lodges on cold collations, enlivened with mirth, freedom, and good humour, and animated by an excellent band of music. Among the vocal performers I had the happiness to hear the celebrated Mrs.——, whose voice was loud and so shrill, that it made my head ache through excess of pleasure. . . .

Besides Ranelagh and Vauxhall, I have been at Mrs. Cornelys' assembly, which, for the rooms, the company, the dresses, and decorations, surpasses all description; but as I have no great turn for card playing, I have not yet entered thoroughly into the spirit of the place : indeed I am still such a country hoyden, that I could hardly find patience to be put in a condition to appear, yet as I was not above six hours under the hands of the hair-dresser, who stuffed my head with as much black wool as would have made a quilted petticoat; and, after all, it was the smallest head in the assembly, except my aunt's.

V. THE SURROUNDINGS OF LONDON

DBFOE, *A Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain,* 1724. i, Letter I I , p. 121-2

From *Richmond* to *London* the river sides are full of villages, and those villages so full of beautiful buildings, charming gardens and rich habitations of gentlemen of

quality that nothing **in** the **world** can **imitate it, no, not** the country for twenty miles round Paris, though that indeed is a kind of prodigy.

To enumerate the gentlemen's houses in their view would be too long for this work ; to describe them, would **fill** a large folio ; it shall suffice to observe something concerning the original of the strange passion for fine gardens which has so commendably possessed the English gentlemen of late years, for 'tis evident it is but of late years.

It is since the Revolution that our *English* gentlemen began so universally to adorn their gardens with those plants we call *ever greens,* which leads me to a particular observation that may not be improper in this place ; King *William* and Queen *Mary* introduced each of them *two customs,* which by the people's imitating them, became the *two idols* of the town, and indeed of the whole kingdom ; the Queen brought in (I) the love of fine *East-India* calicoes, such as were then called *Masslapatan* Chints, *Atlasses,* and fine painted calicoes, which afterwards descended into the humours of the common people so much as to make them *grievous* to our trade,[1] and *ruining* to our manufactures and the Poor ; so that the Parliament were obliged to make two Acts at several times to restrain and at last prohibit the use of them. (2) The Queen brought in the custom or humour, as I may call it, of furnishing houses with *China-ware,* which increased to a strange degree afterwards, piling their *China* upon the tops of cabinets, scrutoires and every chimney-piece to the tops of the ceilings, and even setting up shelves for their *China-ware* where they wanted such places, till it became a grievance in the expense of it and even injurious to their families and estates. . . .

The King on his part introduced (1) the love of gardening and (2) of painting.[2] In the first his Majesty was particularly delighted with the decoration of *ever-greens* as the greatest addition to the beauty of a garden, preserving the

[1] The woollen trade.

[2] It is hardly necessary to say that this statement is not accurate.

figure of the place, even in the roughest part of an inclement and tempestuous winter. . . .

With the particular judgment of the King all the gentlemen in *England* began to fall in, and in a few years fine gardens and fine houses began to grow up in every corner ; the King began with the gardens at *Hampton-Court* and *Kensington,* and the gentlemen followed everywhere, with such a gust that the alteration is indeed wonderful through the whole kingdom, but nowhere more than in the two counties of *Middlesex* and *Surrey,* as they border on the river *Thames,* the beauty and expense of which are only to be wondered at, not described; they may indeed be guessed at, by what is seen in one or two such as these named. But I think to enter into a particular of them would be an intolerable task, and tedious to the reader.

That these houses and gardens are admirably beautiful in their kind, and in their separate and distinct beauties, such as their situation, decoration, architect, *[sic]* furniture and the like, must be granted, and many descriptions have been accurately given of them, as of *Ham-House, Kew-Green,* the *Prince's House,* Sir *William Temple's,* Sir *Charles Hedges, Sion-House, Osterly,* Lord *Ranelagh's* at *Chelsea-Hospital,* the many noble seats in *Isleworth, Twittenham, [Twickenham], Hammersmith, Fulham, Putney, Chelsea, Batter sea* and the like.

But I find none has spoken of what I call the distant glory of all these buildings. There is a beauty in these things at a distance, taking them *en passant,* and in *perspective,* which few people value, and fewer understand, and yet here they are more truly great than in all their private beauties whatsoever ; here they reflect beauty and magnificence upon the whole country, and give a kind of character to the island of *Great Britain* in general. The banks of the *Seine* are not thus adorned from *Paris* to *Rouen* or from *Paris* to the *Loign* above the City. The *Danube* can show nothing like it above and below *Vienna,* or the *Po* above and below *Turin* ; the whole country here shines with a lustre not to be described. Take them in a remote view,

the fine seats shine among the trees as jewels shine in a rich coronet; in a *near sight* they are mere pictures and paintings; *at a distance* they are all nature, *near hand* all art, but both in the extremest beauty.

In a word, nothing can be more beautiful; here is a plain and pleasant country, a rich fertile soil, cultivated and enclosed to the utmost perfection of husbandry, then bespangled with villages; those villages filled with these houses, and the houses surrounded with gardens, walks, vistas, avenues, representing all the beauties of building and all the pleasures of planting. It is impossible to view these countries from any rising ground and not be ravished with the delightful prospect. *For example,* suppose you take your view from the little rising hills about *Clafham,* if you look to the east, there you see the pleasant villages of *Peckham* and *Camberwell,* with some of the finest dwellings about London. . . .

Add to all this, that these fine houses and innumerable more which cannot be spoken of, are not, *at least very few of them,* the mansion houses of families, the ancient residences of ancestors, the capital messuages of the estates, nor have the rich possessors any lands to a considerable value about them, but these are all houses of retreat, like the *bastides* of *Marseilles,* gentlemen's mere *summer houses,* or citizen's *country-houses,* whither they retire from the hurries of business, and from getting money, to draw their breath in a clear air, and to divert themselves and families in the hot weather, and that they are shut up, and as it were stripped of their inhabitants in the winter, who return to smoke and dirt, *Sin* and *Seacoal* (as it was coarsely expressed) in the busy City, so that in short all this variety, this beauty, this glorious show of wealth and plenty, is really a view of the luxuriant age which we live in, and of the overflowing riches of the citizens, who in their abundance make these gay excursions, and live thus deliciously all the summer, retiring within themselves in the winter, the better to lay up for the next summer's expense.

VI. THE GREAT COUNTRY HOUSE—CONNOISSEURSHIP IN ARCHITECTURE AND PAINTING

DEFOE, *Tour*, ii, Letter III, pp. 160-3

But the beauty of *Stamford* is the neighbourhood of the noble palace of the earl of *Exeter*, called *Burleigh House*, built by the famous Sir *William Cecil*, Lord *Burleigh*. . . . This house, built all of free-stone, looks more like a town than a house, at which avenue soever you come to it; the towers and the pinnacles so high and placed at such a distance from one another, look like so many distant parish churches in a great town, and a large spire covered with lead, over the great clock in the centre, looks like the cathedral, or chief church of the town.

The house stands on an eminence which rises from the north entrance of the park, coming from Stamford. . . . As you mount the hill, you come to a fine esplanade, before the great gate or first entrance of the house, where there is a small but very handsome semi-circle, taken in with an iron balustrade, and from this, rising a few steps, you enter a most noble hall, but made infinitely more noble by the invaluable paintings with which it is so filled, that there is not room to place any thing between them.

The late Earl of Exeter, father of his present lordship, had a great genius for painting and architecture, and a superior judgment in both, as every part of this noble structure will testify, for he changed the whole face of the building; he pulled down great part of the front next the garden and turned the old Gothic windows into those spacious sashes which are now seen there, and though the founder or first builder, who had an exquisite fancy also (as the manner of buildings then was) had so well ordered the situation and avenues of the whole fabric, that nothing was wanting of that kind, and had also contrived the house itself in a most magnificent manner, the rooms spacious, well directed, the ceilings lofty and the decorations just,

yet the late earl found room for alterations, infinitely to the advantage of the whole, as particularly, a noble stair-case, a whole set of fine apartments, with rooms of state, fitting for the entertainment of a prince, especially those on the garden side, though at present a little out of repair again.

As this admirable genius, *the late earl,* loved paintings, so he had infinite advantage in procuring them, for he not only travelled three times into *Italy,* and stayed every time a considerable while at *Florence,* but he was so entertained at the Court of *Tuscany,* and had, by his most princely deportment and excellent accomplishments, so far obtained upon the Great Duke that he might be said indeed to love him, and his Highness shewed the Earl many ways that esteem, and more particularly, in assisting him to purchase many excellent pieces at reasonable prices, and not only so, but his highness presented him with several pieces of great value.

Among the rest, there is, in the great hall, his lordship's picture on horseback, done by the Great Duke's principal painter, at his highness's charge and given to his lordship as a mark of the Great Duke's special favour. There is also a fine piece of *Seneca* bleeding to death in the warm bath, and dictating his last morals to his scholars ; the passions are in so lively a manner described in the scholars, their eager attention, their generous regard to their master, their vigilant catching at his words, and some of them taking minutes, that it is indeed admirable and inexpressible. I have been told that the King of *France* offered the earl 6000 pistoles for it.

It would be endless to give a detail of the fine pictures his Lordship brought from *Italy,* all originals, and by the best masters, 'tis enough to say, they infinitely exceed all that can be seen in *England,* and are of more value than the house itself and all the park belonging to it. . . .

Besides the pictures, which as above, were brought from abroad, the house itself, at least the new apartments, may be said to be one entire picture. The stair-case,

the ceilings of all the fine lodgings, the chapel, the hall, the late Earl's closet, are all finely painted by Varrio, of whose work I need say no more than this, that the Earl kept him twelve years in his family, wholly employed in painting those ceilings and stair-cases, etc., and allowed him a coach and horses and equipage, a table and servants and a very considerable pension.

VII. THE COUNTRY-SIDE—A CONTRAST WITH FRANCE

LE BLANC, *Letters on the English and French Nations.* Trans. 1747

Tis in the country you perceive most, the difference there is between France and England; one might almost say, that luxury reigns as much in the country in England, as it does in the cities in France. The English farmer is rich, and enjoys all the conveniences of life in abundance : if he labours for the merchant, he partakes, as well as the rest of his countrymen, of the advantages of commerce. In several parts of England, a farmer's servant drinks his tea, before he goes to plow.

The wisdom of the English government is to be fully praised for taking such particular care of the happiness of this class of men, which we ought to regard as the first, because 'tis they who subsist all the rest. A country where the farmer is in easy circumstances, must be a rich country. . . . Let the maxims, dictated by hard heartedness to the miserable, which is but too often the concomitant of luxury and opulence, be what they will, lands are always better cultivated in proportion as the farmers are richer; at least, certain it is, those who are ill fed are not able to endure the fatigue of labour.

Our neighbours in this respect, act upon quite different principles ; humanity dictates them, and experience shows their wisdom. The care with which the country is cultivated with them is the consequence of the plenty in which the farmer lives ; and if he is truly, commonly speaking, more robust here than in France, 'tis perhaps because he is

better fed. The fruits of his labour are not only sufficient for his necessities, but also enable him to procure that sort of superfluity which makes what we term, *the pleasure of life*, and which varies according to men's different conditions, all of which we may say, have their luxuries. In England as well as in Holland, the villages are neater and better built than in France ; every thing in them declares the riches of the inhabitants. One perceives by the houses of the English farmers, that they are in easy circumstances enough to have a taste for neatness, and that they have likewise time enough to satisfy it. I have found them every where well clothed. They never go out in the winter without a riding coat. Their wives and daughters not only dress but adorn themselves. In the winter they wear short cloth cloaks to defend themselves from the cold, and straw hats in the summer to guard themselves from the heat of the sun. All the English women have fine complexions, even those in the country are not without, and the ease they enjoy permits them to take care of them. A young country girl in other countries is a mere peasant, here by the neatness of her dress and genteelness of her person you would take her for a shepherdess in one of our romances. I know provinces in France where there is no difference between the man and his wife but the petticoat ; some of them also labour as much, especially in the country, where they participate with them the fatiguing labour of the plow. We very rarely see the English women employed in laborious works.

The effects of this wise economy are visible in every thing in the country, even in their animals, and the earth repays the husbandman with usury what it costs him to have good horses and feed them well. If he carries his grain to market, he has one particularly for his own riding. But 'tis at horse races especially that we see proofs of the comfortable lives the English farmers lead. There are none where you don't see two thousand countrymen, most of which have their wife, daughter or mistress behind them ; and you often see great fat farmers' wives galloping there who are

happy enough to have horses able to carry them. People never run after diversions, except when their family affairs don't require their presence at home.

'Tis pity this plenty which the English farmer enjoys, should make him so proud and insolent. He does not only dispute the road with those whom the order of society has made his superiors, but sometimes jostles and insults them for his pleasure. Whoever has forty shillings a year estate, gives his vote at elections for members of parliament ; an English farmer is very proud of this privilege and thinks more of making his advantage than a good use of it. How happy would the English people be, if they had a right idea of all their advantages ! But it does not appear that they are sensible of their value, for such as they are, they are not the less venal for it. They do not reflect that in making so bad a use of this privilege they run the risk of losing it, and that those who buy their votes must necessarily sell their own. Yet nevertheless, he sells his vote, and instead of giving it to the honestest man in the county, gives it to him who gives him most beer. . . .

VIII. THE COUNTRY TOWN--IMPRESSIONS OF A LONDON GIRL

The Early Diary of Frances Burney, ed. A. R. Ellis, 1889, i, 14

July 17 [1768!.

Such a set of tittle tattle, prittle prattle visitants! Oh dear! I am so sick of the ceremony and fuss of all these fall lall people ! So much dressing—chit chat—complimentary nonsense—In short, a Country Town [1] is my detestation—all the conversation is scandal, all the attention, dress, and *almost* all the heart, folly, envy, and censoriousness. A City or a village are the only places

[1] Lynn, of which Defoe writes (1722): "Here are more gentry, and consequently is more gaiety in this town than in Yarmouth, or even in Norwich itself, the place abounding in very good company." ***Tour,*** *i,* p. III. See also below I, VII, ii.

which I think, can be comfortable, for a Country Town, I think has all the bad qualities, without one of the good ones, of both.

We live here, generally speaking in a very regular way —we breakfast always at 10, and rise as much before as we please—we dine precisely at 2, drink tea about 6—and sup exactly at 9. I make a kind of rule, never to indulge myself in my two *most* favourite pursuits, reading and writing, in the morning—no, like a very good girl I give that up wholly, accidental occasions and preventions excepted, to needle work, by which means my reading and writing in the afternoon is a pleasure I cannot be blamed for by my mother, as it does not take up the time I ought to spend otherwise.

II

RELIGION, THE CHURCH AND THE CLERGY

Pious without Enthusiasm.

Eighteenth Century epitaph.

ENTHUSIASM, a vain belief of private revelation, a vain confidence of divine favour or communication.

JOHNSON, *Dictionary,* 1755.

FANATICISM, enthusiasm, religious frenzy.

Ibid.

BOSWELL. *' Is there not less religion in the nation now than formerly ? '* JOHNSON. *' I don't know, Sir, that there is.'* BOSWELL. *' For instance, there used to be a chaplain in every great family, which we do not find now.'* JOHNSON. *' Neither do you find any of the state servants which great families used formerly to have. There is a change of modes in the whole department of life.'* (1769.)

That the clergy were held in contempt was a common-place in the earlier eighteenth century; Swift indeed wrote an essay *Concerning that universal Hatred which prevails against the Clergy.* Materialism and spiritual deadness is the general verdict on the Church. Then as earlier there was a chasm between the " higher clergy ", too often pluralists and political time-servers, and the "lower clergy", too often victims of poverty and isolation (ii, iii). The clergy were in fact the outcome of the system of patronage and the relations between squire and parson. Even when these were excellent as in Sir Roger's parish (i) the parson was still the squire's dependent, a position which Parson Adams (iii) filled with such admirable dignity.

The Methodist revival marks an epoch in the history of the country **and** the Church. In its earlier stages it **was** received by men of letters and the cultivated world **in general**

with dislike and contempt. It was at first the occasion of much religious hysteria among its devotees. Hence the accusations of "Enthusiasm", which Wesley himself repudiated as an evil thing.

I. SQUIRE AND PARSON

ADDISON, *The Spectator*, No. 106. July 2, 1711

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man, who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: He heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than as a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humourist, and that his virtues, as well as his imperfections, are as it were tinged with a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly *his*, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just mentioned? and without staying for an answer told me, that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of back-gammon. 'My friend', says Sir Roger, 'found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not shew it. I have given him

the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he is higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has lived among them: If any dispute arises they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in *English*, and only begged of him that every *Sunday* he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally and make a continued system of practical divinity/ . . .

Ibid., No. 112, July 9, 1711

I am always very well pleased with a country *Sunday*; and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind. It is certain the country-people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time, in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. *Sunday* clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country-fellow distinguishes himself as much in the *Church-yard*,

as a citizen does upon the *Change,* the whole parish-politics being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing : He has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion-table at his own expense. He has often told me, that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular ; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a Common-Prayer book ; and at the same time employed an itinerant singing-master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the Psalms ; upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed out-do most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer no body to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees any body else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servant to them. Several other of the old knight's particularities break out upon these occasions : sometimes, he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing-Psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces *Amen* three or four times to the same prayer ; and sometimes stands up when every body else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one *John Matthews* to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This *John Matthews* it seems is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him

in all circumstances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see any thing ridiculous in his behaviour ; besides that the general sense and worthiness of his character makes his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, no body presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side ; and every now and then enquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church, which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

The chaplain has often told me, that upon a catechising day, when Sir Roger has been pleased with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a Bible to be given him next day for his encouragement; and sometimes accompanies it with a flitch of bacon to his mother. Sir Roger has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place; and that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the Church-service, has promised upon the death of the present incumbent, who is very old, to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir Roger and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable, because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the 'squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always preaching at the 'squire, and the 'squire to be revenged on the parson never comes to church. The 'squire has made all his tenants atheists and tithe-stealers, while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them in almost every sermon, that he is a better man than his patron. In short, matters are come to such an extremity, that the 'squire has not said his prayers either in public or private this half year, and that the parson threatens him, if he

does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this sort, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people ; who are so used to be dazzled with riches, that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning; and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.

IL SQUIRE AND PARSON—ANOTHER VIEW

[J. HILDROP, D.D.], *The Contempt of the Clergy considered in a Letter to a Friend,* 1739, 25-30

" I proceed now to consider the general charge against the inferior clergy, viz. *Pride, Pedantry, Ill-manners, Idleness and Neglect of their Cures*—&c.—&c. I who have passed through many scenes of life as a silent and impartial spectator, have made it a general remark, that *Pride* and *Pedantry,* &c. are most commonly charged by their enemies upon the most deserving: and that *Idleness* and neglect of their cures are always charged by their friends upon the most worthless part of their order. There are without doubt too many among them that too well deserve these imputations, but must all suffer for their sakes ? . . . It must be owned, that the clergy in and about Town, have no reason to complain of contempt, they have their full portion of respect and esteem ; and in other cities and great towns in proportion. Whether it be that the better sort of clergy are usually fixed in those large conspicuous cures ; or whether they are more careful to support their characters, where they know themselves to be under the observation and censures of men of taste and figure, but so it is—and the further you remove from those places, you gradually decline to barbarism and obscurity. There are, to my particular knowledge, in many country villages clergymen of distinguished learning and piety,

who are as it were buried alive among the vicious **and the** ignorant, and in a manner excluded from all the comforts of social life. And how should it be otherwise, except where the esquire or great men of the parish or neighbourhood be judges and lovers of real merit. And how often that is the case, I leave you to judge. If the Esquire happen to be wrong-headed, illiterate, sottish or profane, what can the poor parson do ? . . . If they should ever descend so low as to invite the poor vicar from his solitude, *soup maigre,* and watch-light,[1] to make one in a party of frolick and madness ; and he should refuse the invitation, or come awkwardly into it; if he should refuse to go to the utmost stretch of intemperance, or disrelish the many ungracious jokes which are always cracked over the doctor; it gives a sort of check to the merriment, and throws a damp over the spirits of the good company : they immediately treat him with that indifference and contempt (if not with rudeness and ill-manners) as may sufficiently discourage him from ever venturing among them again. From that moment he has a mark of contempt fixed upon him, as a *sour, morose, ill-natured fellow.* If he should ever make a decent opportunity of shewing these gentlemen their true characters, and attempt to convince them of their absurd, irregular, licentious, hopeless way of life, though they should seem to hear it with patience, yet they never heartily forgive the impertinence of the officious reprover. That resentment seldom fails to produce rancour and aversion, and from that moment every thing takes a wrong turn, the most innocent words and actions are misjudged, and the most general reflections upon any one vice, even in the pulpit, are interpreted as a satire or libel upon the Esquire and his friends who return him the compliment of an *unmannerly ill-bred coxcomb.* If at any time he should have the courage to interrupt a profane leud conversation and with a decent assurance rally and

[1] A kind of rush-light coated with tallow—"darkness made visible." Not in O. E. D., but see White's *Selborne,* Letter L X V I I I.

" expose their ignorance, which is the real root of infidelity, if he attempt to reduce them from rattle and tumult, from leud jokes and loud laughter to cool and impartial reasoning, to which they are absolute strangers, they cover their confusion as well as they can with an affected superiority of taste, or quality, of front, or fortune, and ever after condemn and avoid the impertinent reformer for an *insolent insupportable pedant.*

When I was at Bath last year, I was invited by a gentleman who lodged in the same house to go and spend a month with him at his seat in *Somersetshire.* . . . On the Sunday morning I was preparing to go to church . . . but my friend took me out to walk in his park and shew me the beauties of his situation. The next Sunday he contrived some other amusement to hinder our going to church. There was indeed a clergyman in the house, who had quite laid aside his sacerdotal character, but acted in several lay-capacities, as valet de chambre, butler, game keeper, pot-companion, butt, and buffoon, who never read prayers, or so much as said grace in the family whilst I was in it. . . . Upon my asking the character of the vicar, whose face I had never seen, or scarce heard his name mentioned, he was represented as a *proud unmannerly sour pedant,* who could never be an agreeable companion for people of birth and politeness. . . . [The vicar was in fact] a very learned, well-bred, religious man; but one that was resolved to support his sacred character and not prostitute the dignity of his function, nor his superior understanding to the vanity and contempt of ignorance and folly. This was sufficient to exclude him from all the social comforts of good neighbourhood ; whilst a dirty wretch, who seemed to live in defiance of virtue, decency, good manners and clean linen, was in a good measure the first minister and director of the family, always mentioned with the familiar appellation of *honest Harry,* a merry good-natured fellow as ever broke bread,

III. PARSON, POLITICS AND PATRONAGE: THE STATUS OF THE "LOWER CLERGY"

FIELDING, *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews,* 1742, Book II, Chap. VIII.

A notable dissertation by Mr. Abraham Adams ; wherein that gentleman appears in a political light.

'I do assure you, sir/ says he, taking the gentleman by the hand, ' I am heartily glad to meet with a man of your kidney ; for though I am a poor parson, I will be bold to say I am an honest man, and would not do an ill thing to be made a bishop ; nay, though it hath not fallen my way to offer so noble a sacrifice, I have not been without opportunities of suffering for the sake of my conscience, I thank Heaven for them ; for I have had relations, though I say it, who made some figure in the world ; particularly a nephew, who was a shop-keeper and an alderman of.a corporation. He was a good lad, and was under my care when a boy; and I believe would do what I bade him to his dying day. Indeed, it looks like extreme vanity in me to affect being a man of such consequence as to have an interest in an alderman ; but others have thought so too, as manifestly appeared by the rector, whose curate I formerly was, sending for me on the approach of an election, and telling me, if I expected to continue in his cure, that I must bring my nephew to vote for one Colonel Courtly, a gentleman whom I had never heard tidings of till that instant. I told the rector I had no power over my nephew's vote (God forgive me for such prevarication !) ; that I supposed he would give it according to his conscience; that I would by no means endeavour to persuade him to give it otherwise. He told me it was in vain to equivocate ; that he knew I had already spoke to him in favour of Squire Fickle, my neighbour ; and, indeed, it was true I had ; for it was a season when the church was in danger, and when all good men expected they knew not what would happen to us all. I then answered boldly, if he thought I had given my promise, he affronted me in proposing any

breach of it. Not to be too prolix, I persevered, and so did my nephew, in the esquires's interest, who was chose chiefly through his means; and so I lost my curacy. Well, sir, but do you think the esquire ever mentioned a word of the church? *Ne verburm quidem, ut ita dicam:* within two years he got a place, and hath ever since lived in London; where I have been informed (but God forbid I should believe that), that he never so much as goeth to church. I remained, sir, a considerable time without any cure, and lived a full month on one funeral sermon, which I preached on the indisposition of a clergyman; but this by the bye. At last, when Mr. Fickle got his place, Colonel Courtly stood again; and who should make interest for him but Mr. Fickle himself! that very identical Mr. Fickle, who had formerly told me the colonel was an enemy to both the church and state, had the confidence to solicit my nephew for him; and the colonel himself offered me to make me chaplain to his regiment, which I refused in favour of Sir Oliver Hearty, who told us he would sacrifice every thing to his country; and I believe he would, except his hunting, which he stuck so close to, that in five years together he went but twice up to parliament; and one of those times, I have been told, never was within sight of the House. However, he was a worthy man, and the best friend I ever had; for, by his interest with a bishop, he got me replaced in my curacy, and gave me eight pounds out of his own pocket to buy me a gown and cassock, and furnish my house. He had our interest while he lived, which was not many years. On his death I had fresh applications made to me; for all the world knew the interest I had in my good nephew, who now was a leading man in the corporation; and Sir Thomas Booby, buying the estate which had been Sir Oliver's, proposed himself a candidate. He was then a young gentleman just come from his travels, and it did me good to hear him discourse on affairs which, for my part, I knew nothing of. If I had been master of a thousand votes he should have had them all. I engaged my nephew in his interest, and he was elected; and a very

fine parliament-man he was. They tell me he made speeches of an hour long, and, I have been told, very fine ones; but he could never persuade the Parliament to be of his opinion. *Non omnia possumus omnes.* He promised me a living, poor man! and I believe I should have had it, but an accident happened, which was, that my lady had promised it before, unknown to him. This, indeed, I never heard till afterwards; for my nephew, who died about a month before the incumbent, always told me I might be assured of it. Since that time, Sir Thomas, poor man! had always so much business, that he never could find leisure to see me. I believe it was partly my lady's fault too, who did not think my dress good enough for the gentry at her table. However, I must do him the justice to say he never was ungrateful; and I have always found his kitchen, and his cellar too, open to me: many a time, after service on a Sunday—for I preached at four churches—have I recruited my spirits with a glass of his ale. Since my nephew's death, the corporation is in other hands; and I am not a man of that consequence I was formerly. I have now no longer any talents to lay out in the service of my country; and to whom nothing is given, of him can nothing be required. However, on all proper seasons, such as the approach of an election, I throw a suitable dash or two into my sermons, which I have the pleasure to hear is not disagreeable to Sir Thomas and the other honest gentlemen my neighbours, who have all promised me these five years to procure an ordination for a son of mine, who is now near thirty, hath an infinite stock of learning, and is, I thank Heaven, of an unexceptionable life; though, as he never was at an university, the bishop refuses to ordain him. Too much care cannot indeed be taken in admitting any to the sacred office; though I hope he will never act so as to be a disgrace to any order, but will serve his God and his country to the utmost of his power, as I have endeavoured to do before him; nay, and will lay down his life whenever called to that purpose. I am sure I have educated him in those principles; so

that I have acquitted my duty, and shall have **nothing to** answer for on that account. But I do not distrust him, for he is a good boy ; and if Providence should throw it in his way to be of as much consequence in a public light as his father once was, I can answer for him he will use his talents as honestly as I have done.'

IV. A COUNTRY RECTOR

WILLIAM LAW, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life,* 1729, 213-14

Cognatus is a sober, regular *clergyman* of good repute in the world, and well esteemed in his parish. All his parishioners say he is an *honest man,* and very notable at making a *bargain.* The farmers listen to him with great attention, when he talks of the properest time of selling corn.

He has been for twenty years a diligent observer of *markets,* and has raised a considerable fortune by good management.

Cognatus is very *orthodox,* and full of *esteem* for our *English* liturgy ; and if he has not prayers on *Wednesdays,* and *Fridays,* it is because his *predecessors* had not used his parish to any such custom.

As he cannot serve both his *livings* himself, so he makes it a matter of *conscience* to keep a *sober curate* upon one of them, whom he *hires* to take care of all the souls in the parish, at as cheap a rate as a sober man can be procured,

Cognatus has been very prosperous all his time; but still he has had the uneasiness and vexations that they have, who are deep in worldly business. *Taxes, losses, crosses, bad mortgages, bad tenants,* and the hardness of the times, are frequent subjects of his conversation : and a good or bad *season* has a great effect upon his spirits.

Cognatus has no other end in growing rich, but that he may leave a considerable fortune to a *niece,* whom he has *politely* educated in expensive finery, by what he has saved out of the tithes of *two livings.*

The neighbours look upon *Cognatus* as a happy clergy-

man, because they see him (as they call it) in *good circumstances* ; and some of them intend to dedicate their own sons to the church, because they see how well it has succeeded with *Cognatus*, whose father was but an *ordinary man.*

V. PATRONAGE AND PREFERMENT

An Essay on the Fates of Clergymen. SWIFT, *Works,* Ed. Scott, viii, 229-30

[Eugenio, a scholar and a wit:]

He was the younger son to a gentleman of good birth, but small estate ; and his father dying, he was driven to London to seek his fortune : he got and became reader in a parish church, at twenty pounds a-year ; he was carried by an Oxford friend to Will's coffee house, frequented in those days by men of wit, where in some time he had the bad luck to be distinguished. His scanty salary compelled him to run deep in debt for a new gown and cassock, and now and then forced him to write some paper of wit or humour, or preach a sermon for ten shillings to supply his necessities. He was a thousand times recommended by his poetical friends to great persons as a young man of excellent parts who deserved encouragement, and received a thousand promises, but his modesty, and a generous spirit, which disdained the slavery of continual application and attendance, always disappointed him, making room for the greatest dunces, who were sure to be never out of sight.

He had an excellent faculty in preaching, if he were not sometimes a little too refined, and apt to trust too much to his own way of thinking and reasoning.

When, upon the vacancy of a preferment, he was hardly drawn to attend upon some promising lord, he received the usual answer, " That he came too late, for it had been given to another the day before." And he had only this comfort left, that every body said, " It was a thousand pities something could not be done for poor Mr. Eugenio."

The remainder of the story will be despatched in a few words: wearied with weak hopes, and weaker pursuits, he accepted a curacy in Derbyshire of thirty pounds a-year, and when he was five-and-forty, had the great felicity to be preferred by a friend of his father's to a vicarage worth annually sixty pounds, in the most desert parts of Lincolnshire; where, his spirits quite sunk with those reflections that solitude and disappointment bring, he married a farmer's widow, and is still alive, utterly undistinguished and forgotten; only some of the neighbours have accidentally heard that he had been a notable man in his youth.[1]

VI. EASTER MEDITATIONS

JOHNSON, *Prayers and Meditations* (1785). *Works,* 1825, vi. On *Easter Day,* April 7 [1776]

The time is again at which, since the death of my poor dear Tetty, on whom God have mercy, I have annually commemorated the mystery of the Redemption, and annually purposed to amend my life. My reigning sin, to which perhaps, many others are appendant, is waste of time, and general sluggishness, to which I was always inclined, and in part of my life, have been almost compelled by morbid melancholy and disturbance of mind. Melancholy has had in me its paroxysms and remissions, but I have not improved the intervals, nor sufficiently resisted my natural inclination, or sickly habits. I will resolve, henceforth, to rise at eight in the morning, so far as resolution is proper, and will pray that God will strengthen me. I have begun this morning.

Though for the past week I have had an anxious design of communicating to-day, I performed no particular act of devotion, till on Friday I went to Church. My design was to pass part of the day in exercises of piety, **but** Mr.

[1] This reflects the bitterness of Swift's own disappointment, **when his brilliant life as a wit in London and his services to his party were rewarded only with the Deanery of St. Patrick.**

Boswell interrupted me; of him, however, I could have rid myself, but poor Thrale, *orbus et exspes,* came for comfort and sat till seven, when we all went to church.

In the morning I had at church some radiations of comfort. I fasted, though less rigorously than at other times. I, by negligence, poured milk into the tea, and, in the afternoon drank one dish of coffee with Thrale ; yet at night, after a fit of drowsiness, I felt myself very much disordered by emptiness, and called for tea, with peevish and impatient eagerness. My distress was very great.

Yesterday, I do not recollect that to go to church came into "my thoughts ; but I sat in my chamber, preparing for preparation: interrupted, I know not how. I was near two hours at dinner.

I go now with hope,

To rise in the morning at eight.

To use my remaining time with diligence.

To study more accurately the Christian religion.

VII. METHODISTS, JUSTICES, AND THE MOB

JOHN WESLEY, *Diary,* Ed. N. Curnock, iii. p. 20

(a) *Wed.* 9. [June 1742.] I rode over to a neighbouring town [Crowle, Lincolnshire] to wait upon a Justice of Peace, a man of candour and understanding; before whom (I was informed) their angry neighbours had carried a whole wagon-load of these new heretics. But when he asked what they had done there was a deep silence ; for that was a point their conductors had forgot. At length one said, ' Why, they pretended to be better than other people ; and besides, they prayed from morning to night.' Mr. S[tovin] asked, ' But have they done nothing besides ? ' ' Yes, sir/ said an old man : ' an't please your worship, they have *convarted* my wife. Till she went among them, she had such a tongue ! And now she is as quiet as a lamb.' ' Carry them back, carry them back,' replied the Justice, **'and let** them convert all the scolds in **the town.'**

Ibid., iii. pp. 98-100

(b) *Thur.* 20. [Oct. 1743.] After preaching to a small, attentive congregation, I rode to Wednesbury. At 12 I preached in a ground near the middle of the town to a far larger congregation than was expected, on ' Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever/ I believe, every one present felt the power of God ; and no creature offered to molest us, either going or coming ; but the Lord fought for us, and we held our peace.

I was writing at Francis Ward's in the afternoon when the cry arose that the mob had beset the house. We prayed that God would disperse them, and it was so. One went this way and another that; so that in half an hour, not a man was left. I told our brethren, ' Now is the time for us to go ' ; but they pressed me exceedingly to stay; so, that I might not offend them, I sat down, though I foresaw what would follow. Before five, the mob surrounded the house again in greater numbers than ever. The cry of one and all was, " Bring out the minister we will have the minister/ I desired one to take their captain by the hand and bring him into the house. After a few sentences interchanged between us the lion was become a lamb. I desired him to go and bring in one or two more of the most angry of his companions. He brought in two, who were ready to swallow the ground with rage ; but in two minutes they were as calm as he. I then bade them make way, that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was in the midst of them I called for a chair, and standing up, asked,' What do any of you want with me ?' Some said, ' We want you to go with us to the Justice/ I replied, 'That I will, with all my heart/ I then spoke a few words, which God applied, so that they cried out with might and main, ' The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defence /' I asked, ' Shall we go to the Justice to-night or in the morning ?' Most of them cried,' To-night, to-night'; on which I went before, and two or three hundred followed, the rest returning whence they came.

The night came on before we had walked a mile, together with heavy rain. However, on we went to Bentley Hall, two miles from Wednesbury. One or two ran before to tell Mr. Lane that they had brought Mr. Wesley before his Worship. Mr. Lane replied, 'What have I to do with Mr. Wesley? Go and carry him back again.' By this time the main body came up, and began knocking at the door. A servant told them Mr. Lane was in bed. His son followed, and asked what was the matter. One replied, 'Why, an't please you, they sing psalms all day ; nay, and make folks rise at live in the morning. And what would your worship advise us to do ? ' 'To go home,' said Mr. Lane, 'and be quiet.'

Here they were at a full stop, till one advised them to go to Justice Persehouse at Walsall. All agreed to this; so we hastened on, and about seven came to his house. But Mr. P. likewise sent word that he was in bed. Now they were at a stand again; but at last they all thought it the wisest course to make the best of their way home. About fifty of them undertook to convey me. But we had not gone a hundred yards when the mob of Walsall came, pouring in like a flood, and bore down all before them. The Darlaston mob made what defence they could ; but they were weary, as well as outnumbered: so that in a short time, many being knocked down, the rest of *them ran away and left me in their hands.

To attempt speaking was vain, for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea. So they dragged me along till we came to the town, where, seeing the door of a large house open I attempted to go in ; but a man, catching me by the hair, pulled me back into the middle of the mob. They made no more stop till they had carried me through the main street, from one end of the town to the other. I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness. At the west end of the town, seeing a door half open, I made toward it, and would have gone in, but a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, saying they would pull the house down to

the ground. However, I stood at the door and asked, 'Are you willing to hear me speak?' Many cried out, 'No, no! knock his brains out; down with him, kill him at once.' Others said, 'Nay but we will hear him first!' I began asking, 'What evil have I done? Which of you all have 1 wronged in word or deed?' and continued speaking for above a quarter of an hour, till my voice suddenly failed. Then the floods began to lift up their voice again, many crying out, 'Bring him away! Bring him away!'

In the meantime my strength and my voice returned, and I broke out aloud into prayer. And now the man who just before headed the mob, turned and said, 'Sir, I will spend my life for you: follow me and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head.' Two or three of his fellows confirmed his words, and got close to me immediately. At the same time, the gentleman in the shop cried out, 'For shame, for shame! Let him go.' An honest butcher who was a little farther off, said it was a shame they should do thus, and pulled back four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The people then, as if it had been by common consent, fell back to right and left; while those three or four men took me between them, and carried me through them all. But on the bridge the mob rallied again: we therefore went on one side of the mill-dam, and thence through the meadows, till, a little before ten, God brought me safe to Wednesbury, having lost only one flap of my waistcoat and a little skin from one of my hands.

VIII. A FASHIONABLE VIEW OF THE METHODISTS

The Duchess of Buckingham to Lady Huntingdon, *c.* 1741. *Life and Times of Selina Countess of Huntingdon,* 1839, i. 27

I thank your ladyship for the information concerning the Methodist preachers; their doctrines are most repulsive, and strongly tinctured with impertinence and disrespect towards their superiors, in perpetually endeavouring to level all ranks, and do away with all distinctions. It is

monstrous **to** be **told that** you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting ; and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiment so much at variance with high rank and good breeding.

Your ladyship does me infinite honour by your obliging inquiries after my health. I shall be most happy to accept your kind honour of accompanying me to hear your favourite preacher,[1] and shall wait your arrival. The Duchess of Queensberry insists on my patronizing her on this occasion ; consequently she will be an *addition* to our party.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lady Huntingdon, your ladyship's most grateful and much obliged,

C. BUCKINGHAM.

[1] Probably Whitefield.

III

EDUCATION

Hail, horrors, hail I ye ever gloomy bowers,
Ye gothic fanes, and antiquated towers,
Where rushy Camus' slowly-winding flood
Perpetual draws his humid train of mud.
Hymn to Ignorance, GRAY, 1742.

Gibbon's gloomy picture (i) needs some qualification as a representation of university life. First, the intellectual stagnation of Cambridge is generally admitted to have been less than that of Oxford. Secondly, Gibbon writes as a gentleman commoner, poor men were apt to be more diligent, and though it is true that a degree could be obtained with scandalous ease, it was a common complaint that the universities bred pedants. There were many poor students at both universities as sizars, scholars or proteges of some patron, and these looked chiefly to the church as a means of advancement in the world. Though education was much influenced by hopes of patronage (ii), it was in some ways more democratic than it is to-day. Clearer distinctions between classes made for a more easy mixing of classes, especially in schools (v). Westminster and Eton were aristocratic schools (iii), but many tradesmen's sons were educated there, and Moore, who travelled on the continent for some years with the Duke of Hamilton, thought that this mixing of classes was of great value in English life. He writes in 1779, " In all the countries of Europe, England excepted, such a deference is paid to boys of rank at public schools that emulation . . . is greatly blunted. The boys in the middle rank of life are depressed by the insolence of their titled companions, which they are not allowed to correct or retaliate. . . . The public schools in England disdain this mean partiality, and are, on that

account, peculiarly useful to boys of high rank and fortune. . . . He will see a dunce of high rank flogged with as little ceremony as the son of a tailor, and the richest coward kicked about by his companions equally with the poorest poltroon." For the grand tour, an important part of the education of the upper classes, see below, Part II, IV, iv.

I. OXFORD IN 1752

GIBBON, *Memoirs of My Life and Writings*,[1] in *Works*, 1796, i. pp. 32-39

A traveller, who visits Oxford or Cambridge, is surprised and edified by the apparent order and tranquillity that prevail in the seats of the English muses. In the most celebrated universities of Holland, Germany, and Italy, the students, who swarm from different countries, are loosely dispersed in private lodgings at the houses of the burghers : they dress according to their fancy and fortune ; and in the intemperate quarrels of youth and wine, their swords, though less frequently than of old, are sometimes stained with each other's blood. The use of arms is banished from our English universities; the uniform habit of the academics, the square cap, and black gown, is adapted to the civil and even clerical profession ; and from the Doctor in Divinity to the undergraduate, the degrees of learning and age are externally distinguished. Instead of being scattered in a town, the students of Oxford and Cambridge are united in colleges ; their maintenance is provided at their own expense or that of the founders; and the stated hours of the hall and chapel represent the discipline of a regular, and as it were, a religious community. The eyes of the traveller are attracted by the size or beauty of the public edifices ; and the principal colleges appear to be so many palaces, which a liberal nation has erected and endowed for the habitation of science. My own introduction to the university of Oxford forms a new era in my life ; and at the distance of forty years I

[1] This, with a trifling alteration, is *Memoir B* in the *Autobiographies* Ed. John Murray, 1896.

still remember my first emotions of surprise and satisfaction. In my fifteenth year I felt myself suddenly raised from a boy to a man ; the persons whom I respected as my superiors in age and academical rank entertained me with every mark of attention and civility ; and my vanity was flattered by the velvet cap and silk gown, which distinguish a gentleman commoner from a plebeian student. A decent allowance, more money than a schoolboy had ever seen, was at my own disposal; and I might command, among the tradesmen of Oxford, an indefinite and dangerous latitude of credit. A key was delivered into my hands, which gave me the free use of a numerous and learned library, my apartment consisted of three elegant and well-furnished rooms in the new building, a stately pile, of Magdalen College, and the adjacent walks, had they been frequented by Plato's disciples, might have been compared to the Attic shade on the banks of the Ilissus. Such was the fair prospect of my entrance (April 3, 1752) into the University of Oxford. . . .

I spent fourteen months at Magdalen College ; they proved the fourteen months the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life : the reader will pronounce between the school and the scholar ; but I cannot affect to believe that Nature had disqualified me for all literary pursuits. The specious and ready excuse of my tender age, imperfect preparation, and hasty departure may doubtless be alleged, nor do I wish to defraud such excuses of their proper weight. Yet in my sixteenth year I was not devoid of capacity or application; even my childish reading had displayed an early though blind propensity for books ; and the shallow flood might have been taught to flow in a deep channel and a clear stream. . . .

Perhaps, in a separate annotation, I may coolly examine the fabulous and real antiquities of our sister universities, a question which has kindled such fierce and foolish disputes among their fanatic sons. In the meanwhile it will be acknowledged that these venerable bodies are sufficiently old to partake of the prejudices and infirmities of age. The

schools of Oxford and Cambridge were founded in a dark age of false and barbarous science; and they are **still tainted** with the vices of their origin. Their primitive discipline was adapted to the education of priests and monks; and the government still remains in the hands of the clergy, an order of men whose manners are remote from the present world, and whose eyes are dazzled by the light of philosophy. The legal incorporation of these societies by the charters of popes and kings had given them **a** monopoly of the public instruction; and the spirit of monopolists is narrow, lazy, and oppressive ; their work is more costly and less productive than that of independent artists ; and the new improvements so eagerly grasped by the competition of freedom, are admitted with slow and sullen reluctance in those proud corporations, above the fear of a rival, and below the confession of an error. We can scarcely hope that any reformation will be a voluntary act; and so deeply are they rooted in law and prejudice, that even the omnipotence of parliament would shrink from an inquiry into the state and abuses of the two universities. . . .

In all the universities of Europe, excepting our own, the languages and sciences are distributed among a numerous list of effective professors : the students, according to their taste, their calling, and their diligence, apply themselves to the proper masters ; and in the annual repetition of public and private lectures, these masters are assiduously employed. Our curiosity may enquire what number of professors has been instituted at Oxford ? (for I shall now confine myself to my own university;) by whom are they appointed and what may be the probable chances of merit or incapacity ? how many are stationed to the three faculties, and how many are left for the liberal arts ? what is the form and what the substance, of their lessons ? But all these questions are silenced by one short and singular answer, " That in the university of Oxford, the greater **part of** the public professors have for these many years given **up altogether even the pretence of teaching." Incred-**

ible as the fact may appear, I must rest my belief on the positive and impartial evidence of a master of moral and political wisdom, who had himself resided at Oxford. Dr. Adam Smith assigns as the cause of their indolence, that, instead of being paid by voluntary contributions, which would urge them to increase the number, and to deserve the gratitude of their pupils, the Oxford professors are secure in the enjoyment of a fixed stipend, without the necessity of labour, or the apprehension of control. . . .

The college of St. Mary Magdalen was founded in the fifteenth century by Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester; and now consists of a President, forty fellows, and a number of inferior students. It is esteemed one of the largest and most wealthy of our academical corporations, which may be compared to the Benedictine abbeys of Catholic countries ; and I have loosely heard that the estates belonging to Magdalen College, which are leased by those indulgent landlords at small quit-rents and occasional fines, might be raised, in the hands of private avarice, to an annual revenue of nearly thirty thousand pounds. Our colleges are supposed to be schools of science as well as of education ; nor is it unreasonable to expect that a body of literary men, devoted to a life of celibacy, exempt from the care of their own subsistence, and amply provided with books, should devote their leisure to the prosecution of study, and that some of their studies should be manifested to the world. The shelves of their library groan under the weight of the Benedictine folios, of the editions of the fathers, and the collections of the middle ages, which have issued from the single abbey of St. Germain des Prez at Paris. A composition of genius must be the offspring of one mind ; but such works of industry as may be divided among many hands, and must be continued during many years, are the peculiar province of a laborious .community. If I inquire into the manufactures of the monks of Magdalen, if I extend the inquiry to the other colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, a silent blush, or a scornful frown, will be the only reply. The fellows or monks of my time were

decent easy men, who supinely enjoyed the gifts of the founder; their days were filled by a series of uniform employments; the chapel and the hall, the coffee-house and the common room, till they retired, weary and well satisfied, to a long slumber. From the toil of reading, or thinking, or writing, they had absolved their conscience; and the first shoots of learning and ingenuity withered on the ground, without yielding any fruits to the owners or the public. As a gentleman commoner, I was admitted to the society of the fellows, and fondly expected that some questions of literature would be the amusing and instructive topics of their discourse. Their conversation stagnated in a round of college business, Tory politics, personal anecdotes, and private scandal: their dull and deep potations excused the brisk intemperance of youth ; and their constitutional toasts were not expressive of the most lively loyalty for the House of Hanover. A general election was now approaching: the great Oxfordshire contest already blazed with all the malevolence of party zeal. Magdalen College was devoutly attached to the old interest! and the names of Wenman and Dashwood were more frequently pronounced than those of Cicero and Chrysostom. The example of the senior fellows could not inspire the undergraduates with a liberal spirit of studious emulation ; and I cannot describe, as I never knew, the discipline of college. Some duties may possibly have been imposed on the poor scholars, whose ambition aspired to the peaceful honours of a fellowship *(ascribi quietis ordinibus . . . Deorum)* ; but no independent members were admitted below the rank of a gentleman commoner, and our velvet cap was the cap of liberty. A tradition prevailed that some of our predecessors had spoken Latin declamations in the hall, but of the ancient custom no vestige remained: the obvious methods of public exercises and examinations were totally unknown; and I have never heard that either the president or the society interfered in the private economy of the tutors and their pupils.

IL THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

W. COWPER, *Tirocinium*, or *A Review of Schools*, 1784, 11. 201-231, 297-4°4

Would you your son should be a sot or dunce,
Lascivious, headstrong, or all these at once ;
That, in good time, the stripling's finished taste
For loose expense and fashionable waste,
Should prove your ruin, and his own at last ;
Train him in public with a mob of boys,
Childish in mischief only and in noise,
Else of a mannish growth, and five in ten
In infidelity and lewdness men.
There shall he learn, ere sixteen winters old,
That authors are most useful, pawned or sold;
That pedantry is all the schools impart,
But taverns teach the knowledge of the heart;
There waiter Dick, with Bacchanalian lays,
Shall win his heart, and have his drunken praise,
His counsellor and bosom-friend shall prove,
And some street-pacing harlot his first love.
Schools, unless discipline were doubly strong,
Detain their adolescent charge too long;
The management of tyros of eighteen
Is difficult, their punishment obscene.
The stout tall captain, whose superior size
The minor heroes view with envious eyes,
Becomes their pattern, upon whom they fix
Their whole attention, and ape all his tricks.
His pride, that scorns to obey or to submit,
With them is courage, his effrontery wit;
His wild excursions, window-breaking feats,
Robbery of gardens, quarrels in the streets,
His hair-breadth 'scapes, and all his daring schemes,
Transport them, and are made their favourite themes.

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
We love the play-place of our early days.

The scene is touching, and the heart is stone
That feels not at that sight, and feels at none.
The walls on which we tried our graving skill,
The very name we carved subsisting still;
The bench on which we sat while deep-employed,
Though mangled, hacked and hewed, not yet destroyed:
The little ones, unbuttoned, glowing hot,
Playing our games, and on the very spot;
As happy as we once, to kneel and draw
The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw;
To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
Or drive it devious with a dexterous pat ;
The pleasing spectacle at once excites
Such recollection of our own delights
That, viewing it, we seem almost to obtain
Our innocent sweet simple years again.
This fond attachment to the well-known place
Whence first we started into life's long race
Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,
We feel it e'en in age, and at our latest day.
Hark! how the sire of chits, whose future share
Of classic food begins to be his care,
With his own likeness placed on either knee,
Indulges all a father's heartfelt glee ;
And tells them, as he strokes their silver locks,
That they must soon learn Latin, and to box :
Then turning he regales his listening wife
With all the adventures of his early life ;
His skill in coachmanship, or driving chaise,
In bilking tavern bills, and spouting plays;
What shifts he used detected in a scrape,
How he was flogged, or had the luck to escape ;
What sums he lost at play, and how he sold
Watch, seals and all—till all his pranks are told.
Retracing thus his *frolics* ('tis **a** name
That palliates deeds of folly and of shame),
He gives **the local** bias **all** its sway;
Resolves that where he played **his** sons **shall play,**

And destines their bright genius to be shown
Just in the scene where he displayed his own.
The meek and bashful boy will soon be taught
To be as bold and forward as he ought ;
The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,
Great schools suit best the sturdy and the rough.
Ah, happy designation, prudent choice,
Th' event is sure ; expect it and rejoice !
Soon see your wish fulfilled in either child,
The pert made pert er, and the tame made wild.
The great, indeed, by titles, riches, birth,
Excused the incumbrance of more solid worth,
Are best disposed of where with most success
They may acquire that confident address,
Those habits of profuse and lewd expense,
That scorn of all delights but those of sense,
Which though in plain plebeians we condemn,
With so much reason all expect from them.
But families of less illustrious fame,
Whose chief distinction is their spotless name,
Whose heirs, their honours none, their income small,
Must shine by true desert, or not at all,
What dream they of, that with so little care
They risk their hopes, their dearest treasure, there ?
They dream of little Charles or William graced
With wig prolix, down-flowing to his waist;
They see the attentive crowds his talents draw,
They hear him speak—the oracle of law.
The father, who designs his babe a priest,
Dreams him episcopally such at least;
And while the playful jockey scours the room
Briskly, astride upon the parlour broom,
In fancy sees him more superbly ride
In coach with purple lined, and mitres on its side.
Events improbable and strange as these,
Which only a parental eye foresees,
A public school shall bring to pass **with** ease.
But how ? resides such virtue in that air,

As must create an appetite for prayer ?
And will it breathe into him all the zeal
That candidates for such a place should feel,
To take the lead, and be the foremost still
In all true worth and literary skill ?
"Ah, blind to bright futurity, untaught
The knowledge of the world, and dull of thought !
Church-ladders are not always mounted best
By learned clerks and Latinists professed.
The exalted prize demands an upward look
Not *to* be found by poring on a book.
Small skill in Latin, and still less in Greek,
Is more than adequate to all I seek.
Let erudition grace him, or not grace,
I give the bauble but the second place ;
His wealth, fame, honours, all that I intend,
Subsist and centre in one point—a friend.
A friend, whate'er he studies or neglects,
Shall give him consequence, heal all defects.
His intercourse with peers, and sons of peers—
There dawns the splendour of his future years ;
In that bright quarter his propitious skies
Shall blush betimes, and there his glory rise.
Your lordship, and *Your Grace*, what school can teach
A rhetoric equal to those parts of speech ?
What need of Homer's verse, or Tully's prose,
Sweet interjections ! if he learn but those ?
Let reverend churls his ignorance rebuke,
Who starve upon a dog's-eared Pentateuch,
The parson knows enough who knows a duke."

III. A FRENCH IMPRESSION OF ENGLISH SCHOOLBOYS-WESTMINSTER AND ETON

P. GROSLEY, *A Tour to London* .... Translated ... by T. Nugent, 1772, i. 167-71

The public schools and universities, by bringing together persons of all ranks and conditions in life, put them, in

some measure, upon a level. A spirit of emulation reigns there which is excluded by domestic education : connexions are formed, which often lay the foundation of the greatest fortunes. " Such, say, the English, was the education at Sparta, calculated to form men, and not petit maitres

I have attended Westminster-school; and have seen Eton : which are the chief foundations of this sort. The children, who are all dressed alike, in the plainest manner imaginable, and who have their hair cut like our brethren *De la Charite,* with a band on their necks, shew how they are likely to turn out at the age of fifty. With faces, which are, generally speaking, very handsome, and with an air of the utmost mildness, they are the most intractable, and the most obstinate creatures, that ever came out of the hands of nature. In their deportment, in their very pastimes, their countenances shew nothing of that flexible disposition, and those winning graces, which elsewhere are discoverable in boys of their age : they do not betray their archness by those tricks, and those little frolics, the result of which is to laugh at the expense of their school-fellows. To make up for this, they are mad for violent exercises, the want of which they already feel: to be indulged in these exercises, is the greatest favour they expect from their masters. If, during their recreation, they listen to the conversation of their tutors, generally speaking, this turns upon politics, and either tires and disgusts them, or inspires them with an early taste for subjects of that nature.

As we sailed up the Thames from Windsor to Eton, at about fifty paces from the college, we came to the head of a mill-bank, where were three of the grown scholars, who had hid themselves amongst the reeds, to erect a little battery: we passed by them, and were saluted with a general discharge, which would, doubtless, have peppered us most terribly, if they had been better marksmen. We were obliged to them for their good intention ; and arrived at the college, after having crossed a meadow, which

separates it from the Thames. It was then sun-set, the damps began to fall, and the grass was covered with a dewy moisture : yet at this very time we saw about sixty of the boys in their shirts, dripping with sweat, and playing at cricket. A pretty youth, nearly related to the Earl of Chesterfield, upon seeing me, quitted his play, and came to pay his respects. With astonishment, I heard, that he and his companions took this recreation every day, at the same hour, and in the same place. These boys, were watched by one person only, at some distance, who sat upon the banks of the Thames, with a book in his hand.

I have elsewhere spoken of the quarrels, which happen amongst those boys, especially in their walks; quarrels, which the day following, or when first an opportunity offers, they decide by fisticuffs, with the resolution and obstinacy of boxers by profession. Scarce can the presence of the most respectable company keep the young people in awe. Could we suppose an assembly of that sort, it was surely that, which met in Westminster-hall, when Lord Byron was brought to a trial.[1] At the head of the enclosure which was set apart for the peers, over whom the lord-chancellor presided as high-steward, stood a throne ; which though it was not occupied by the king, represented royal majesty in judgement. The children of the noblest families in England, dressed in little frocks, which they wear at school, and which confounds them with the offspring of citizens and the lower sort of people, were crowded on the steps going to the throne, and seemed very attentive to the proceedings of the court. But they soon afterwards began to behave like themselves, as soon as the peers entered into debate upon the several articles of the accusation ; then they rolled about the steps of the throne, quarrelled, swallowed down apples, with which their pockets were crammed, and threw the remainder in each other's faces. I even saw some of them fling bits of apples into the enormous periwig of the lord-high steward, who was

[1] For killing Mr. Chaworth in a duel, 1765.

the more conveniently seated for the purpose, as **the back** of his seat was towards the throne : he turned about two or three times, with a complacent air, which seemed to shew, that he took their freedom in good part. In a word, I never saw youths behave in a less decent manner, or appear less sensible of the dignity of a magistrate.

IV. THE SCHOOLMASTER'S LOT

GOLDSMITH, *The Vicar of Wakefield,* 1766, chap, xx

'Upon my arrival in town, Sir, my first care was to deliver your letter of recommendation to our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than I. My first scheme, you know, Sir, was to be usher at an academy; and I asked his advice on the affair. Our cousin received the proposal with a true sardonic grin. "Ay", cried he "this is indeed a very pretty career that has been chalked out for you. I have been an usher at a boarding school myself; and may I die by an anodyne necklace,[1] but I had rather be an under-turnkey in Newgate. I was up early and late : I was browbeat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys within, and never permitted to stir out to meet civility abroad. But are you sure you are fit for a school ? Let me examine you a little. Have you been bred apprentice to the business ? "—" No."—" Then you won't do for a school. Can you dress the boys' hair ? "—" No."—" Then you won't do for a school. Have you had the smallpox ? "—" No."—" Then you won't do for a school. Can you lie three in a bed? "—"No."-—"Then you will never do for a school. Have you got a good stomach ? "—" Yes."—"Then you will by no means do for a school. No, sir : if you are for a genteel, easy profession, bind yourself seven years an apprentice to turn a cutler's wheel; but avoid a school by any means. . . ."

[1] For an explanation of this allusion, see below, I, VI, iii.

V. PARTRIDGE, A COUNTRY SCHOOLMASTER

HENRY FIELDING, *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling,* II, iii

Indeed, though this poor man had undertaken a profession to which learning must be allowed necessary, this was the least of his commendations. He was one of the best-natured fellows in the world, and was, at the same time, master of so much pleasantry and humour, that he was reputed the wit of the country; and all the neighbouring gentlemen were so desirous of his company, that as denying was not his talent, he spent much time at their houses, which he might, with more emolument, have spent in his school.

It may be imagined that a gentleman so qualified and so disposed, was in no danger of becoming formidable to the learned seminaries of Eton or Westminster. To speak plainly, his scholars were divided into two classes : in the upper of which was a young gentleman, the son of a neighbouring squire, who at the age of seventeen, was just entered into his Syntaxis ; and in the lower was a second son of the same gentleman, who, together with seven parish boys, was learning to read and write.

The stipend arising hence would hardly have indulged the schoolmaster in the luxuries of life, had he not added *to* this office those of clerk and barber, and had not Mr. Airworthy added to the whole an annuity of ten pounds, which the poor man received every Christmas, and with which he was enabled to cheer his heart during that sacred festival.

VI. THE DISCIPLINE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STEELE, *Spectator,* No. 168. *September* 12, 1711

'Mr. Spectator,

' I send you this to congratulate your late choice of a subject, for treating of which you deserve public thanks ; I mean that on those licensed tyrants the schoolmasters.[1]

[1] *Spectator,* **No. 157, also by Steele.**

If you can disarm them of their rods, you will certainly have your old age reverenced by all the young gentlemen of Great Britain who are now between seven and seventeen years. . . .

' I was bred myself, sir, in a very great school, of which the master was a Welshman, but certainly descended from a Spanish family, as plainly appeared from his temper as well as his name.[1] I leave you to judge what a sort of school-master **a** Welshman ingrafted on a Spaniard would make. So very dreadful had he made himself to me, that although it is above twenty years since I felt his heavy hand, yet still once a month at least I dream of him, so strong an impression did he make on my mind. 'Tis a sign he has fully terrified me waking, who still continues *to* haunt me sleeping.

' And yet I may say without vanity, that the business of the school was what I did without great difficulty; and I was not remarkably unlucky ; and yet such was the master's severity, that once a month, or oftener, I suffered as much as would have satisfied the law of the land for a petty larceny.[2]

' Many a white and tender hand, which the fond mother has passionately kissed a thousand and a thousand times, have I seen whipped until it was covered with blood ; perhaps for smiling, or for going a yard and a half out of a gate, or for writing an O for an A, or an A for an O. These were our great faults ! Many a brave and noble spirit has been there broken; others have run from thence and were never heard of afterwards. It is a worthy attempt to undertake the cause of distressed youth ; and it is a noble piece of knight-errantry to enter the lists against so many armed pedagogues. Tis pity but we had a set of men, polite in their behaviour and method of teaching, who should be put into a condition of being above flattering or fearing the parents of those they instruct. We might **then possibly see learning become a pleasure, and cliildren**

[1] Dr. Charles Roderick, Headmaster of Eton.
[2] See below, X, I I I .

delighting themselves in that which now they abhor for coming upon such hard terms to them. What would be still a greater happiness arising from the care of such instructors, would be, that we should have no more pedants, nor any bred to learning who had not genius for it. I am, with the utmost sincerity,

'Sir,

' Your most affectionate,

' Humble Servant.'

VII. SCHOLASTIC DISCIPLINE—ANOTHER VIEW

BOSWELL, *Life of Johnson,* ii. 144-5

[Boswell to Johnson :]

"I am coming to London soon, and am to appear in an appeal from the Court of Session to the House of Lords. A schoolmaster in Scotland was, by a court of inferior jurisdiction, deprived of his office, for being somewhat severe in the chastisement of his scholars. The Court of Session, considering it to be dangerous to the interest of learning and education, to lessen the dignity of teachers, and make them afraid of too indulgent parents, instigated by the complaints of their children, restored him. His enemies have appealed to the House of Lords, though the salary is only twenty pounds a year. . . ."

[Johnson's advice :] ii. 157

We went to the Mitre, and dined in the room where he and I first supped together. He gave me great hopes of my cause. ' Sir, (said he,) the government of a schoolmaster is somewhat of the nature of military government ; that is to say, it must be arbitrary, it must be exercised by the will of one man, according to particular circumstances. You must shew some learning upon this occasion. You must shew, that a schoolmaster has a prescriptive right to beat; and that an action of assault and battery cannot be admitted against him, unless there is some great excess, some barbarity. This man has

maimed none of his boys. They are all left with the full exercise of their corporeal faculties. In our schools in England, many boys have been maimed; yet I never heard of an action against a schoolmaster on that account. Puffendorf, I think, maintains the right of a schoolmaster to beat his scholars.'

[Johnson dictates notes to Boswell for his speech in defence of the schoolmaster.] ii. 183

" The charge is, that he has used immoderate and cruel correction. Correction, in itself, is not cruel; children, being not reasonable, can be governed only by fear. To impress this fear, is therefore one of the first duties of those who have the care of children. It is the duty of a parent; and has never been thought inconsistent with parental tenderness. It is the duty of a master, who is in his highest exaltation when he is *loco parentis.* Yet, as good things become evil by excess, correction, by being immoderate, may become cruel. But when is correction immoderate ? When it is more frequent or more severe than is required *ad monendum et docendum,* for reformation and instruction. No severity is cruel which obstinacy makes necessary; for the greatest cruelty would be, to desist, and leave the scholar too careless for instruction, and too much hardened for reproof. Locke, in his treatise of Education, mentions a mother, with applause, who whipped an infant eight times before she subdued *it* ; for had she stopped at the seventh act of correction, her daughter, says he, would have been ruined. The degrees of obstinacy in young minds, are very different: as different must be the degrees of persevering severity. A stubborn scholar must be corrected till he is subdued. . . . The degrees of scholastic, as of military punishment, no stated rules can ascertain. It must be enforced till it overpowers temptation ; till stubbornness becomes flexible, and perverseness regular. Custom and reason have, indeed, set some bounds to scholastic penalties. The schoolmaster inflicts no capital punishments; nor enforces his edicts

by either death or mutilation. The civil law has wisely determined, that a master who strikes at a scholar's eye shall be considered as criminal. But punishments, however severe, that produce no lasting evil, may be just and reasonable, because they may be necessary. . . ."

[The schoolmaster lost his case " after a very eloquent speech by Lord Mansfield."] ii. 186

I repeated a sentence of Lord Mansfield's speech . . . ' My Lords, severity is not the way to govern either boys or men.'* ' Nay (said Johnson), it is the way to *govom* them, I know not whether it be the way to *mend* them.'

VIII. A DEFENCE OF CHARITY SCHOOLS

Dr. ISAAC WATTS, *An Essay towards the Encouragement of Charity Schools*, 1728

The good education of children is an important duty of parents, and a very valuable blessing to the rising age ; yet there are great multitudes of parents in the lower rank of life, who are so ignorant that they are incapable of instructing their own children well in the knowledge of things that belong to this world or another : Or if they have knowledge, yet some are so exceeding poor that they can hardly withhold time enough from earning their bread to spend in the careful education of their sons and their daughters. And among these poorer parts of mankind there are others, who are too careless in this important concern, though the welfare of their children, here and hereafter, seems to depend upon it. And there are great numbers also who die in poverty, and leave their young offspring behind them untaught and grievously exposed.

What must be done in this case ? Must all those children who are so unhappy as to be born of poor or ignorant parents, grow up like the brutes of the earth, without education ? Must they be abandoned to the wildness of their own nature, and be let run loose and savage in the streets ?

[1] A principle ascribed to his experience of Westminster School under John Nicoll. J. Sargeaunt, *Annals of Westminster School, 1898*, P 168

Shall no care be taken **to** inform their minds, to curb their passions, and to make them speak and act like reasonable creatures, and live useful to the world? . . .

I proceed now to give some answers to the common objections against all our charity schools for the instruction of the poor.

Objection I.

There is no need of any learning at all for the meanest ranks of mankind: Their business is to labour, not to think: Their duty is to do what they are commanded, to fill up the most servile posts, and to perform the lowest offices and drudgeries of life for the convenience of their superiors, and common nature gives them knowledge enough for this purpose. . . .

Objection VIII.

But if these children of the poor who are supported by the charity of others be trained up in reading, writing and arithmetic, will not this render them qualified for *clerkships, or book-keeping, or any better sort of place or employment,* where learning is necessary? And then they become " competitors for such places as others of equal talents, who have yet far better pretences to them." The sons of tradesmen and mechanics, who have paid public taxes and parish-dues, and even have given bread and clothes to the poor, their sons have a right to be employed in all these stations, as clerks or servants to merchants and others, wherein there is a prospect of advancement in life: And there are a thousand such in England; but if the charity-bred youth are preferred before them, 'tis taking the bread from those whose fathers have fed and clothed and fostered them, to the prejudice of their own children.

Answer. The foregoing account of the slender and low degrees of learning which are bestowed on the children in our charity-schools, seems to anticipate and exclude this complaint. There are none of these poor who are, or ought to be, bred up to such an accomplished skill in writing and accounts as to be qualified for any of these posts; except here and there a single lad, whose bright genius

and whose constant application and industry have outrun all his fellows : And **for** such an one I have pleaded before, that he might not be thrust out of school the sooner, and be punished merely for his ingenuity and diligence. . . .

If you have any desire that the poor of this nation should not be left to grow up in all manner of vice and iniquity, if you have any value for the preservation of property, for the propagation of virtue or religion and the transmission of them to the next age, if you have any tenderness for the immortal souls of mankind, and any zeal for the honour of God in the growing generation, bestow a mite towards the support of this most useful and generous charity. Give something towards the instruction and education of a company of wretched young creatures, that they may be rescued from the vile company of those that curse and swear, rob and steal, that they may be kept from fatal temptations to drunkenness, lewdness and vile intemperance, and preserved from sin and ruin.

IV

WOMEN'S EDUCATION

A little wit is valued in a woman, as we are pleased with a few words spoken plain by a parrot.

SWIFT, *Thoughts on Various Subjects,* 1706.

All our ladies read now, which is a great extension.

JOHNSON (1778).

These disparaging accounts of women and their education do not of course mean that there were no sensible, witty, charming, well-educated women in the earlier part of the eighteenth century. But during Johnson's life-time there were conspicuous changes, both in education itself and in the attitude towards learned ladies. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's complaints (iii) were far from applying to the age of the blue stockings when Sophy Streatfield's Greek was almost as much a subject of admiration as her tears or her "ivory neck" (iv). Swift, writing to Mrs. Delany in 1736, says that " the ladies in general are *extremely mended* both in writing and reading since I was young. . . . A woman of quality who had *excellent* good sense was formerly my correspondent, but she scrawled and spelt like a Wapping wench, having been brought up in a Court at a time before reading was thought of any use for a female ".

I. THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS

STEELE, *The Spectator,* No. 66. May 16, 1711

When a girl is safely brought from her nurse, before she is capable of forming one simple notion of any thing in life, she is delivered to the hands of her dancing-master; and with a collar round her neck, the pretty wild thing is

taught a fantastical gravity of behaviour, and forced to a particular way of holding her head, heaving her breast, and moving with her whole body ; and all this under pain of never having an husband, if she steps, looks, or moves awry. This gives the young lady wonderful workings of imagination, what is to pass between her and this husband, that she is every moment told of, and for whom she seems to be educated. Thus her fancy is engaged to turn all her endeavours to the ornament of her person, as what must determine her good and ill in this life; and she naturally thinks, if she is tall enough, she is wise enough for any thing for which her education makes her think she is designed. To make her an agreeable person is the main purpose of her parents; to that is all their cost, to that is all their care directed ; and from this general folly of parents we owe our present numerous race of coquettes. . . . But sure there is a middle way to be followed ; the management of a young lady's person is not to be overlooked, but the erudition of her mind is much more to be regarded.

IL THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS, 1728

W. LAW, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life,* 1729, 351-355

Matilda is a fine woman of good *breeding,* great *sense* and much *religion.* She has three daughters that are educated by herself. She will not trust them with any one else, or at any *school* for fear they should learn any thing ill. She stays with the *dancing-master* all the time he is with them, because she will hear every thing that is said to them. She has heard them read the scriptures so often, that they can repeat great part of it without book: and there is scarce a good book of *devotion,* but you may find it in their *closets.*

Had *Matilda* lived in the first ages of Christianity, when it was practised in the *fulness* and *plainness* of its doctrines, she had in all probability been one of its greatest saints. But as she was born in corrupt times, where she wants

examples of Christian perfection, and hardly ever saw a piety higher than her own ; so she has many defects, and communicates them all to her daughters.

Matilda was never *meanly* dressed in her life; and nothing pleases her in *dress,* but that which is very *rich* and *beautiful* to the eye.

Her daughters see her great zeal for religion, but then they see an equal earnestness for all sorts of *finery.* They see she is not negligent of her *devotion,* but then they see her more careful to preserve her *complexion,* and to prevent those changes, which time and age threaten her with.

They are afraid to meet her if they have missed the *church,* but then they are more afraid to see her if they are not *laced* as *straight* as they can possibly be.

She often shows them her *own picture,* which was taken when their father fell in love with her. She tells them, how *distracted* he was with passion at the *first sight* of her, and that she had never had so *fine a complexion,* but for the diligence of her good mother, who took exceeding care of it.

Matilda is so intent upon all the arts of improving their *dress,* that she has some *new fancy* almost every day, and leaves no ornament untried, from the richest *jewel* to the poorest *flower.* She is so nice and critical in her judgment, so sensible of the smallest error, that the *maid* is often forced to dress and undress her daughters three or four times a day, before she can be satisfied with it.

As to the *patching,* she reserves that for herself; for, she says, if they are not stuck on with judgment, they are rather a prejudice than an ornament to *the face.*

The children see so plainly the *temper* of their mother, that they even affect to be *more pleased* with dress, and to be more fond of every little ornament, than they really are, merely to gain her favour.

They saw their eldest sister once brought to her *tears,* and her *perverseness* severely reprimanded, for presuming to say, that she thought it was better to cover the *neck,* than to go so *far naked* as the modern dress requires.

She stints them in their *meals,* **and** is very scrupulous **of** what they eat and drink, and tells them how many *fine shapes* she has seen spoiled in her time, for want of such care. If a *pimple* rises in their faces, she is in a great fright, and they themselves are as afraid to see her with it, as if they had committed some great sin.

Whenever they begin to look too *sanguine* and *healthful,* she calls in the assistance of the *doctor* ; and if *physic,* or *issues,* will keep the complexion from inclining to *coarse* or *ruddy,* she thinks them well employed.

By this means they are *poor, pale, sickly, infirm,* creatures, *vapoured* through want of spirits, *crying* at the smallest accidents, *swooning* away at any thing that frights them, and hardly able to bear the *weight* of their best clothes.

The eldest daughter lived as long as she could under this discipline, and died in the twentieth year of her age.

When her body was opened, it appeared that her *ribs* had grown into her *liver,* and that her other *entrails* were much hurt by being *crushed* together with her *stays,* which her mother had ordered to be twitched so straight that it often brought tears to her eyes, whilst the maid was dressing her.

Her youngest daughter is run away with a *gamester,* a man of great beauty, who in *dressing* and *dancing* has no superior.

Matilda says she should die of grief at this accident, but that her *conscience* tells her, she has contributed nothing to it herself. She appeals to their *closets,* to their books of devotion, to testify what care she has taken to establish her children in a life of solid piety and devotion.

Now though I don't intend to say, that no daughters are brought up in a *better way* than this, for I hope there are many that are ; yet thus much I believe may be said, that the much greater part of them, are not brought up **so well, or** accustomed **to** so **much religion, as in the present** instance.

Their minds are turned so **much to the care of their**

beauty and dress, and the indulgence of vain desires, as in the present case, without having such rules of devotion to stand against *it.* So that if *solid* piety, *humility* and a *sober sense* of themselves, is much wanted in that sex, it is the plain and natural consequence of a vain and corrupt education.

And if they arc often too ready to receive the first *fops, beaux,* and fine *dancers,* for their husbands; it is no wonder they should like that in men, which they have been taught to admire in themselves.

And if they are often seen to lose that little religion they were taught in their youth, it is no more to be wondered at, than to see a *little flower* choked and killed amongst *rank weeds.*

III. THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU, *Letters and Works,* 1861, ii. 229-30, 242

Lady Mary to her daughter, *March* 6, 1753.

. . . My own was one of the worst in the world, being exactly the same as Clarissa Harlowe's; her pious Mrs. Norton so perfectly resembling my governess, who had been nurse to my mother, I could almost fancy the author was acquainted with her. She took so much pains, from my infancy, to fill my head with superstitious tales and false notions, it was none of her fault I am not at this day afraid of witches and hobgoblins, or turned methodist. Almost all girls are bred after this manner. I believe you are the only woman (perhaps I might say, person) that never was either frighted or cheated into anything by your parents. . . . I could give many examples of ladies whose ill conduct has been very notorious, which has been owing to that ignorance which has exposed them to idleness, which is justly called the mother of mischief. There is nothing so like the education of a woman of quality as that of a prince : they are taught to dance, and the exterior part of what is called good breeding, which if they attain,

they are extraordinary creatures in their kind, and have all the accomplishments required by their directors. The same characters are formed by the same lessons, which inclines me to think (if I dare say it) that nature has not placed us in an inferior rank to men, no more than the females of other animals, where we see no distinction of capacity; though, I am persuaded, if there was a commonwealth of rational horses (as Dr. Swift has supposed), it would be an established maxim among them, that a mare could not be taught to pace.

October 10, 1753.

I confess I have often been complimented, since I have been in Italy, on the books I have given to the public. I used at first to deny it with some warmth ; but finding I persuaded nobody, I have of late contented myself with laughing whenever I heard it mentioned, knowing the character of a learned woman is far from being ridiculous in this country, the greatest families being proud of having produced female writers. . . . To say truth, there is no part of the world where our sex is treated with so much contempt as in England. I do not complain of men for having engrossed the government: in excluding us from all degrees of power, they preserve us from many fatigues, many dangers, and perhaps many crimes. The small proportion of authority that has fallen to my share (only over a few children and servants) has always been a burden, and never a pleasure, and I believe every one finds *it* so who acts from a maxim (I think an indispensable duty), that whoever is under my power is under my protection. Those who find a joy in inflicting hardships, and seeing objects of misery, may have other sensations ; but I have always thought corrections, even when necessary, as painful to the giver as to the sufferer, and am therefore very well satisfied with the state of subjection we are placed in : but I think it the highest injustice to be debarred the entertainment of my closet, and that the same studies that raise the character of a man should hurt that of a

woman. We are educated in the grossest ignorance, and no art omitted to stifle our natural reason; if some few get above their nurses' instructions, our knowledge must rest concealed, and be as useless to the world as gold in the mine. I am now speaking according to our English notions, which may wear out, some ages hence, along with others equally absurd.

IV. BLUE STOCKINGS

Fanny Burncy to her sister, Mrs. Phillips. *March* 19, 1782. *Diary,* ii. 76-7

Do you know they have put me again into the newspapers, in a copy of verses made upon literary ladies,—where are introduced Mrs. Carter, Chapone, Cowley, Hannah More, Mrs. Grcville, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Thrale, Mrs. Crewe, Sophy Streatfield, and Mrs. Montagu ? In such honourable company, to repine at being placed, would perhaps be impertinent; so I take it quietly enough ; but I would to Heaven I could keep clear of the whole ! However, my dear father is so delighted, that though he was half afraid of speaking to me about them at first, he carries them constantly in his pocket, and reads them to every-body!

[From a corrected copy found among Dr. Burney's papers, there is every reason to suppose he wrote them himself. They appeared in the *Morning Herald* for March 12, 1782 :]

Iierald! haste, with me proclaim
Those of literary fame,
Hannah More's pathetic pen,
Painting high th' impassioed scene,
Carter's piety and learning,
Little Burney's quick discerning ;
Cowley's neatly pointed wit,
Healing those her satire hit;
Smiling Streatfield's iv'ry neck,
Nose and notions—*a la Grecque!*

V

AUTHORS, PUBLISHERS AND PATRONS

Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause a while from Letters to be wise ;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail.
See Nations slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.

JOHNSON, *The Vanity of Human Wishes,* 1749.

Thus the soft gifts of sleep conclude the day,
And stretch'd on bulks, as usual, Poets lay.

POPE, *The Dunciad,* ii. 419.

PATRON, One who countenances, supports or protects. Commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid with flattery.

JOHNSON, *Dictionary,* 1755.

Johnson's lifetime covers the transition from the great age of the patron of letters (under Anne) to the age when the chief support of the author was the reading public (vii). In this transition the booksellers, as publishers, played an important part (ii, iv). Nevertheless, literary patronage did not disappear—the principle of patronage was too closely interwoven with the fabric of society for that, and publication by subscription—a sort of joint stock patronage—survived in spite of its abuse.

I. MEN OF LETTERS IN ENGLAND

VOLTAIRE, *Letters concerning the English Nation [Lettres Philosophiques."]*[1] (Transl. 1733) 224-6.

The *English* have so great a veneration for exalted talents, that a man of merit in their country is always

[1] When Voltaire wrote, the palmy days of patronage were over; his letter is directed against conditions in France.

sure of making his fortune. Mr. *Addison* in *France* would have been elected a member of one of the academies, and, by the credit of some women, might have obtained a yearly pension of twelve hundred livres ; or else might have been imprisoned in the *Bastile,* upon pretence that certain speeches in his tragedy of *Cato* had been discovered, which glanced at the porter of some man in power. Mr. *Addison* was raised to the post of Secretary of State in *England.* Sir *Isaac Newton* was made warden of the Royal Mint. Mr. *Congreve* had a considerable employment. Mr. *Prior* was plenipotentiary. Dr. *Swift* is Dean of St. *Patrick* in *Dublin,* and is more revered in *Ireland* than the Primate himself. The religion which Mr. *Pope* professes excludes him indeed from preferments of every kind, but then it did not prevent his gaining two hundred thousand livres by his excellent translation of *Homer.* I myself saw a long time in France the author of *Rhadamistus* [Crebillon *pere]* ready to perish for hunger. . . .

But the circumstance which mostly encourages the arts in *England,* is the great veneration which is paid them. The picture of the Prime Minister hangs over the chimney of his own closet, but I have seen that of Mr. *Pope* in twenty noblemen's houses. Sir *Isaac Newton* was revered in his lifetime and had a due respect paid to him after his death ; the greatest men in the nation disputing who should have the honour of holding up his pall. Go into *Westminster Abbey,* and you'll find that what raises the admiration of the spectator, is not the mausoleums of the *English* kings, but the monuments which the gratitude of the nation has erected, to perpetuate the memory of those illustrious men who contributed to its glory.

II. BOOKSELLERS, AUTHORS AND CRITICS

Pope to the Earl of Burlington, 1716. *Works,* ed. Elwin and Courthope, 1886, x, 205-10

My Lord,—If your mare could speak, she would give an account of what extraordinary company she had on the road ; which since she cannot do, I will.

It was the enterprising Mr. Lintot, the redoubtable rival of Mr. Tonson, who, mounted on a stone-horse (no disagreeable companion to your lordship's mare), overtook me in Windsor-forest. He said, he heard I designed for Oxford, the seat of the Muses, and would, as my bookseller, by all means accompany me thither.

I asked him where he got his horse ? He answered he got it of his publisher: " For that rogue my printer (said he) disappointed me : I hoped to put him in a good humour by a treat at the tavern, of a brown fricassee of rabbits, which cost two shillings, with two quarts of wine, besides my conversation. I thought myself cocksure of his horse, which he readily promised me, but said that Mr. Tonson had just such another design of going to Cambridge, expecting there the copy of a new kind of Horace from Dr. [Bentley], and if Mr. Tonson went, he was pre-engaged to attend him, being to have the printing of the said copy.

" So in short, I borrowed this stone-horse of my publisher, which he had of Mr. Oldmixon for a debt; he lent me too the pretty boy you see after me : he was a smutty dog yesterday, and cost me near two hours to wash the ink off his face ; but the devil is a fair-conditioned devil, and very forward in his catechise : if you have any more bags, he shall carry them."

I thought Mr. Lintot's civility not to be neglected, so gave the boy a small bag, containing three shirts and an Elzevir Virgil; and mounting in an instant proceeded on the road, with my man before, my courteous stationer beside, and the aforesaid devil behind.

Mr. Lintot began in this manner: " Now damn them ! what if they should put it into the newspaper, how you and I went together to Oxford ? what would I care ? If I should go down into Sussex, they would say I was gone to the Speaker. But what of that ? If my son were but big enough to go on with the business, by G—d I would keep as good company as old Jacob."

Hereupon I inquired of his son. " The lad (says he)

has fine parts, but is somewhat sickly, much as you are. —I spare nothing for his education at Westminster. Pray don't you think Westminster to be the best school in England? most of the late ministry came out of it, so did many of this ministry. I hope the boy will make his fortune."

Don't you design to let him pass a year at Oxford? "To what purpose? (said he) the Universities do but make pedants, and I intend to breed him a man of business."

As Mr. Lintot was talking, I observed he sat uneasy in his saddle, for which I expressed some solicitude; Nothing, (says he,) I can bear it well enough; but since we have the day before us, methinks it would be very pleasant for you to rest awhile under the woods. When we were alighted: "See here, what a mighty pretty Horace I have in my pocket! what if you amused yourself in turning an ode, till we mount again? Lord! if you pleased, what a clever Miscellany might you make at leisure hours?" Perhaps I may, said I, if we ride on; the motion is an aid to my fancy, a round trot very much awakens my spirits; then jog on apace, and I'll think as hard as I can.

Silence ensued for a full hour; after which Mr. Lintot lugged the reins, stopped short, and broke out, "Well, Sir, how far have you gone?" I answered, Seven miles. "Z—ds, Sir," said Lintot, "I thought you had done seven stanzas. Oldsworth, in a ramble round Wimbleton-hill, would translate a whole ode in half this time. **I'll** say that for Oldsworth (though I lost by his Timothy's) he translates an ode of Horace the quickest of any man in England. I remember Dr. King would write verses in a tavern three hours after he could not speak: and there is Sir Richard,[1] in that rumbling old chariot of his, between Fleet-ditch and St. Giles's pound, shall make you half a Job."

Pray, Mr. Lintot, (said I,) now you talk of translators,

[1] **Sir Richard Blackmore, author of *Paraphrase on the Book of Job*, 1700.**

what is **your** method **of** managing them ? " **Sir,** (replied he,) they are the saddest pack of rogues in the world: in a hungry fit, they'll swear they understand all the languages in the universe. I have known one of them take down a Greek book upon my counter, and cry, Ah, this is Hebrew, I must read it from the latter end. By G—d, I can never be sure in these fellows, for I neither understand Greek, Latin, French, nor Italian myself. But this is my way; I agree with them for ten shillings per sheet, with a proviso, that I will have their doings corrected by whom I please ; so by one or other they are led at last to the true sense of an author ; my judgment giving the negative to all my translators." But how are you secure those correctors may not impose upon you ? "Why I get any civil gentleman (especially any Scotchman) that comes into my shop, to read the original to me in English ; by this I know whether my first translator be deficient, and whether my corrector merits his money or not.

"I'll tell you what happened to me last month. I bargained with S. [Dr. Se wel] for a new version of Lucretius to publish against Tonson's; agreeing to pay the author so many shillings at his producing so many lines. He made a great progress in a very short time, and I gave it to the corrector to compare with the Latin ; but he went directly to Creech's translation and found it the same word for word, all but the first page. Now, what d'ye think I did ? I arrested the translator for a cheat; nay, and I stopped the corrector's pay too, upon this proof that he had made use of Creech instead of the original."

Pray tell me next how you deal with the critics ? "Sir," said he, "nothing more easy. I can silence the most-formidable of them : the rich ones for a sheet apiece of the blotted manuscript, which cost me nothing; they'll go about with it to their acquaintance, and pretend they had *it* from the author, who submitted to their correction : this has given some of them such an air, that in time they **come to be consulted with, and dictated to, as the top**

critics of the town.—As for the poor critics, FU give you one instance of my management, by which you may guess the rest: a lean man that looked like a very good scholar, came to me t'other day; he turned over your Homer, shook his head, shrugged up his shoulders, and pished at every line of it: One would wonder (says he) at the strange presumption of some men : Homer is no such easy task, that every stripling, every versifier—he was going on, when my wife called to dinner : Sir, said I, will you please to eat a piece of beef with me ? Mr. Lintot, said he, I am really concerned you should be at the expense of this great book, I am really concerned on your account—Sir, I am much obliged to you: if you can dine upon a piece of beef, together with a slice of pudding—Mr. Lintot, I do not say but Mr. Pope, if he would condescend to advise with men of learning—Sir, the pudding is upon the table, if you please to go in. My critic complies, he comes to a taste of your poetry, and tells me in the same breath, that the book is commendable, and the pudding excellent.

" Now, sir, (continued Mr. Lintot,) in return to the frankness I have shown, pray tell me, is it the opinion of your friends at Court that my Lord Lansdown will be brought to the bar or not ?" I told him I heard he would not, and I hoped it, my Lord being one I had particular obligations to.—"That may be," replied Mr. Lintot, "but by G—, if is he not, I shall lose the printing of a very good trial."

These, my Lord, are a few of the traits by which you discern the genius of Mr. Lintot, which I have chosen for the subject of a letter. I dropped him as soon as I got to Oxford, and paid a visit to my Lord Carleton, at Middleton.

The conversations I enjoy here are not to be prejudiced by my pen, and the pleasures from them only to be equalled when I meet your Lordship. I hope in a few days to cast myself from your horse at your feet. I am, &c.

III. GRUB-STREET

GOLDSMITH, *The Citizen of the World* (First published in the *Public Ledger,* 1760-61) ; 3rd ed. 1774 Letter xxxi.

[" The proceedings of the club of authors " which meets every Saturday evening at " The Broom ", Islington.
The poet reads his poem, in spite of protests:]

" Gentlemen, says he, the present piece is not one of your common epic poems, which come from the press like paper kites in summer: there are none of your Turnuscs or Dido's in it; it is an heroical description of Nature. . . . The picture was sketched in my own apartment, for you must know, gentlemen, that I am myself the hero. Then putting himself into the attitude of an orator, with all the emphasis of voice and action, he proceeded.

" Where the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay ;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champagne,
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane ;
There in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug.
A window patch'd with paper lent a ray,
That dimly shew'd the state in which he lay ;
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread ;
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread :
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew ;
The seasons fram'd with listing found a place,
And brave prince William shew'd his lamp-black face : *
The morn was cold, he views with keen desire
The rusty grate, unconscious of a fire ;
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scored,
And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney board,
A night-cap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night—a stocking all the day ! "

With this last line he seemed so much elated, that he was unable to proceed. " There, gentlemen, cries he, there is

[1] **The Duke of Cumberland, probably a** silhouette.

a description for you; Rabelais's bed-chamber is **but** a fool to it:

A cap by night—a stocking all the day!

there is sound and sense, and truth, and nature in the trifling compass of ten little syllables."

He was too much employed in self-admiration to observe the company; who, by nods, winks, shrugs, and stifled laughter, testified every mark of contempt. . . .

The whole club seemed to join in condemning the season, as one of the worst that had come for some time ; a gentleman particularly observed, that the nobility were never known to subscribe worse than at present. " I know not how it happens, said he, though I follow them up as close as possible, yet I can hardly *get* a single subscription in a week. The houses of the great are as inaccessible as a frontier garrison at midnight. I never see a nobleman's door half-opened, that some surly porter or footman does not stand full in the breach. I was yesterday to wait upon a subscription-proposal upon my Lord Squash, the Creolian. I had posted myself at his door the whole morning, and just as he was getting into his coach, thrust my proposal snug into his hand in the form of a letter from myself. He just glanced at the superscription, and, not knowing the hand, consigned it to his valet-de-chambre; this respectable personage treated it as his master, and put it into the hands of the porter; the porter grasped my proposal frowning; and measuring my figure from top to toe, put *it* back into my own hands unopened."

" To the devil pitch all the nobilty ! cries a little man, in a peculiar accent: I am sure they have of late used me most scurvily. You must know, gentlemen, some time ago, upon the arrival of a certain noble duke from his travels, I set myself down, and vamped up a fine flaunting, poetical panegyric, which I had written in such a strain, that I fancied it would have even wheedled milk from a mouse. In this I represented the whole kingdom welcoming his grace to his native soil, not forgetting **the** loss

France and Italy would sustain in their arts by his departure. I expected to touch for a bank-bill at least; so folding up my verses in gilt-paper, I gave my last half-crown to a genteel servant to be the bearer. My letter was safely conveyed to his grace, and the servant, after four hours' absence, during which time I led the life of a fiend, returned with a letter four times as big as mine. Guess my extasy at the prospect of so fine a return. I eagerly took the packet into my hands, that trembled to receive *it*. I kept it some time unopened before me, brooding over the expected treasure it contained; when opening it, as I hope to be saved, gentlemen, his grace had sent me in payment for my poem, no bank-bills, but six copies of verse, each longer than mine, addressed to him upon the same occasion."

" A nobleman, cries a member, who had hitherto been silent, is created as much for the confusion of us authors as the catch-pole. I'll tell you a story, gentlemen, which is as true as that this pipe is made of clay. When I was delivered of my first book, I owed my tailor for a suit of clothes; but that is nothing new, you know, and may be any man's case as well as mine. Well, owing him for a suit of clothes, and hearing that my book took very well, he sent for his money, and insisted upon being paid immediately: though I was at that time rich in fame, for my book run like wild-fire, yet I was very short in money, and being unable to satisfy his demand, prudently resolved to keep my chamber, preferring a prison of my own choosing at home, to one of my tailor's choosing abroad. In vain the bailiffs used all their arts to decoy me from my citadel; in vain they sent to let me know that a gentleman wanted to speak with me at the next tavern, in vain they came with an urgent message from my aunt in the country ; in vain I was told that a particular friend was at the point of death, and desired to take his last farewell: I was deaf, insensible, rock, adamant; the bailiffs could make no impression on my hard heart, for I effectually kept my liberty by never stirring out of the room.

" This was very well for a fortnight; when one morning I received a most splendid message from the Earl of Doomsday, importing that he had read my book, and was in raptures with every line of it; he impatiently longed to see the author, and had some designs which might turn out greatly to my advantage. I paused upon the contents of this message, and found there could be no deceit, for the card was gilt at the edges, and the bearer, I was told, had quite the looks of a gentleman. Witness, ye powers, how my heart triumphed at my own importance ! I saw a long perspective of felicity before me ; I applauded the taste of the times, which never saw genius forsaken ; I had prepared a set introductory speech for the occasion, five glaring compliments for his lordship, and two more modest for myself. The next morning, therefore, in order to be punctual for my appointment, I took coach, and ordered the fellow to drive to the street and house mentioned in his lordship's address. I had the precaution to pull up the window as I went along, to keep off the busy part of mankind, and, big with expectation, fancied the coach never went fast enough. At length, however, the wished-for moment of its stopping arrived, this for some time I impatiently expected, and letting down the window in a transport, in order to take a previous view of his lordship's magnificent palace and situation, I found poison to my sight! I found myself, not in an elegant street, but a paltry lane ; not at a nobleman's door, but the door of a sponging-house : I found the coachman had all this while been just driving me to jail, and I saw the bailiff with a devil's face, coming out to secure me."

IV. PATRONAGE—THE DEDICATION BURLESQUED

FIELDING, *Pasquin: A Dramatick Satire on the Times*, 1736, Act iii.

FUSTIAN. Before the rehearsal begins, gentlemen, I must beg your opinion of my dedication : you know, a dedication is generally a bill drawn for value therein con-

tained; which value is a set of nauseous fulsome compliments which my soul abhors and scorns; for I mortally hate flattery, and therefore have carefully avoided it.

SNEERWELL. Yes, faith, a dedication without flattery will be worth the seeing.

FUSTIAN. Well, sir, you shall see it. Read it, dear Trap wit; I hate to read my own works.

TRAPWIT *[Reads).* " My Lord, at a time when nonsense, dulness, lewdness, and all manner of profaneness and immorality are daily practised on the stage, I have prevailed on my modesty to offer to your lordship's protection a piece, which, if it has no merit to recommend it, has at least no dement to disgrace it; nor do I question at this, when every one else is dull, you wiJl be pleased to find one exception to the number.

" I cannot help assuming to my self some little merit from the applause which the. town has so universally confered upon me."

FUSTIAN. That you know, Mr. Sneerwell, may be omitted, if it should meet with any ill-natured opposition ; for which reason, I shall not print off my dedication till after the play is acted.

TRAPWIT *(Reads).* " I might here indulge myself with a delineation of your lordship's character ; but as I abhor the least imputation of flattery, and as I am certain your lordship is the only person in this nation that does not love to hear your praises, I shall be silent—only give me leave to say, That you have more wit, sense, learning, honour, and humanity, than all mankind put together ; and your person comprehends in it everything that is beautiful; your air is everything that is graceful, your look everything that is majestic, and your mind is a store-house where every virtue and every perfection are lodged : to pass by your generosity, which is so great, so glorious, so diffusive, that like the sun it eclipses and makes stars of all your other virtues—I could say more—"

SNEERWELL. Faith, sir, that's more than I could.

TRAPWIT. " But shall commit a violence upon myself,

and conclude with assuring your lordship, that I am, my lord, your lordship's most obedient, most devoted, most obsequious, and most obliged humble servant."

FUSTIAN. There you see it, sir, concise, and not fulsome.

SNEERWELL. Very true, sir, if you had said less it would not have done.

FUSTIAN. No, I think less would have been downright rude, considering it was a person of the first quality.

V. THE DEDICATION OF FIELDING'S FIRST PLAY

Love in Several Masques, 1728

To THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU [1]

MADAM,—Your ladyship's known goodness gives my presumption the hopes of a pardon, for prefixing to this slight work the name of a lady, whose accurate judgment has long been the glory of her own sex, and the wonder of ours : especially, since it arose from a vanity to which your indulgence, on the first perusal of it, gave birth.

I would not insinuate to the world that this play passed free from your censure ; since I know it not free from faults, not one of which escaped your immediate penetration. Immediate indeed ! for your judgment keeps pace with your eye, and you comprehend almost faster than others overlook.

This is a perfection very visible to all who are admitted to the honour of your conversation ; since, from those short intervals you can be supposed to have had to yourself, amid the importunities of all the polite admirers and professors of wit and learning, you are capable of instructing the pedant, and are at once a living confutation of those morose schoolmen, who would confine knowledge to the male part of the species, and a shining instance of all those perfections and softer graces, which nature has confined to the female.

i Fielding's cousin..

But I offend your ladyship, whilst I please myself and the reader; Therefore I shall only beg your leave to give a sanction to this comedy by informing the world that its representation was twice honoured with your ladyship's presence, and am, with the greatest respect,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient

Most humble servant,

HENRY FIELDING.

VI. THE PATRON

BOSWELL, *Life of Johnson* i, 261 ff.

To THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD

My Lord, February 7, 1755.

I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address ; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre]*—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending ; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the arts of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through

difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had *it* been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the Public should consider me as owing that to a Patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work so far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for Thave been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

My Lord, Your Lordship's most humble
Most obedient servant,
SAM. JOHNSON.

VII. THE DECAY OF PATRONAGE: CHANGES IN MANNERS

BOSWELL, *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson,* L.L.D., 1785

[A conversation with Johnson in St. Andrew's, Aug. 19, 1773]

Dr. Watson observed, that Glasgow University had fewer home-students, since trade increased, as learning was rather incompatible with it. JOHNSON. 'Why, Sir, as trade is now carried on by subordinate hands, men in trade have as much leisure as others; and now learning

itself is **a** trade. A man goes to a bookseller, and gets what he can. We have done with patronage. In the infancy of learning we find some great man praised for it. This diffused it among others. When it becomes general, an author leaves the great, and applies to the multitude.' Bo SWELL. ' It is a shame that authors are not now better patronized/ JOHNSON. 'NO, Sir. If learning cannot support a man, if he must sit with his hands across till somebody feeds him, it is as to him a bad thing, and it is better as it is. With patronage, what flattery ! what falsehood ! While a man is in equilibrio, he throws truth among the multitude, and lets them take it as they please : in patronage he must say what pleases his patron, and it is an equal chance whether that be truth or falsehood/—WATSON. ' But is not the case now, that instead of flattering one person, we natter the age ? ' JOHNSON. ' No, Sir. The world always lets a man tell what he thinks, his own way. I wonder however, that so many people have written, who might have let it alone. That people should endeavour to excel in conversation, I do not wonder; because in conversation praise is instantly reverberated/

We talked of changes in manners. Dr. Johnson observed, that our drinking less than our ancestors was owing to the change from ale to wine. ' I remember, (said he,) when **all** the *decent* people in Litchfield got drunk every night, and were not the worse thought of. Ale was cheap, so you pressed it strongly. When a man must bring a bottle of wine, he is not in such haste. Smoking has gone out. To be sure, it is a shocking thing, blowing smoke out of our mouths into other people's mouths, eyes, and noses, and having the same thing done to us. Yet I cannot account, why a thing which requires so little exertion, and yet preserves the mind from total vacuity, should have gone out. Every man has something by which he calms himself: beating with the feet, or so.[1] I remember when people in England changed **a** shirt only once **a** week: a Pandour,

[1] Dr. Johnson used to practise this very much himself. [BOSWELL.]

when he gets a shirt, greases it to make it last. Formerly, good tradesmen had no fire but in the kitchen; never in the parlour, except on Sunday. My father, who was a magistrate of Lichfield, lived thus. They never began to have a fire in the parlour, but on leaving off business, or some great revolution of their life.'

VI

LIFE AND LETTERS

How shall I speak Ihcc, or thy power address,
Thou God of our idolatry, the Press ?
By thee, religion, liberty, and laws,
Exert their influence, and advance their cause ;
By thee worse plagues, than Pharaoh's land befell,
Diffused make earth the vestibule of hell.
Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies,
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

COWPER, *The Progress of Error,* 1782.

One of the most important developments of the period is the multiplication of newspapers and the birth of the monthly magazine and the critical review. It was accompanied by a great increase in the reading public and by such new portents as the professional journalist[x] (emerging out of the book-seller's hack), and the written review. These changes involved the superseding of "the Town", the society of authors, wits and fine gentlemen who, in the earlier part of the century, had met in clubs and coffee-houses and given laws to literature.

I. CLUBS

CLUB, An assembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions.

JOHNSON, *Dictionary,* 1755.

Our modern celebrated clubs are founded upon eating and drinking.

ADDISON, *Spectator,* No. 9.

[1] That is, the development of journalism as a profession. The isolated journalist, e.g. Marchamont Nedliam (1620-1678) was a product of the Civil War.

THE FOUNDING OF A FAMOUS TORY CLUB—THE BROTHERS.[1]

Letter from St. John (Bolingbroke) to Lord Orrery, *12th June,* 1711. *Works,* vi, 1798, 150

I must, before I send this letter, give your Lordship an account of a club which I am forming; and which, as light as the design may be, I believe will prove of real service. We shall begin to meet in a small number, and that will be composed of some who have wit and learning to recommend them ; of others, who from their own situations, or from their relations, have power and influence, and of others, who from accidental reasons may properly be taken in. The first regulation proposed, and that which must be inviolably kept, is decency. None of the extravagance of the Kit-cat, none of the drunkenness of the Beefsteak is to be endured. The improvement of friendship, and the encouragement of letters, are to be the great ends of our society. A number of valuable people will be kept in the same mind, and others will be made converts to their opinions.

Mr. Fenton, and those who, like him, have genius, will have a corporation of patrons to protect and advance them in the world. The folly of our party will be ridiculed and checked, the opposition of another will be better resisted; a multitude of other good uses will follow, which I am sure do not escape you; and I hope in the winter to ballot for the honour of your company amongst us.

IL THE ESSAY AND THE NEWSPAPER

J. GAY, *The present State of Wit in a Letter to a Friend in the Country,* 1711. (Reprinted in Arber's *English Garner,* vi. 1883)

Before I proceed further in the account of our Weekly Papers, it will be necessary to inform you that at the beginning of the winter, to the infinite surprise of all men, Mr. Steele flang up his *Tatler*; and instead of ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, *Esquire,* subscribed himself RICHARD STEELE

[1] Among the members of this short-lived club were Swift, Prior, Harley and Arbuthnot.

to the last of those Papers, after a handsome compliment to the Town for their kind acceptance of his endeavours to divert them. . . . However that were, his disappearance seemed to be bewailed as some general calamity. Every one wanted so agreeable an amusement, and the coffee-houses began to be sensible that the *Esquire's Lucubrations* alone had brought them more customers than all their other News Papers put together. . . .

To give you my own thoughts of this gentleman's writings, I shall, in the first place observe, that there is a noble difference between him and all the rest of our Polite and Gallant Authors. The latter have endeavoured to please the Age by falling in with them, and encouraging them in their fashionable vices and false notions of things. It would have been a jest, some time since, for a man to have asserted that anything witty could be said in praise of the married state, or that Devotion and Virtue were any way necessary to the character of a Fine Gentleman. BICKERSTAFF ventured to tell the Town that they were a parcel of fops, fools and coquettes ; but in such a manner as even pleased them, and made them more than half inclined to believe that he spoke truth.

Instead of complying with the false sentiments or vicious tastes of the Age—either in morality, criticism, or good breeding—he has boldly assured them, that they were altogether in the wrong; and commanded them, with an authority which perfectly well became him, to surrender themselves to his arguments for Virtue and Good Sense.

It is incredible to conceive the effect his writings have had on the Town ; how many thousand follies they have either quite banished or given a very great check to ! And how much countenance they have added to Virtue and Religion! how many people they have rendered happy, by shewing them it was their own fault they were not so ! and, lastly, how entirely they have convinced our young fops and young fellows of the value and advantages of Learning!

He has indeed rescued it out of the hands of pedants

and fools, **and** discovered the true way **of making it amiable** and lovely to all mankind. In the dress he gives it, it is a most welcome guest at tea-tables and assemblies, and is relished and caressed by the merchants on the Change. Accordingly there is not a lady at Court, nor a banker in Lombard Street, who is not verily persuaded that Captain STEELE is the greatest scholar and best casuist of any man in England.

Lastly, his writings have set all our Wits and men of letters on a new way of thinking of which they had little or no notion before: and although we cannot say that any of them have come up to the beauties of the original, I think we may venture to affirm, that every one of them writes and thinks much more justly than they did some time since.

The vast variety of subjects which Mr. STEELE has treated of, in so different manners, and yet ALL so perfectly well, have made the world believe that it was impossible they should all come from the same hand. This set every one upon guessing who was the *Esquire s* friend? and most people at first thought it must be Dr. SWIFT; but it is now no longer a secret that his only great and constant assistant was Mr. ADDISON. . . .

Westminster, May 3, 1711.

III. THE ART OF ADVERTISING

S. JOHNSON, *The Idler*, No. 40. January 29, 1759

THE ART OF ADVERTISING EXEMPLIFIED

The practice of appending to the narratives of public transactions more minute and domestic intelligence, and filling the newspapers with advertisements, has grown up' by slow degrees to its present state.

Genius is shown only by invention. The man who first took advantage of the general curiosity that was excited by a siege or battle, to betray the readers of news into the knowledge of the shop where the best puffs and powders were to be sold, was undoubtedly a man of great sagacity,

and profound skill in the nature of man. But when he had once shown the way, it was easy to follow him ; and every man now knows a ready method of informing the public of all that he desires to buy or sell; whether his wares be material or intellectual; whether he makes clothes, or teaches the mathematics; whether he be a tutor that wants a pupil, or a pupil that wants a tutor.

Whatever is common is despised. Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused, and it is, therefore, become necessary to gain attention by magnificence of promises, and by eloquence sometimes sublime, and sometimes pathetic.

Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement. I remember a *wash-ball* that had a quality truly wonderful—It gave *an exquisite edge to the razor.* And there are now to be sold, *for ready money only,* some *duvets for bed-coverings, of down, beyond comparison superior to what is called otter-down* and indeed such, that its *many excellencies* cannot be here set forth. With one excellence we are made acquainted—*it is warmer than four or five blankets, and lighter than one.*

There are some, however, that know the prejudice of mankind in favour of modest sincerity. The vendor of the *beautifying fluid* sells a lotion that repels pimples, washes away freckles, smooths the skin, and plumps the flesh ; and yet, with a generous abhorrence of ostentation, confesses that it will not *restore the bloom of fifteen to a lady of fifty.*

The true pathos of advertisements must have sunk deep into the heart of every man that remembers the zeal shown by the seller of the *anodyne necklace,* for the ease and safety of *poor toothing infants,* and the affection with which he warned every mother, that *she would never forgive herself,* if her infant should perish without a necklace.

I cannot but remark to the celebrated author who gave, in his notifications of the camel and dromedary, so many specimens of the genuine sublime, that there is now arrived another subject yet more worthy of his pen. *A famous*

Mohawk Indian warrior, who took Dieskaw *the French general prisoner, dressed in the same manner with the native Indians when they go to war, with his face and body painted, with his scalping-knife, tom-axe, and all other implements of war! a sight worthy the curiosity of every true Briton!* This is a very powerful description ; but a critic of great refinement would say, that it conveys rather *horror* than *terror.* An Indian, dressed as he goes to war, may bring company together ; but if he carries the scalping-knife and tom-axe, there are many true Britons that will never be persuaded to see him but through a grate.

It has been remarked by the severer judges, that the salutary sorrow of tragic scenes is too soon effaced by the merriment of the epilogue ; the same inconvenience arises from the improper disposition of advertisements. The noblest objects may be so associated as to be made ridiculous. The camel and dromedary themselves might have lost much of their dignity between *the true flower of mustard* and the *original Daffy's elixir;* and I could not but feel some indignation when I found this illustrious Indian warrior immediately succeeded by *a fresh parcel of Dublin butter.*

The trade of advertising is now so near to perfection, that it is not easy to propose any improvement. But as every art ought to be exercised in due subordination to the public good, I cannot but propose it as a moral question to these masters of the public ear, whether they do not sometimes play too wantonly with our passions, as when the registrar of our lottery-tickets invites us to his shop by an account of the prize which he sold last year; and whether the advertising controvertists do not indulge asperity of language without any adequate provocation; as in the dispute about *straps for razors,* now happily subsided, and in the altercation which at present subsists concerning *eau de luce* ?

In an advertisement it is allowed to every man to speak well of himself, but I know not why he should assume the privilege of censuring his neighbour. He may proclaim

his own virtue or skill, but ought not to exclude others from the same pretensions.

Every man that advertises his own excellence should write with some consciousness of a character which dares to call the attention of the public. He should remember that his name is to stand in the same paper with those of the king of Prussia and the emperor of Germany, and endeavour to make himself worthy of such association.

Some regard is likewise to be paid to posterity. There are men of diligence and curiosity who treasure up papers of the day merely because others neglect them, and *in* time they will be scarce. When these collections shall be read in another century, how will numerous contradictions be reconciled ? and how shall fame be possibly distributed among the tailors and bodice-makers of the present age?

Surely these things deserve consideration, It is enough for me to have hinted my desire that these abuses may be rectified; but such is the state of nature, that what all have the right of doing, many will attempt without sufficient care or due qualifications.

IV. THE ART OF PUFFING

R. B. SHERIDAN, *The Critic,* or, *A Tragedy rehearsed.* 1779. Act i. se. 2

SNEER. . . . But surely, Mr. Puff, there is no great mystery in your present profession ?

PUFF. Mystery, sir ! I will take upon me to say the matter was never scientifically treated, nor reduced to rule before.

SNEER. Reduced to rule ?

PUFF. 0 lud, sir, you are very ignorant, I am afraid !—Yes, sir,—puffing is of various sorts; the principal are, the puff direct, the puff preliminary, the puff collateral, the puff collusive, and the puff oblique, or puff by implication. These all assume, as circumstances require, the various forms of Letter to the Editor, Occasional Anecdote,

Impartial Critique, Observation from Correspondent, or Advertisement from the Party.

SNEER. The puff direct I can conceive—

PUFF. O yes, that's simple enough! For instance,—a new comedy or farce is to be produced at one of the theatres (though by-the-by they don't bring out half what they ought to do)—the author, suppose Mr. Smatter, or Mr. Dapper, or any particular friend of mine—very well; the day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received; I have the plot from the author, and only add—" characters strongly drawn—highly coloured—hand of a master—fund of genuine humour—mine of invention—neat dialogue—Attic salt." Then for the performance—" Mr. Dodd was astonishingly great in the character of Sir Harry. That universal and judicious actor, Mr. Palmer, perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the colonel;—but it is not in the power of language to do justice to Mr. King: [1] indeed he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience. As to the scenery,—the miraculous powers of Mr. de Lout her bourg's pencil are universally acknowledged. In short, we are at a loss which to admire most, the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers."

SNEER. That's pretty well indeed, sir.

PUFF. Oh, cool!—quite cool!—to what I sometimes do.

SNEER. And do you think there are any who are influenced by this?

PUFF. O lud, yes, sir! The number of those who go through the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed.

SNEER. Well, sir,—the puff preliminary?

PUFF. O that, sir, does well in the form of a caution. In a matter of gallantry now—Sir Flimsy Gossamer wishes

[1] King played the part of *Puff* in the first performance, Dodd played *Dangle, and* Palmer, *Sneer.*

to be well with Lady Fanny Fete—He applies to me—I open trenches for him with a paragraph in the Morning Post.—" It is recommended to the beautiful and accomplished Lady F four stars F dash E to be on her guard against that dangerous character, Sir F dash G; who, however pleasing and insinuating his manner may be, is certainly not remarkable for the *constancy of his attachments* ! "—in italics. Here, you see, Sir Flimsy Gossamer is introduced to the particular notice of Lady Fanny, who perhaps never thought of him before—she finds herself publicly cautioned to avoid him, which naturally makes her desirous of seeing him ; the observation of their acquaintance causes a pretty kind of mutual embarrassment; this produces a sort of sympathy of interest, which if Sir Flimsy is unable to improve effectually, he at least gains the credit of having their names mentioned together, by a particular set, and in a particular way—which nine times out of ten is the full accomplishment of modern gallantry.

DANGLE. Egad, Sneer, you will be quite an adept in the business.

PUFF. NOW, sir, the puff collateral is much used as an appendage to advertisements, and may take the form of anecdote—" Yesterday, as the celebrated George Bonmot was sauntering down St. James Street, he met the lively Lady Mary Myrtle coming out of the park :—' Good God, Lady Mary, I'm surprised to meet you in a white jacket,—for I expected never to have seen you, but in a full-trimmed uniform and a light-horseman's cap!'—' Heavens, George, where could you have learned that ? ' ' Why,' replied the wit, ' I just saw a print of you, in a new publication called the Camp Magazine ; which, by-the-by, is a devilish clever thing, and is sold at No. 3, on the right hand of the way, two doors from the printing-office, the corner of Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, price only one shilling.' " [1]

[1] An example of an actual advertisement will show that Puff does not exaggerate : "A few days ago Charles Fox accidentally meeting the Countess of Derby, rallied her exceedingly on her late

SNEER. Very ingenious indeed!

PUFF. But the puff collusive is the newest of any; for it acts in the disguise of determined hostility. It is much used by bold booksellers and enterprising poets.—" An indignant correspondent observes, that the new poem called *Beelzebub's Cotillon,* or *Proserpine's Fete Champetre,* is one of the most unjustifiable performances he ever read. The severity with which certain characters are handled is quite shocking: and as there are many descriptions in it too warmly coloured for female delicacy, the shameful avidity with which this piece is bought by all people of fashion is a reproach on the taste of the times, and a disgrace to the delicacy of the age/' Here, you see, the two strongest inducements are held forth; first, that nobody ought to read it; and secondly, that every body buys it: on the strength of which the publisher boldly prints the tenth edition, before he had sold ten of the first; and then establishes it by threatening himself with the pillory, or absolutely indicting himself for *scan. mag.*

DANGLE. Ha ! ha ! ha !—'gad, I know it is so.

PUFF. AS to the puff oblique, or puff by implication, it is too various and extensive to be illustrated by an instance : it attracts in titles and presumes in patents; it lurks in the *limitation* of a subscription, and invites in the assurance of crowd and incommodation at public places; it delights to draw forth concealed merit, with a most disinterested assiduity; and sometimes wears a

cricket match at the Oaks. You handle your bat ... so adroitly that henceforward we must take care of our heads as well as our hearts." " In the name of wonder (answered the Countess) How came you to know anything of my cricket match ? " "I purchased my information, Madam (replied Charles), for one shilling, which was the sum I gave for Pearce's Lottery Magazine at No. 122 Fleet Street, in which there is a most entertaining and particular account of the whole match, embellished with an elegant print of the Field and the players, marshalled by your Ladyship at full length, whirling your bat with as much agility as the Duke of Dorset himself could exhibit."—*Public Advertiser,* Sept. 20, 1777. It seems not unlikely that this is the actual advertisement ridiculed by Sheridan,

countenance of smiling censure and tender reproach. It has a wonderful memory for parliamentary debates, and will often give the whole speech of a favoured member with the most flattering accuracy. But above all, it is a great dealer in reports and suppositions. It has the earliest intelligence of intended preferments that will reflect *honour* on the *patrons* ; and embryo promotions of modest gentlemen who know nothing of the matter themselves. It can hint a riband for implied services in the air of a common report; and with the carelessness of a casual paragraph, suggest officers into commands, to which they have no pretension but their wishes. This, sir, is the last principal class in the art of puffing—an art which I hope you will now agree with me is of the highest dignity, yielding a tablature of benevolence and public spirit; befriending equally trade, gallantry, criticism, and politics : the applause of genius—the register of charity—the triumph of heroism—the self-defence of contractors—the fame of orators—and the gazette of ministers.

V. NOVELS AND NOVELISTS

C. JENNER, *The Poet,* in *Town Eclogues,* 2nd ed., 1773, pp. 23, 24, 25-6

Hard is the fate of him who writes for bread:
Ah wherefore was I better taught, than fed !
Ye cruel parents! was it then in spite
Ye learnt me nothing but to read and write.

Why did I meddle with the rhyming trade ?
A sheet of prose is far, far sooner made :

Why not engage with *Noble* or with *Bell,*
To weave thin novels that are sure to sell ?
Enamour'd youths had then, by my good rules,
Made happy love to girls at boarding schools;
And ev'ry Miss, with fond romantic head,
Had my adventures stol'n, to read in bed.

Thrice happy authors, who with little skill
In two short weeks can two short volumes fill!
Who take some Miss, of christian name inviting,
And plunge her deep in love, and letter writing;
Perplex her well with jealous parents' cares,
Expose her virtue to a lover's snares ;
Give her false friends and perjur'd swains by dozens,
With all the episodes of aunts and cousins ;
Make parents thwart her, and her lover scorn her;
And some mishap spring up at ev'ry corner.
Make her lament her fate with *Atis* and *Otis,*
And tell some dear Miss *Willis* [1] all her woes,
Whilst now with love and now with grief she rages ;
Till, having brought her through two hundred pages,
Finding, at length, her father's heart obdurate,
Will make her take the 'Squire, and leave the curate ;
She scales a garden wall, or fords a river,
Elopes, gets married, and her friends forgive her.
How easy flows a chit-chat tale like this!
In modern novels nothing comes amiss.
Fielding, they say, and *Richardson* had learning;
But, surely, readers then were more discerning:
Our modern writers please the town as well,
Who know no grammar, and but learn to spell.
Critics indeed may maul their flimsy ware,
But where's the work that modern critics spare ?

VI. THE NEW READING PUBLIC

Memoirs of the . . . Life of James Lackington, new ed., 1792, 385-91

I was obliged to be pretty well informed of the state of politics in Europe, as I have always found that *book-selling* is much affected by the political state of affairs. . . . If there is anything in the newspapers of consequence, that draws many to the coffee house, where they chat away the evenings, instead of visiting the shops of book-

[1] Miss Laetitia Willis was the confidante to whom Lydia Melford's letters (in Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker)* were written. See above, P- 7-

sellers (as *they ought to do*, no doubt) or *reading* at home. . . . I have often experienced that the report of a war or the trial of a great man, or indeed any subject that attracts public attention, has been some hundreds of pounds out of my pocket in a few weeks.

Before I conclude this letter, I cannot help observing, that the sale of books in general has increased prodigiously within the last twenty years. According to the best estimation I have been able to make, I suppose that more than four times the number of books are sold now that were sold twenty years since. The poorer sort of farmers, and even the poor country people in general, who before that period spent their evenings in relating stories of witches, ghosts, hobgoblins &c, now shorten the winter nights by hearing their sons and daughters read talcs, romances &c, and on entering their houses you may see Tom Jones, Roderick Random, and other entertaining books stuck up on their bacon racks &c. If *John* goes to market with a load of hay, he is charged to be sure not to forget to bring home " Peregrine Pickle's adventures ", and when *Dolly* is sent to market to sell her eggs, she is commissioned to purchase " The History of Pamela Andrews ". In short all ranks and degrees now READ. But the most rapid increase of the sale of books has been since the termination of the late war [1783].

A number of book-clubs are also formed in every part of England where each member subscribes a certain sum quarterly to purchase books. . . . I am informed that when circulating libraries were first opened, the booksellers were much alarmed, and their rapid increase added to their fears, and led them to think that the sale of books would be much diminished by them. But experience has proved that the sale of books, so far from being diminished by them, has been greatly promoted, as from those repositories, many thousand families have been cheaply provided with books, by which the taste for reading has become much more general, and thousands of books are purchased every year, by such as have first borrowed them at those

libraries, and after reading and approving of them become purchasers.

The Sunday-Schools are spreading very fast in most parts of England, which will accelerate the diffusion of knowledge among the lower class of the community, and in a very few years exceedingly increase the sale of books.. . .

It is worth remarking that the increase of histories, romances, stories, poems &c. into schools, has been a very great means of diffusing a general taste for reading among all ranks of the people ; whilst in schools the children only read the bible (which was the case in many schools a few years ago), children then did not make so early a progress as they have since they have been pleased and entertained as well as instructed; and this relish for books in many will last as long as life.

VII. AUTHORS ON CRITICS

(a) FIELDING, *Covent Garden Journal,* No. 3. January 11, 1752.[1]

To require what is generally called learning in a critic is altogether as absurd as to require genius. Why should a man in this case, any more than in all others, be bound by any opinions but his own ? Or why should he read by rule any more than eat by it ? If I delight in a slice of bullock's liver or of Oldmixon,[2] why should I be confined to turtle or to Swift ?

(b) R. B. SHERIDAN, Preface to *The Rivals,* 1775

As for the little puny critics, who scatter their peevish strictures in private circles, and scribble at every author who has the eminence of being unconnected with them, as they are usually spleen-swoln from a vain idea of increasing their consequence, there will always be found a petulance and illiberality in their remarks, which should place them as far beneath the notice of a gentleman, as their original dulness had sunk them from the level of the most unsuccessful author.

[1] See also below, *Critic,* p. 153.

[2] A prolific writer of little merit attacked in the *Dunciad.* SeE above, p. *67.*

VII

LIFE AND POLITICS

Love thy country, wish it well,
Not with too intense a care,
'Tis enough that when it fell,
Thou its ruin did'st not share.
GEORGE BUBB DODINGTON, Lord Melcombe, 1761.

The large part played by politics in the social life of the period is barely indicated in the following extracts: they should be read in relation with those parts of the sections on Religion and Education which show the ramifications of the system of patronage. They do however illustrate the way in which political oligarchy was tempered by democratic manners.

I. BUBB DODINGTON AT A BOROUGH ELECTION

The Diary of the late Bubb Dodington, 1784, pp. 285-9

[1754, April]

I I. Dr. Sharpe and I set out from Eastbury, at four o'clock in the morning, for Bridgewater, where, as I expected, I found things very disagreeably framed.

12. Lord Egmont came, with trumpets, noise, &c.

13. He and we walked the town: we found nothing unexpected, as far as we went.

14 Spent in the infamous and disreputable compliance with
15 the low habits of venal wretches.

17. Came on the election, which I lost by the injustice of the Returning Officer. The numbers were **for Lord** Egmont 119, for Mr. Balch 114, for me 105. Of

my good votes 15 were rejected: 8 bad votes **for** Lord Egmont were received.

18. Left Bridgewater—for ever. Arrived at Eastbury in the evening.

24. Arrived at Hammersmith in the evening.

26. I went to the Duke of Newcastle's. Received with much seeming affection: thanks for Weymouth where I had succeeded: sorrow for Bridgewater where I had not. I told him, that I would give him a detail of that whole transaction, in as clear and short a manner as was possible, if he was then at leisure to receive it: but if not, and he thought it worth mentioning to the King, I would only give him the heads of it. . . . Accordingly, I began by telling him, that, I had done all that was in the power of money and labour, and shewed him two bills for money remitted thither, before I went down, one of 10001. one of 500 1., besides all the money then in my steward's hands, so that the election would cost me about 2,500 1. In the next place, if this election stood, the borough was for ever in Tory hands: that all this was occasioned by want of proper support from the Court and from the behaviour of the servants of the Crown. Upon Mr. Pelham's death, seeing the multitude of promotions in which no notice was taken of me, and Lord Paulett acting openly against me, with all his might; seeing no check given to him, or encouragement to me, they so strongly concluded the Government to be indifferent, that live out of the Custom-house officers gave single votes for Lord Egmont. The next head was—that in spite of all I had a fair majority of legal votes, for that the Mayor had admitted eight bad votes for Lord Egmont, and refused fifteen good ones for me: so that it was entirely in their own hands, to retrieve the borough, and get rid of a troublesome opponent if they pleased: that if the King required this piece of service, it was to be done, and the borough **put**

into Whig hands, and under his influence, without any stretch of power; for the cause was so clear and indisputable, that, instead of wanting their power to support it, nothing but their power could withstand it: that, if it was expected, I would lend my name, and my assistance here and in the country, to rescue the borough, and deliver it into the hands of such as the King should approve of; but that I, on my own account, would have nothing more to do with it. I had fulfilled to the utmost the sacrifice of duty which I had promised and proposed to myself; I desired no retrieval or acquisition of interest, and would absolutely be no further concerned, than as the canal to convey that borough into his Majesty's disposition. . . . He made great professions of good wishes, good will, best endeavours, &c. &c.—which weigli with me as much as the breath they were composed of.

IL HORACE WALPOLE'S ELECTION FOR THE BOROUGH OF KING'S LYNN, 1761

H. Walpole to George Montagu, March 31st, 1761. *Letters,* ed. Toynbee, v. 43-4

Think of me, the subject of a mob, who was scarce ever before in a mob ! addressing them in the town-hall, riding at the head of two thousand people through such a town as Lynn, dining with above two hundred of them, amid bumpers, huzzas, songs, and tobacco, and finishing with country dancing at a ball and sixpenny whisk! I have borne it all cheerfully; nay, have sat hours in *conversation,* the thing upon earth that I hate, have been to hear misses play on the harpsichord, and to see an alderman's copies of Reubens and Carlo Marat. Yet to do the folks justice, they are sensible, and reasonable, and civilized; their very language is polished since I lived among them. I attribute this to their more frequent intercourse with the world and capital, **by** the **help of good roads and postchaises,**

which, if they have abridged the King's dominions, have at least tamed his subjects—well! how comfortable it will be tomorrow, to see my perroquet, to play at loo, and not to be obliged to talk seriously—the Heraclitus of the beginning of this letter will be overjoyed on finishing it to sign himself

Your old friend
DEMOCRITUS.

III. ELECTIONS AND CANVASSING

LE BLANC, *Letters on the English and French Nations,* Trans. 1747, i- 196

I am in one of the best towns in England for good inns [Northampton], and yet I am lodged in one of the worst of the whole county ; and that only because I met upon the road with a peer of the realm, who was going to London as well as I, and desired that we might make the rest of our journey together; which I easily consented to, without the least suspicion that I should pay so dear for the favour of his lordship's company.

Here each party has its particular inns ; and if a member of parliament is in the opposition to the court, he is under a necessity of going to an inn of his party, or he is a lost man ; for either they would believe he had turned his coat, or they would turn it for him. In this country, the children in all conditions of life suck the spirit of party with their milk. They have scarcely learned to speak, when they are taught the terms of *corruption* and *opposition,* by which they now denote the different parties, which were not long since characterized by the odious names of Whig and Tory.

My fellow traveller was much better off than I, for finding the wine bad, he had recourse to the beer, and the fowl proving hard he revenged himself on the pudding, which was soft enough. But I, who am not seasoned to this gross food, and drink little or no beer, I, who am neither of the party of corruption nor opposition, neither

Whig nor Tory, what business had I *in* this wretched house?

This is not all: I saw the moment when I thought that our inn-keeper's hatred of the ministry would give him a right to sit down at the table with us. We were obliged at least to drink out of the same pot with him to his health, and to the healths of all those of the town of Northampton who were enemies to Sir Robert Walpole (against whom I have not the least subject of complaint) and friends to our landlord, with whom you see I have not much reason to be in love. And what was still worse, I was under a necessity of listening to the reasons of this zealous partisan of the *opposition.* My travelling companion had the politeness to entertain him during the whole of supper time, for it was not the inn-keeper that made court to my lord, but my lord to the inn-keeper. . . .

Moreover, it is not upon the road only, that these gentlemen are exposed to pay for their party zeal. At their country seats they daily suffer this soft of tyranny. Those who aspire to become considerable, and will not make their court to the king, are under a necessity of making it to the people. For example, a member of parliament, who is in the opposition, is obliged to buy his provisions from people of his party, let their goods be ever so bad: if any of his servants bought a single pound of sugar from a grocer who is on the minister's side, the master would be looked on as a false brother and would lose all his interest. . . .

IV. THE COUNTY CANDIDATE'S WIFE

Eail of Cork,[1] *The Connoisseur,* No. 20, June 13, 1754

Dear Lady Charlotte,

I have been plagued, pestered, teased to death, and hurried out of my wits, ever since I have been in this odious country. O my dear, how I long to be in town again! Pope and the poets may say what they like of

[1] Better known as Lord Orrery, author of *Remarks on Swift,*

their purling streams, shady groves and flowery meads; but I had rather live all my days among the cheesemongers' shops in Thames-street, than pass such another spring in this filthy country. Would you believe it? I have scarce touched a card since I have been here: and then there has been such ado with us about election matters; such a rout with their hissing and hallowing, my head is ready to split into a thousand pieces! If my Sir John must be in parliament, why cannot he do as your lord does, and be content with a borough, where he might come in without all this trouble, and take his seat in the House, though he has never been within a hundred miles of the place.

Our house, my dear, has been a perfect inn, ever since we came down; and I have been obliged to trudge about as much as a fat landlady. Our doors are open to every dirty fellow in the county that is worth forty shillings a year; all my best floors are spoiled by the hobnails of farmers stamping about them; every room is a pig-stye, and the Chinese paper in the drawing-room stinks so abominably of punch and tobacco, that it would strike you down to come into it. If you knew what I have suffered, you would think I had the constitution of a washer-woman to go through it. We never sit down to table without a dozen or more of boisterous two-legged creatures as rude as bears; and I have nothing to do but to heap up their plates and drink to each of their healths. What is worse than all, one of the beasts got tipsy, and nothing would serve him but he must kiss me, which I was forced to submit to, for fear of losing his vote and interest. Would you think it, dear Charlotte?—do not laugh at me—I stood godmother in person to a huge lubberly boy at a country farmer's, and they almost poisoned me with their hodge-podge they called caudle, made of sour ale and brown sugar. All this and more I have been obliged to comply with, that the country fellows might not say, 'my lady is proud and above them'.

Besides, there is not a woman creature within twenty

miles of the place, that is fit company for my housekeeper ; and yet I must be intimate with them all. Lady B. indeed is very near us; but though we are very well acquainted in town, we must not be seen to speak to each other here, because her lord is in the opposition. Poor Thomas got a sad drubbing at her house, where I innocently sent him, at my first coming into the country, with a how d'ye to her ladyship. The greatest female acquaintance I have here, are Mrs. Mayoress, a tailor's wife, and Mrs. Alderman Gascoigne, who sells pins and needles on one side of the shop, while her husband works at his pestle and mortar on the other. These ordinary wretches are constant attendants on my tea-table : I am obliged to take them and their brats out an airing in my coach every evening; and am afterwards often doomed to sit down to whist and swabbers, or one-and-thirty bone-ace for farthings. Mrs. Mayoress is a very violent party-woman ; and she has two pug-dogs; one of which she calls Sir John, and the other Colonel, in compliment, you must know, to my husband and his brother candidate.

We had a ball here the other day; and I opened it with Sir Humphrey Chase, who danced in his boots, and hobbled along for all the world like the dancing bears which I have seen in the streets at London. A terrible mistake happened about precedence which, I fear, will lose Sir John a good many votes. An Attorney's wife was very angry that her daughter, a little pert chit just come from the boarding school, was not called out to dance before Miss Norton, the brewer's daughter, when every body knew (she said) that her girl was a gentlewoman bred and born.

I wish, my dear, you were to see my dressing room; you would think it was a ribbon-shop. Lettice and I have been busy all this week in making up knots and favours; and yesterday no milliner's prentice could work harder than I did, in tying them on to the sweaty hats of country bumpkins. And is it not very hard upon me ? I must not even dress as I please ; but am obliged to wear

blue, though you know it does not suit my complexion, and makes me look as horrid as the witches in Macbeth.

But what is worse than all, Sir John tells me, the election expenses have run so high, that he must shorten my allowance of pin-money. He talks of turning off half his servants; nay, he has even'hinted to me that I shall not come to town all the winter, Barbarous creature !—But if he dare serve me so, he shall positively lose his election next time, I will raise such a spirit of opposition in all the wives and daughters in the county against him.

I am your affectionate friend, &c.

V. CANVASSING IN THE COUNTRY

COWPER, *Correspondence,* ed. T. Wright, 1904, ii. 182-3

COWPER TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON. March 29, 1784

. . . As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches, in like manner the effect of these turbulent times is felt even at Orchard side, where in general times we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidentally deposited in some hollow beyond the water-mark, by the usual dashing of the waves. We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any intrusion in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when to our unspeakable surprise a mob appeared before the window; a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys halloo'd, and the maid announced Mr. Grenville.[1] Puss was unfortunately let out of her box,[2] so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused entrance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as **the** only possible way of approach.

[1] **William Grenville, afterwards Earl Grenville. Prime Minister 1806-7.**

[2] **Cowper's tame hare.**

Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window, than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour, were filled. Mr. Grenville, advancing toward me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he and as many more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally ready to believe, and the less, no doubt, because Mr. Ashburner, the draper, addressing himself to me at this moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying, that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed the maids in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman. He is very young, genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as *it* should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he has a third also, which he wore suspended by a riband from his button-hole. The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, Puss scampered, the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew,

VIII

THE COURT

Far from despising Kings, I like the breed,
Provided " King-like " they behave :
Kings are an instrument we need,
Just as we razors want—to shave ;
To keep the State's face smooth—give it an air—
Like my Lord North's, so folly, round, and fair.
JOHN WOLCOT (Peter Pindar), *An Apologetic Postscript to Ode upon Ode* (1784).

Under the Hanoverians the Court suffered an inevitable decline in prestige and it played little part in life or literature. **Its** irreproachable domesticity under George **III** was a new element in the country; it reacted on national manners, **and** foreshadows, like many other aspects of the age, developments of the nineteenth century. It lent itself to ridicule, as well as to the loyal affection of those admitted to (or constrained to enter) that far from brilliant circle, of whom the best known is Fanny Burney (ii). The King's homely manners, the economies of himself and his Queen (in the interests of political corruption) and the peculiarities of his conversation were fair game for the political satirist (iii).

I. THE COURT IN 1765: A FRENCH VIEW

GROSLEY, *A Tour to London,* . . . Trans. 1772, ii. 223-4

If, notwithstanding, any king ever deserved the love of his people, it is George III. He leads, at his rural seat near Richmond (a seat much inferior in magnificence and lustre to that of many noblemen) a life of the most regular simplicity; which he divides entirely between the queen and his books. It is true he comes every week

to hold a levee and a drawing-room at St. James's; but the court is by no means brilliant; he comes with the queen in a very plain equipage, escorted by a few light horse. I have already observed that coachmen and carmen never stop at his approach, and that they take a pride in not bowing to him: "Why should we bow to George? say the insolent rabble: he should bow to us: he lives at our expense."

II. A BIRTHDAY AT WINDSOR

F. BURNEY, *Diary*, ed. A. Dobson,* 1904, ii. 430-1

Monday, August 7, [1786]. This has been the first cheerful day since the memorable and alarming attack of the 2nd of August.[1] It was the birthday of the little princess Amelia; and the fondness of the whole family for that lovely child, and her own infantine enjoyment of the honours paid her, have revived the spirits of the whole house.

The manner of keeping the birthdays here is very simple. All the Royal Family are new-dressed; so—at least so they appear—are all their attendants. The dinners and desserts are unusually sumptuous; and some of the principal officers of state, and a few of the ladies of the court, come to Windsor to make their compliments; and at night there is a finer concert, by an addition from town of the musicians belonging to the Queen's band. If the weather is fine, all the family walk upon the terrace, which is crowded with people of distinction, who take that mode of showing respect, to avoid the trouble and fatigue of attending at the following drawing-room.

Another method, too, which is taken to express joy and attachment upon these occasions, is by going to the eight o'clock prayers at the Royal Chapel. The congregation all assemble, after the service, in the opening at the foot of the great stairs which the Royal Family descend from

[1] **When a mad-woman attempted to stab the king.**

their gallery; and those who have any pretensions **to** notice scarce ever fail to meet with it.

To-day, this Staircase Drawing-room, as it is named by Major Price, was very much crowded; and *it* was a sweet sight to me, from my windows, to see that the royal group—respectfully followed by many people of distinction who came on the occasion, and, at a still greater distance, encircled by humbler, but not less loyal congratulators—had their chief attention upon my dear, aged, venerable Mrs. Delany, who was brought in by the King and Queen, to partake with them the birthday breakfast.

In the evening, for the first time since my arrival, I went upon the terrace, under the wing and protection of my dear Mrs. Delany, who was tempted to walk there herself, in order to pay her respects on the little Princess's birthday. . . .

It was really a mighty pretty procession. The little Princess, just turned of three years old, in a robe-coat covered with fine muslin, a dressed close cap, white gloves, and a fan, walked on alone and first, highly delighted in the parade, and turning from side to side to see everybody as she passed : for all the terracers stand up against the walls, to make a clear passage for the Royal Family, the moment they come in sight. Then followed the King and Queen, no less delighted themselves with the joy of their little darling. The Princess Royal, leaning on Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave, followed at a little distance.

III. THE KING AND THE BREWER

JOHN WOLCOT (Peter Pindar), *Instructions to a celebrated Laureat,* alias *The Progress of Curiosity,* alias *A Birthday Ode* . . ,

[George I I I visits Whitbread's brewery.]

Now Mr. Whitbread serious did declare,
To make the majesty of England stare,
That he had butts enough, he knew,
Placed side by side, would reach along to **Kew.**

On which the King with wonder swiftly cried,
" What, if they reach to Kew then, side by side,
What would they do, what, what, placed end to end ? "
To whom, with knitted, calculating brow,
The Man of Beer most solemnly did vow,
Almost to Windsor that they would extend ;
On which the King with *wondering* mien,
Repeated it unto the *wondering* Queen.

Now did his Majesty so gracious say
To Mr. Whitbread, in his flying way,
" Whitbread, d'ye nick the excisemen now and then ?
Hae Whitbread, when d'ye think to leave off trade ?
Hae, what ? Miss Whitbread's still a maid, a maid ?
What, what's the matter with the men ?

" D'ye hunt ?—hae, hunt ? No, no, you are too *old*—
You'll be Lord Mayor—Lord Mayor one day—
Yes, yes, I've heard so—yes, yes, so I'm told :
Don't, don't the fine for sheriff pay—
I'll prick you every year, man, I declare :
Yes, Whitbread—yes, yes—you shall be Lord Mayor.

" Whitbread, d'ye keep a coach or *job* one, pray ?
Job, job, that's cheapest—yes, that's best, that's best—
You put your liveries on your draymen—hae ?
Hae, Whitbread ?—You have feather'd well your nest ?
What is the price, now hae, of all your stock ?
But, Whitbread, what's o'clock, pray, what's o'clock ? "

IX

THE STATE OF THE POOR

He [Johnson] said, " the poor in England were better provided for, than in any other country of the same extent : he did not mean little cantons or petty republics. Where a great proportion of the people (said he), are suffered to languish in helpless misery, that country must be ill policed, and wretchedly governed : a decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization.—Gentlemen of education, he observed, were pretty much the same in all countries ; the condition of the lower orders, the poor especially, was the true mark of national discrimination."

The state of the poor had long been a pressing problem and the occasion of much discussion and many pamphlets, of which that of Defoe (i) is perhaps the most famous. But it is in the age of the novel that for the first time the distresses of the poor man or woman, considered as an individual, become the subject of detailed, realistic and sympathetic literary treatment (ii, iii). And Johnson's criterion of civilization (which heads this section) breaks new ground.

I. THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY

DEFOE, *Giving Alms and Charity,* 1704, 25 ff.

Good husbandry is no *English* virtue ; it may have been brought over; and in some places where it has been planted it has thriven well enough ; but 'tis a foreign species, it neither loves nor is beloved by an *Englishman*; and 'tis generally observed, nothing is so universally hated, nothing treated with such a general contempt, as a rich covetous man, though he does no man any wrong, only saves his own ; every man will have an ill word for him. If a misfortune happens to him, Hang him, a covetous old

rogue, 'tis no matter, he's rich enough. Nay, when a certain great man's house was on fire, I have heard the people say to one another, Let it burn and 'twill, he's a covetous old miserly dog. I won't trouble my head to help him; he'd be hanged before he'd give us a bit of bread if we wanted it.

Though this be a fault, yet I observe from it something of the natural temper and genius of the nation; generally speaking, they cannot save their money. It is generally said, the *English* get estates and the *Dutch* save them; and this observation I have made between foreigners and *Englishmen* that where an *Englishman* earns 20s. *per* week and *but just lives,* as we call it, a *Dutchman* grows rich and leaves his children in very good condition. Where an *English* labouring-man, with his 9s. *per* week, lives wretchedly and poor, a *Dutchman* with that wages will live very tolerably well, keep the wolf from the door, and have everything handsome about him. In short, he will be rich with the same gain as makes the *Englishman* poor; he'll thrive when the other goes in rags; and he'll live when the other starves or goes a begging.

The reason is plain, a man with good husbandry and thought in his head, brings home his earnings honestly to his family, commits it to the management of his wife, or otherwise disposes of it for proper subsistence; and this man with mean gains, lives comfortably and brings up a family, when a single man, getting the same wages, drinks it away at the alehouse, thinks not of to-morrow, lays up nothing for sickness, age or disaster, and when any of these happen he's starved and a beggar.

This is so apparent in every place, that I think it needs no explication, that *English* labouring people eat and drink, but specially the latter, three times as much in value as any sort of foreigners of the same dimensions in the world.

I am not writing this as a satire on our people, 'tis a sad truth; and worthy the debate and application of the nation's physicians assembled in Parliament; the profuse

extravagant humour of our poor people in eating and drinking, keeps them low, causes their children to be left naked and starving to the care of the parishes, whenever either sickness or disaster befalls the parent.

The next article is their *sloth.* We are the most *lazy diligent* nation in the world ; vast trade, rich manufactures, mighty wealth, universal correspondence, and happy success, has been constant companions of *England,* and given us the title of an industrious people ; and so in general we are.

But there is a general taint of slothfulness upon our poor ; there is nothing more frequent than for an *Englishman* to work till he has got his pocket full of money, and then go and be idle, *or perhaps drunk,* till 'tis all gone, and perhaps himself in debt; and ask him in his cups, what he intends ? He'll tell you honestly, he'll drink so long as it lasts, and then go to work for more.

I humbly suggest, this distemper's so general, so epidemic, and so deep rooted in the nature and genius of the *English,* that I much doubt its being easily redressed, and question whether it be possible to reach it by an Act of Parliament.

This is the ruin of our poor; the *wife mourns,* the children *starves,* the husband *has no work before him,* but lies at the alehouse, or otherwise *idles away* his time and won't work. . . .

If this Honourable House can find out a remedy for this part of the mischief; if such Acts of Parliament may be made as may effectually cure the sloth and luxury of our poor, that shall make drunkards take care of wife and children, spendthrifts lay up for a *wet day,* idle, lazy fellows diligent, and thoughtless sottish men careful and provident.

If this can be done, I presume to say there will be no need of transposing and confounding our manufactures, and the circulation of our trade : they will soon find work enough and there will soon be less poverty among us; and if this cannot be done, setting them to work upon woollen manufactures, and therefore encroaching upon

those that now work at them, will but ruin our trade, and consequently increase the number of the poor.

IL THE POOR LAW AND THE PRESS-GANG

GOLDSMITH, *Citizen of the World,* 3rd ed., 1775, Letter cxix [1]

With what indignation do I hear the heroes of tragedy complain of misfortunes and hardships, whose greatest calamity is founded in arrogance and pride. Their severest distresses are pleasures, compared to what many of the adventuring poor every day sustain without murmuring. These may eat, drink, and sleep; have slaves to attend them, and are sure of subsistence for life, while many of their fellow-creatures are obliged to wander, without a friend to comfort or to assist them, find enmity in every law, and are too poor to obtain even justice.

I have been led into these reflections from accidentally meeting, some days ago, a poor fellow begging at one of the outlets of this town, with a wooden leg. I was curious to learn what had reduced him to his present situation ; and, after giving him what I thought proper, desired to know the history of his life and misfortunes, and the manner in which he was reduced to his present distress. The disabled soldier, for such he was, with an intrepidity truly British, leaning on his crutch, put himself into an attitude to comply with my request, and gave me his history as follows:

" As for misfortunes, Sir, I cannot pretend to have gone through more than others. Except the loss of my limb, and my being obliged to beg, I don't know any reason, thank heaven, that I have to complain: there are some who have lost both legs and an eye ; but, thank heaven, it is not quite so bad with me.

" My father was a labourer in the country, and died when I was five years old; so I was put upon the parish. As he had been a wandering sort of a man, the parishioners were not able to tell to what parish I belonged, or where

[1] **First published in the *British Magazine,* June, 1760.**

I was born; so they sent me to another parish, and that parish sent me to a third; till at last it was thought I belonged to no parish at all. At length, however, they fixed me. I had some disposition to be a scholar, and had actually learned my letters; but the master of the work-house put me to business, as soon as I was able to handle a mallet.

"Here I lived an easy kind of a life for five years. I only wrought ten hours in the day, and had my meat and drink provided for my labour. It is true, I was not suffered to stir far from the house, for fear I should run away: but what of that? I had the liberty of the whole house, and the yard before the door, and that was enough for me.

"I was next bound out to a farmer, where I was up both early and late, but I ate well and drank well, and liked my business well enough, till he died. Being then obliged to provide for myself, I was resolved to go and seek my fortune. Thus I lived, and went from town to town, working when I could get employment, and starving when I could get none, and might have lived so still: But happening one day to go through a field belonging to a magistrate, I spied a large hare crossing the path just before me. I believe the devil put it in my head to fling my stick at it: well! what will you have on't? I killed the hare, and was bringing it away in triumph, when the justice met me: he called me a villain and collaring me, desired I would give an account of myself. I began immediately to give a full account of all that I knew of my breed, seed, and generation; but though I gave a very long account, the justice said, I could give no account of myself; so I was indicted, and found guilty of being poor, and sent to Newgate, in order to be transported to the plantations.

"People may say this and that of being in jail; but for my part, I found Newgate as agreeable a place as ever I was **in, in all my life. I** had my belly-full **to** eai **and drink, and did no work; but alas I this kind of life was**

too good to last for ever ! I was taken out of prison, after five months, put on board of a ship, and sent off with two hundred more. Our passage was but indifferent, for we were all confined in the hold, and died very fast, for want of sweet air and provisions; but, for my part, I did not want meat, because I had a fever all the way. Providence was kind; when provisions grew short, it took away my desire of eating. When we came ashore, we were sold to the planters. I was bound for seven years, and as I was no scholar, for I had forgot my letters, I was obliged to work among the negroes, and served out my time, as in duty bound to do.

" When my time was expired, I worked my passage home, and glad I was to see old England again, because I love my country. 0 liberty, liberty, liberty! That is the property of every Englishman, and I will die in its defence. I was afraid, however, that I should be indicted for a vagabond once more, so did not much care to go into the country, but kept about town, and did little jobs when I could get them. I was very happy in this manner for some time; till one evening, coming home from work, two men knocked me down, and then desired me to stand still. They belonged to a press-gang : I was carried before the justice, and as I could give no account of myself (that was the thing that always hobbled me) I had my choice left, whether to go on board a man of war, or list for **a** soldier. I chose to be a soldier; and in this post of **a** gentleman, I served two campaigns in Flanders, and received **but** one wound through the breast, which is troublesome to this day.

" When the peace came on, I was discharged; and as I could not work, because my wound was sometimes painful, I listed for a landman in the East India Company's service. I here fought the French in six pitched battles; and verily believe, that if I could read or write, **our captain would** have given me promotion, and made me a corporal. **But that** W3s **not** my **good** fortune; **I** soon fell sick, **and when I became good for nothing,** got leave **to return**

home again with forty pounds in my pocket, which I saved in the service. This was at the beginning of the present war, so I hoped to be set on shore, and to have the pleasure of spending my money; but the government wanted men, and I was pressed again, before ever I could set foot on shore.

"The boatswain found me, as he said, an obstinate fellow: he swore that I understood my business perfectly well, but that I pretended sickness, merely to be idle. God knows, I knew nothing of sea-business: He beat me without considering what he was about. But still my forty pounds were of some comfort to me under every beating: the money was my comfort, and the money I might have had to this day, but that our ship was taken by the French, and so I lost it all.

"Our crew was carried into a French prison, and many of them died, because they were not used to live in a jail; but for my part, it was nothing to me, for I was seasoned. One night, however, as I was sleeping on a bed of boards, with a warm blanket about me (for I always loved to lie well), I was awaked by the boatswain, who had a dark lantern in his hand. Jack, says he to me, will you knock out the French sentry's brains? I don't care, says I, striving to keep myself awake, if I lend a hand. Then follow me, says he, and I hope we shall do business. So up I got, and tied my blanket, which was all the clothes I had, about my middle, and went with him to fight the Frenchmen. We had no arms; but one Englishman is able to beat five French at any time; so we went down to the door, where both the sentries were posted, and rushing upon them, seized their arms in a moment, and knocked them down. From thence nine of us ran together to the quay, and seizing the first boat we met, got out of the harbour and put to sea. We had not been here three days before we were taken up by an English privateer, who was glad of so many good hands; and we consented to run our chance. However, we had not so much luck as we expected. In three days we fell

in with a French man-of-war, of forty guns, while we had but twenty-three ; so to it we went. The fight lasted for three hours; and I verily believe that we should have taken the Frenchman, but unfortunately, we lost almost all our men just as we were going to get the victory. I was once more in the power of the French, and I believe it would have gone hard with me, had I been brought back to my old jail in Brest; but by good fortune, we were retaken, and carried to England once more.

" I had almost forgot to tell you, that in this last engagement I was wounded in two places ; I lost four fingers of the left hand, and my leg was shot off. Had I the good fortune to have lost my leg and use of my hand on board a king's ship, and not a privateer, I should have been entitled to clothing and maintenance during the rest of my life ; but that was not my chance : one man is born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and another with a wooden ladle. However, blessed be God! I enjoy good health, and have no enemy in this world, that I know of, but the French and the Justice of Peace."

Thus saying, he limped off, leaving my friend and me in admiration of his intrepidity and content; nor could we avoid acknowledging, that an habitual acquaintance with misery is the truest school of fortitude and philosophy. Adieu.

III. POVERTY—THE VILLAGE LABOURER

COWPISR, *The Task*, 1783, iv. *The Winter Evening*, 11. 374-406, 429-61

Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat,
Such claim compassion in a night like this,
And have a friend in every feeling heart.
Warmed, while it lasts, by labour all day long
They brave the season, and yet find at eve,
111 clad and fed but sparely, time to cool.
The frugal housewife trembles when she lights
Her scanty stock of brushwood, blazing clear,

But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys ;
The few small embers left she nurses well.
And while her infant race with outspread hands
And crowded knees sit cowering o'er the sparks,
Retires, content to quake, so they be warmed.
The man feels least, as more inured than she
To winter, and the current in his veins
More briskly moved by his severer toil;
Yet he too finds his own distress in theirs.
The taper soon extinguished, which I saw
Dangled along at the cold finger's end
Just when the day declined, and the brown loaf
Lodged on the shelf, half eaten, without sauce
Of savoury cheese, or butter costlier still,
Sleep seems their only refuge : for alas !
Where penury is felt the thought is chained,
And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few.
With all this thrift they thrive not. All the care
Ingenious parsimony takes but just
Saves the old inventory, bed and stool,
Skillet and old carved chest, from public sale.
They live, and live without extorted alms
From grudging hands, but other boast have none
To soothe their honest pride that scorns to beg,
Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.

But poverty, with most, who whimper forth
Their long complaints, is self-inflicted woe,
Th' effect of laziness or sottish waste.
Now goes the nightly thief prowling abroad
For plunder ; much solicitous how best
He may compensate for a day of sloth,
By works of darkness and nocturnal wrong.
Woe to the gardener's pale, the farmer's hedge
Plashed neatly and secured with driven stakes
Deep in the loamy bank. Uptorn by strength,
Resistless in so bad a cause, but lame
To better deeds, he bundles up **the spoil.**

An ass's burden and, when laden most
And heaviest, light of foot steals fast away.
Nor does the boarded hovel better guard
The well-stacked pile of riven logs and roots
From his pernicious force. Nor will he leave
Unwrenched the door, however well secured,
Where chanticleer amidst his harem sleeps
In unsuspecting pomp. Twitched from the perch
He gives the princely bird, with all his wives,
To his voracious bag, struggling in vain,
And loudly wondering at the sudden change.
Nor this to feed his own. Twere some excuse
Did pity of their sufferings warp aside
His principle and tempt him into sin
For their support, so destitute. But they
Neglected pine at home, themselves, as more
Exposed than others, with less scruple made
His victims, robbed of their defenceless all.
Cruel is all he does. 'Tis quenchless thirst
Of ruinous ebriety that prompts
His ev'ry action, and imbrutes the man.

reputed a hanging judge, for a severity inconsistent with the practice of the Bench. He writes elsewhere (not ironically) : " there is nothing more admirable, nor indeed more amiable, in the law of England, than the extreme tenderness with which it proceeds against persons accused of capital crimes. In this respect, it justly claims a preference to the institutions of all other countries ; in some of which a criminal is hurried to execution with rather less ceremony than is required by our law to carry him to prison ".[1]

I. CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

S. JOHNSON, *The Rambler,* No. 114, April 20, 1751

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, " Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than I ? " On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful procession put the same question to his own heart. Few among those that crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection; for who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others than the theft of a piece of money ?

It has been always the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees

[1] *The Case of Elizabeth Canning,* 1753.

of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man. . . .

Yet, since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havoc of our fellow beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequence might arise from relaxations of the law and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, *το των φοβερων φοβερωτατον, of dreadful things the most dreadful*; an evil beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands in blood ; but when by the last act of cruelty no new danger is incurred and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear ?

It may be urged that the sentence is often mitigated to simple robbery; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion; and indeed, it may be observed that all but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of **a** thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing, compared with his misery; **and** severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment; nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly swayed, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I know not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful or less extensive.

If those whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits, they might have escaped all the temptations to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence ; and detected they might all have been had the prosecutors been certain

that their lives would have been spared. I believe every thief will confess that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured upon capital crimes, because he knows that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual, unless some will inform, and some will prosecute ; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, informations will always be hated, and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death; especially when he remembers that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of public justice are indeed strong : but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderness for life. What is punished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be seldom discovered; and multitudes will be suffered *to* advance from crime to crime, till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, **and** extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice that I might reasonably fear to expose it to the public, could it be supported only by my own observations: I shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure *it that* attention which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy.

IL A HORSE-STEALER'S TRIAL

FIELDING, *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling,* 1749, VIII, xi.

Partridge then proceeded thus: "In the parish where I was born, there lived a farmer whose name was Bridle, and he had a son named Francis, a good, hopeful young

fellow: I was at the grammar-school with him, where I remember he was got into Ovid's Epistles, and he could construe you three lines together sometimes without looking into a dictionary. Besides all this, he was a very good lad, never missed church o' Sundays, and was reckoned one of the best psalm-singers in the whole parish. He would indeed now and then take a cup too much, and that was the only fault he had."—" Well, but come to the ghost," cried Jones. " Never fear, sir ; I shall come to him soon enough," answered Partridge. " You must know, then, that farmer Bridle lost a mare, a sorrel one to the best of my remembrance ; and so it fell out that this young Francis shortly afterward being at a fair at Hindon, and as I think it was on—I can't remember the day ; and being as he was, what should he happen to meet but a man upon his father's mare. Frank called out presently, Stop thief ; and it being in the middle of the fair, it was impossible, you know, for the man to make his escape. So they apprehended him and carried him before the justice : I remember *it* was Justice Willoughby, of Noyle, a very worthy good gentleman ; and he committed him to prison, and bound Frank in a recognizance, I think they call it —a hard word compounded of *re* and *cognosco;* but it differs in its meaning from the use of the simple, as many other compounds do. Well, at last down came my Lord Justice Page to hold the assizes; and so the fellow was had up, and Frank was had up for a witness. To be sure, I shall never forget the face of the judge, when he began to ask him what he had to say against the prisoner. He made poor Frank tremble and shake in his shoes. ' Well you, fellow,' says my lord, ' what have you to say ? Don't stand humming and hawing, but speak out.' But, however, he soon turned altogether as civil to Frank, and began to thunder at the fellow; and when he asked him if he had anything to say for himself, the fellow said he had found the horse. ' Ay ! ' answered the judge, ' thou art a lucky fellow : I have travelled the circuit these forty years, and never found a horse in my life; but I'll tell

thee what, friend, thou wast more lucky than thou didst know of ; for thou didst not only find a horse, but a halter too, I promise thee/ To be sure, I shall never forget the word. Upon which every body fell a laughing, as how could they help it ? Nay, and twenty other jests he made, which I can't remember now. There was something about his skill in horseflesh which made all the folks laugh. To be certain, the judge must have been a very brave man, as well as a man of much learning. It is indeed charming sport to hear trials for life and death. One thing I own I thought a little hard, that the prisoner's counsel was not allowed to speak for him, though he desired only to be heard one very short word, but my lord would not hearken to him, though he suffered a counsellor to talk against him for above half-an-hour. I thought it hard, I own, that there should be so many of them ; my lord, and the court, and the jury, and the counsellors, and the witnesses, all upon one poor man, and he too in chains. Well, the fellow was hanged, as to be sure it could be no otherwise, and poor Frank could never be easy about it. He never was in the dark alone, but he fancied he saw the fellow's spirit."

III. COUNTRY JUSTICE—THE PETTY OFFENDER

Cowper to the Rev. John Newton, *Correspondence*, ed. T. Wright, 1904, ii. 122-4

Nov. 17th, 1783.

My dear Friend, . . .

The country around us is much alarmed with apprehensions of fire. Two have happened since that of Olney. One at Hitchin, where the damage is said to amount to eleven thousand pounds; and another at a place not far from Hitchin, of which I have not yet learnt the name. Letters have been dropped at Bedford, threatening to burn the town; and the inhabitants have been so intimidated as to have placed a guard in many parts of it, several nights past. Some madman or some devil has broke loose, who

it is to be hoped will pay dear for these effusions of his malignity. Since our conflagration here, we have sent two women and a boy to the justice, for depredation; Sue Riviss for stealing a piece of beef, which, in her excuse, she said she intended to take care of. This lady, whom you well remember, escaped for want of evidence ; not that evidence was indeed wanting, but our men of Gotham judged it unnecessary to send it. With her went the woman I mentioned before, who, it seems, has made some sort of profession, but upon this occasion allowed herself a latitude of conduct rather inconsistent with it, having filled her apron with wearing apparel, which she likewise intended to take care of. She would have likewise gone to the county gaol, had Billy Raban, the baker's son, who prosecuted, insisted upon it; but he, good-naturedly, though I think weakly, interposed in her favour, and begged her off. The young gentleman who accompanied these fair ones is the junior son of Molly Boswell. He had stolen some iron-work, the property of Griggs the butcher. Being convicted, he was ordered to be whipped, which operation he under-went at the cart's tail, from the stone-house to the high arch, and back again. He seemed to show great fortitude, but it was all an imposition upon the public. The beadle, who performed it, had filled his left hand with yellow ochre, through which, after every stroke, he drew the lash of his whip, leaving the appearance of a wound upon the skin, but in reality not hurting him at all. [1] This being perceived by Mr. Constable Handscomb, who followed the beadle, he applied his cane, without any such management or

[1] Cf. an entry in Parson Woodcforde's diary, July 22, 1777. Robert Biggen for stealing potatoes was this afternoon whipp'd thro' the streets of Cary by the Hangman at the end of a Cart, He was whipped from the George Inn to the Angel. . . . He, being an old offender, there was a Collection of 0.17.6 given to the Hangman to do him justice. But it was not much for all that —the Hangman was an old man and a most villainous looking Fellow indeed. For my Part I would not contribute one Farthing to it.—*The Diary of a Country Parson,* ed. by J. Beresford, 1924, p. 209.

precaution, to the shoulders of the too merciful executioner. The scene immediately became more interesting. The beadle could by no means be prevailed upon to strike hard, which provoked the constable to strike harder; and this double flogging continued till a lass of Silver-End, pitying the pitiful beadle thus suffering under the hands of the pitiful constable, joined the procession, and placing herself immediately behind the latter, seized him by his capillary club, and pulling him backwards by the same, slapped his face with a most Amazonian fury. This concatenation of events has taken up more of my paper than I intended it should, but I could not forbear to inform you how the beadle thrashed the thief, the constable the beadle, and the lady the constable, and how the thief was the only person concerned who suffered nothing. . . .

IV. THE PROCESSION TO TYBURN

FIELDING, *Covent Garden Journal,* No. 55, July 18, 1752

On Monday last eleven wretches were executed at Tyburn, and the very next night one of the most impudent street-robberies was committed near St. James's Square, an instance of the little force which such examples have on the minds of the populace.

In real truth, the executions of criminals, as at present conducted, serve, I apprehend, a purpose diametrically opposite to that for which they were designed; and tend rather to inspire the vulgar with a contempt of the gallows than with a fear of it.

The day of execution is a holiday to the greatest part of the mob about town. On every such occasion they are sure to assemble in great numbers, and as sure to behave themselves with all kinds of disorder. All the avenues to Tyburn appear like those to a wake or festival, where idleness, wantonness, drunkenness, and every other species of debauchery are gratified.

And as the looks and behaviour of the spectators so well bespeak them to be assembled to see some shew or

farce, those who are to exhibit the spectacle seem brought thither only as the performers of such ridiculous drama. Some indeed, as in the case of all players, perform their parts beyond others, have much more mirth in their countenances, and of jest in their mouths, and do consequently entertain the good company better than their companions; but even among those who fall shortest of such merit, there are very few who do *not* preserve the appearance of indifference at least, and though all cannot force a laugh, there is scarce one who doth not refrain from tears, and from every other mark of fear or contrition.

Can such a scene as this impress the fear of death on the minds of the vulgar ? Can the politician invent any other more powerful method of teaching them to despise it ? Is *it* not to exemplify all the laboured receipts of the philosophers and to prove the truth of those doctrines which are summed up in the lines of Lucretius ?

Multo igitur mortem minus ad nos esse putandum
Si unius csse potest, quam quod nihil esse videmus.

And if the fear of death cannot be inculcated this way, neither can the fear of shame. Here likewise the example operates directly contrary to what is intended ; for however contemptible these wretches may appear to a wise and good man, it is manifest that they are seen in a very different light by their companions, by all those who are capable of learning either a good or bad lesson from their fate. However obnoxious his crime were, the chief who suffers with resolution and boldness, (as is now commonly the case) looks on himself as a hero, and is regarded **and** spoken of as such by others.

Where then is the remedy ? I answer the remedy **hath** been prescribed already, and may be found at the end of the treatise on Robberies published last year : [1] namely private executions before the face of the Court.

To the arguments there used, I have never heard **more**

[1] **Fielding's *Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers,* 1751.**

than one objection, which is, that the execution of criminals would be a very disagreeable sight to the magistrates. So I believe it is in Holland, where the magistrates all attend on these occasions; so, to a good-natured judge, in England is the office of condemning a man to be hanged, to a tender-hearted man perhaps scarce less disagreeable than to see his sentence executed.

But I shall reply no further to an objection which when opposed to the good of the public, is absolutely ridiculous. I will only add that if no method can be found of making our capital punishments more terrible and more exemplary, I wish some other punishments were invented, and that we may no longer proceed to string up hundreds of our fellow-creatures every year, a matter as shocking to all men of humanity, as it is entertaining to a dissolute rabble, who (I repeat it again) instead of being terrified, are hardened and encouraged by the sight.

PART II

I

MEN AND MANNERS

Men and women arc my subjects of enquiry.
JOHNSON.

It was remarked by foreign visitors that in England there were few or no types, individuals went their own way, and eccentricity was almost a rule. The period, too, was a changing one, Squire Western already in 1749 represented the old-fashioned type of country squire. The drinking habits which are correctly described by Le Blanc in the forties (ii) had been greatly modified towards the end of Johnson'slife.[1] Richardson's letter on domestic economy (iii) is of interest in the history of the novel. He began his literary career by writing letters for friends, afterwards elaborated and published, and out of these moralizing and didactic letters developed his first novel, *Pamela,* in the form of letters written by a maid-servant.

I. A COUNTRY SQUIRE AND HIS WIFE

FIELDING, *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling,* 1749, VII, iv

The squire, to whom that poor woman had been a faithful upper-servant all the time of their marriage, had returned that behaviour by making what the world calls a good husband. He very seldom swore at her (perhaps not above once a week) and never beat her : she had not the least occasion for jealousy, and was perfect mistress of her

[1] See above, p. 79.

time ; for she was never interrupted by her husband, who was engaged all the morning in his field exercises, and all the evening with bottle companions. She scarce indeed ever saw him but at meals; where she had the pleasure of carving those dishes which she had before attended at the dressing. From these meals she retired about five minutes after the other servants, having only stayed to drink " the king over the water ". Such were, it seems, Mr. Western's orders ; for it was a maxim with him, that women should come in with the first dish, and go out after the first glass. Obedience to these orders was perhaps no difficult task ; for the conversation (if it may be called so) was seldom such as could entertain a lady. It consisted chiefly of hallowing, singing, relations of sporting adventures, b—d—y, and abuse of women, and of the government.

These, however, were the only seasons when Mr. Western saw his wife ; for when she repaired to her bed, he was generally so drunk that he could not see ; and in the sporting season he always rose from her before it was light. Thus she was perfect mistress of her time, and had besides a coach and four usually at her command; though unhappily, indeed, the badness of the neighbourhood, and of the roads, made this of little use; for none who had set much value on their necks would have passed through the one, or who had set any value on their hours would have visited the other. Now to deal honestly with the reader, she did not make all the return expected to so much indulgence ; for she had been married against her will by a fond father, the match having been rather advantageous on her side ; for the squire's estate was upward of £3000 a year, and her fortune no more than a bare £8000. Hence perhaps she had contracted a little gloominess of temper, for she was rather a good servant than a good wife; nor had she always the gratitude to return the extraordinary degree of roaring mirth, with which the squire received her, even with a good-humoured smile. She would, moreover, sometimes interfere with matters which did not concern her, as the violent drinking of her husband, which in the

gentlest terms she would take some of the few opportunities he gave her of remonstrating against. And once in her life she very earnestly entreated him to carry her for two months to London, which he peremptorily denied ; nay was angry with his wife for the request ever after, being well assured that all the husbands in London are cuckolds.

IL TABLE MANNERS

L E BLANC, *Letters on the English and French Nations,* Trans. 1747, i. 325 if.

The Manner how the English spend their time at table, the ceremony of toasts, &c.

At London, they usually meet more to drink in a melancholy manner, to each other's healths, than converse together with that freedom which the table commonly gives.

When they drank harder in France, than they do at present, this custom of drinking each other's health was also more frequent. It seems to derive its birth from intemperance. Men were so sensible of the unreasonableness of drinking to excess, that they invented this form of politeness, to palliate the vice, by which means they have found a way to gratify their taste, and force, as I may say, others to conform to it. In this sense, the more intemperate people are, the more polite, and the English have carried this form of politeness very far. . . . Drunkenness, since I must name it, is very common here, among people of all ranks. . . .

Desserts are very little used in England ; a good butler is more esteemed here, than a confectioner would be, had he all the ability and fine taste of Procopius. Even at tables where they serve desserts, they do but just show them and presently take away every thing, to the very tablecloth. By this the English, whom politeness does not permit to tell the ladies their company is troublesome to them, give them notice to retire, when they are weary of them; and school-boys don't show more joy, when their

master goes out of school, than the guests do, when they take leave of them. The satisfaction that appears in their looks shows the pleasure they feel on finding themselves freed from the restraint the company of the women laid them under ; and notwithstanding the little attention they pay them, the women always seemed to me to retire with as much regret, as the men showed satisfaction, at seeing them leave the room. The table is immediately covered with mugs, bottles and glasses, and often with pipes and tobacco ; and all things thus disposed, the ceremony of toasts begins. As I do not believe any body who has writ of the manners and ceremonies of nations has treated of this custom, 'tis proper I should inform you of it.

The English call the healths of absent persons, Toasts, which all the company reciprocally propose, and all are obliged to drink, on pain of the greatest unpoliteness. . . . The young man toasts his mistress's health, the honest tradesman his correspondent's, and the grave ecclesiastic, his bishop's. As to the bishop, he has that of his primate, and the primate may if he please drink to his guests the *Prosperity of the Protestant Cause* or any other Toast he thinks proper.

The master of the house is the person who begins these rounds and is obliged to take care of their order and exactness, both with regard to the manner of giving and drinking the Toasts, and to prevent any deviation from the rule which obliges all the company to drink equally alike. . . . The partisans of the Court drink the health of the king and all the royal family, those who oppose the Court, my lord Carteret's, Mr. Pulteney's and of all those who oppose the minister. The Jacobites drink the Pretender's health.

'Tis customary also to toast the reigning beauties, even those they know only by sight, and by this means a coxcomb gives himself the air of a man of fortune. . . . A man would appear ridiculous to some sort of people, **who should** have the misfortune to give for his Toast, a **beauty** whose charms were faded. A man must be acquainted

with the map of London, not to commit such an absurdity.

The men of learning in this country, though they submit themselves very little to the other customs of the nation, are very exact observers of this ceremony of Toasts. They practise it the most frequently and with the greatest solemnity. Every one in his way, toasts not only them *[sic]* of his own nation, but even the most eminent foreigners.

These healths and these rounds very often continue till they can continue them no longer. In the country, as long as they last, they talk nothing but horses and hunting, or else only drink and smoke. I know an Englishman who every time you press him to speak, says, *Talking spoils conversation.* In town they entertain themselves with the affairs of parliament, the stocks and the Spanish galleons.

The ladies, who during this time are in another apartment, don't drink much less, but without running the same hazard, they drink tea, which they use morning and evening, till they can hardly breathe : this contributes to augment their natural inclination to silence, which is, however, perhaps more supportable than the eternal clack clack of some of our French women.

If they dine in taverns, which are very much frequented at London by persons of all ranks, the *Toasts* vary still more ; very frequently after having drunk to the health of their friends, they drink to the ruin and damnation of their enemies. There is then no sort of mad pranks they do not think of, to excite one another to drink.

III. HOUSEWIVES—A MIDDLE-CLASS MENAGE

S. RICHARDSON, *Letters written to and for particular friends on the most important occasions directing not only the requisite style and forms to be observed in writing familiar letters : But how to think and act justly and prudently in the common concerns of human life,* 1741, P- 255 ff.

From a Gentleman to his Lady whose over-niceness in her House, and unnecessary temper with her servants, make their lives uncomfortable.

My dear,

Your kind concern for my absence is very obliging. Tis true, I have already out-stayed my intention by a week; and I find the place I am in so very engaging, and Mr. *Terry* and his sister so agreeable, that, but to come to *you* I would willingly stay a month longer with *them.* In short, my dear, Mr. *Terry* lives just as 7 should wish to live ; and his sister, who is his house-keeper, is just what I should *wish you* to be, *in* many particulars ; though no one, in my opinion, can equal you in others.

You must know then, that Mr. *Terry* and I are quite happy with one another; and when he has no visitors, are indulged in a very pretty parlour, which neither pail nor mop is permitted to enter for two or three days together. And when we have company, the dining-room is at our service, and the kind lady lets us smoke there without remarking upon the beastly fumes that we give the furniture. Not only so, but if, by a sudden turn of the pipe, any of us chances to bestrew the floor with burnt tobacco, we are not broken in upon either by maid or broom. And yet no room can be cleaner than we find that, when we return to it from a walk in the gardens.

And indeed, I must acquaint you, that I never saw a lady more prudently nice than Mrs. *Terry.* Her person, furniture and house, are even patterns of neatness and good (Economy. I never any-where saw the one or the other out-done. Yet how can this be, I marvel!—For I have seen her pass over the mark of a dirty shoe-heel upon a floor as white as a curd, and never once rank the aggressor among the worst of slovens. Nay, more than that, I have seen her brother drop a few crumbs of bread and butter under his feet, without so much as one corrective frown ? Is not this strange, my dear ? Have bachelors, from a sister, more privileges than a married man from his wife ?

More than this, (it is true, upon my honour ! incredible as it may seem to you) t'other day he happened to spill a glass of claret upon a fine damask table-cloth, and broke

the glass ; yet met with no other reproof than an agreeable laugh at his awkwardness, and, *It was well it was he that did it, who might do as he pleased with his own !* Oh, what a happy man, thought I, is this good old bachelor !

But, my dear, prepare for more strange things still: Yesterday, at dinner, he was cutting up a good fat goose, and, by an unfortunate splash, most grievously bespattered a rich gown his sister had on. My heart ached upon this; for truly, I thought, for a moment, I was at home. But good Mrs. *Terry* convinced me of the contrary. Oh, brother, said she, with a smile, what a slip was that !—But misfortunes will happen !—And out she pulled her pocket-handkerchief to wipe her gown. I am sorry for it, sister, said he. It can't be helped, returned she, with a smile ; but I had a good mind to put you to some expense for this. This was all she said, and she kept her seat, and eat her dinner in perfect good temper; nay, and *looked* as easy and pleasant as she spoke.

I must still further observe, that, though all things here are conducted with the greatest decorum, and every servant in the house knows their duty, and does it distinguishingly well, yet I have never heard one high or angry word pass between Mrs. *Terry* and the maids. Is not this surprising, my dear ? What can it be owing to ? I thought, for my share, so much have I been used to a *contrary* management, that no servant could do their duty, unless the mistress of the family put herself out of humour with all the house. Either she is more fortunate than you, in lighting of [on ?] good servants, or, perhaps, as persecution makes schismatics in the church, so finding faults creates them in a family. There may be something in this, my dear, for I have seen your maid *Jane* blunder, out of *fear,* and blunder a second time, to find she *had* blundered, and a third, because she was put quite out, and could not help it.—Then how has my poor deary been discomposed ! How have her charming features been even distorted with passion ! Not a bit of the lily in her face, for the crimson rose had swallowed it all up; and an eye darting flames of indignation and

woe mixed together I And then, breaking silence, Nobody ever had such torments of servants as I have! **Alas**! poor deary! How hard is thy hap!—How much happier this good family! For, secure of an excuse, rather than blame, if a small fault should be committed, in comes each servant, as their duty requires, all serene, pleased, cheerful, as their mistress. Their eye *[sic]* is fixed upon her eye, with a becoming confidence of pleasing; and a nod or a beck, does more with them than a hundred words.

IV. THE BRAVERY OF THE ENGLISH COMMON SOLDIER

[S. JOHNSON], *British Magazine,* Jan., 1760. *Works,* 1825, v. 366 ff.

By those who have compared the military genius of the English with that of the French nation, it is remarked, that *the French officer will always lead, if the soldiers will follow ; and that the English soldiers will always follow if their officers will lead.*

In all pointed sentences, some degree of accuracy must be sacrificed to conciseness; and, in this comparison, our officers seem to lose what our soldiers gain. I know not any reason for supposing that the English officers are less willing than the French to lead, but it is, I think, universally allowed, that the English soldiers are more willing to follow. Our nation may boast, beyond any other people in the world, of a kind of epidemic bravery, diffused equally through all its ranks. We can show a peasantry of heroes, and fill our armies with clowns, whose courage may vie with that of their general. . . .

What may be done by discipline and regularity, may be seen in the troops of the Russian empress and Prussian monarch. We find that they may be broken without confusion and repulsed without flight.

But the English troops have none of these requisites in any eminent degree. Regularity is by no means part of their character: they are rarely exercised, and therefore shew very little dexterity in their evolutions as bodies of

men, or in the manual use of their weapons as individuals; they neither are thought by others, nor by themselves, more active or exact than their enemies, and therefore derive none of their courage from such imaginary superiority-

The manner in which they are dispersed in quarters over the country during times of peace, naturally produces laxity of discipline : they are very little in sight of their officers; and when they are not engaged in the slight duty of the guard, are suffered to live every man his own way.

The equality of English privileges, the impartiality of our laws, the freedom of our tenures, and the prosperity of our trade, dispose us very little to reverence of superiors. It is not to any great esteem of the officers that the English soldier is indebted for his spirit in the hour of battle; for perhaps it does not often happen that he thinks much better of his leader than himself. The French Count, who has lately published *The Art of War,* remarks how much soldiers are animated, when they see all their dangers shared by those who were born to be their masters and whom they consider as beings of a different rank. The Englishman despises such motives of courage: he was born without a master; and looks not on any man, however dignified by lace or titles, as deserving from Nature any claims to his respect, or inheriting any qualities superior to his own.

There are some, perhaps, who would imagine that every Englishman fights better than the subjects of absolute governments, because he has more to defend. But what has the English more than a French soldier ? Property they are both commonly without. Liberty is, to the lowest rank of every nation, little more than a choice of working or starving; and this choice is, I suppose, equally allowed in every country. The English soldier seldom has his head very full of the constitution; nor has there been, for more than a century, any war that put the property or liberty of a single Englishman in danger.

Whence then is the courage of the English vulgar ? It

proceeds in my opinion, from that dissolution of dependence which obliges every man to regard his own character. While every man is fed by his own hands, he has no need of any servile arts; he may always have wages for his labour ; and is no less necessary to his employer, than his employer is to him. While he looks for no protection from others, he is naturally roused to be his own protector; and having nothing to abate his esteem of himself, he consequently aspires to the esteem of others. Thus every man that crowds our streets is a man of honour, disdainful of obligation, impatient of reproach, and desirous of extending his own reputation among those of his own rank ; and as courage is in most frequent use, the fame of courage is most eagerly pursued. From this neglect of subordination I do not deny that some inconveniences may from time to time proceed : the power of the law does not always sufficiently supply the want of reverence, or maintain the proper distinction between different ranks ; but good and evil will grow up in this world together; and they who complain, in peace, of the insolence of the populace, must remember, that their insolence in peace is bravery in war.

V. ENGLISH CRAFTSMEN

LE BLANC, *Letters on the English and French Nations*, Trans. 1747, i. 48

This people, equally industrious and laborious, have a great advantage over their neighbours in all things which require a great deal of time to complete. England has more than any other country of those machines so useful to the state, which really multiply men by lessening their work ; and by means of which one man can execute what would take up thirty without such assistance. Thus by turning a wheel, a boy of ten years old gives to a hundred things made of steel, all at the same time, that beautiful polish, which few of our French workmen can imitate. Thus, in the coal-pits at Newcastle, a single person can, by means of an engine equally surprising and simple,

raise five hundred tons of water an hundred and eighty feet. The drawing of this water facilitates the digging of the coal out of the pit; which coal is of the greatest advantage to the nation, by abundantly supplying the deficiency of wood for firing. This same machine has another use: it furnishes at the same time a country that wants water with a river that may be called artificial.

'Tis not in great works alone that the English excel: the most common trades here seem to partake of the perfection of arts. In all lock-work, which is so rudely performed in our country, I equally admire the patience and industry of the English workman. Ravechet does not finish the hinge of a gold snuff-box with greater care than they do that of a clothes-press here. With regard to the neatness and solidity of work of all kinds they succeed better in the least towns of England, than in the most considerable cities of France. I have seen here, in country places, common hands work and put together the several parts of a piece of joiner's work with a degree of exactness and propriety which the best master-joiners of Paris would find it difficult to come near.

The English artisan has the quality, extremely commendable, and peculiar to him, which is, never to swerve from the degree of perfection in his trade which he is master of: whatever he undertakes, he always does as well as he can. The French workman is far from deserving this commendation. His reputation is scarcely established, when he grows negligent: whatever faults there are in his work more frequently proceed from his desire of cheating, than from his ignorance. On the contrary, the care an Englishman constantly takes to do his work well seems to bespeak in him a notion of the exact, which suffers him not to depart from it. In this respect it may be said that the meanest workman here has noble thoughts of the trade he professes. But at the same time, it should seem as if the idea of the exact is the only one the Englishman has of the beautiful. The genteel escapes him. There is nothing which is not susceptible of the elegance of the

outlines. For us it is not sufficient that an elbow-chair be convenient, we require further that its shape be agreeable. Our apartments are effectively adorned with what serves only to furnish those of London. The English workmen take no less pains than ours in seeking this gracefulness in the shape of things ; but notwithstanding all their endeavours, they have not been able to attain it. . . . Does not an over-scrupulous exactitude cool the genius ?

VI. SERVANTS

DEFOE, *Every-Body's Business is No-Body's Business,* 2nd ed., 1725, 16-19

Our charity-children are distinguished by their dress, why then may not our women servants ? Why may they not be made frugal *per* force, and not suffered to put all on their backs, but obliged to save something for a rainy day ? I am therefore entirely against any servants wearing of silks, laces and other superfluous finery; it sets them above themselves and makes their mistresses contemptible in their eyes. . . .

Besides, the fear of spoiling their clothes makes them afraid of household-work ; so that in a little time we shall have none but chamber-maids and nursery-maids ; and of this let me give one instance : My family is composed of myself and sister, a man and a maid; and being without the last, a young wench came to hire herself. The man was gone out, and my sister above stairs, so I opened the door myself, and this person presented herself to my view, dressed completely, more like a visitor than a servant-maid ; she not knowing me, asked for my sister : Pray Madam, said I, be pleased to walk into the parlour, she shall wait on you presently. Accordingly I handed Madam in, who took it very cordially. After some apology, I left her alone for a minute or two, while I (stupid wretch!) ran up to my sister, and told her, there was a gentlewoman below come to visit her. Dear brother, said she, **don't** leave her alone, go down and entertain her while I dress

myself. Accordingly, down I went, and talked of indifferent affairs ; mean while my sister dressed herself all over again, not being willing to be seen in an undress. At last she came down dressed as clean as her visitor; but how great was my surprise, when I found my fine lady a common servant-wench.

My sister, understanding what she was, began to enquire what wages she expected ? She modestly asked but eight pounds a year. The next question was, what work she could do to deserve such wages! To which she answered, that she could clean a house, or dress a common family-dinner. But cannot you wash, replied my sister, or get up linen ? She answered in the negative, and said she would undertake neither, nor would she go into any family that did not put out their linen to wash, and hire a chair-woman to scour. She desired to see the house, and after having carefully surveyed it, said, the work was too hard for her, nor could she undertake it. This put my sister beyond ail patience, and me into the greatest admiration. Young woman, said she, you have made a mistake, I want a house-maid, and you are a chamber-maid. No madam, replied she, I am not needle-woman enough for that. And yet you ask eight pounds a year, replied my sister. Yes madam, said she, nor shall 1 bate a farthing. Then get you gone for a lazy impudent baggage, said I, you want to be a boarder, not a servant: Have you a fortune, or estate, that you dress at that rate ? No sir, said she, but I hope I may wear what I work for without offence. What you work for, interrupted my sister, why you don't seem willing to undertake any work : You will not wash or scour ; you cannot dress a dinner for company ; you are no needle-woman, and our little house of two rooms on **a** floor is too much for you. For God's sake, what can you do ? Madam, replied she pertly, I know my business, and don't fear a service ; there are more places than parish-churches; if you wash at home you should have **a** laundry-maid; if you give entertainments, you must **have a cook-maid**; **and if** you have any needle-work, you

should have a chamber-maid; and such a house as this is enough for a house-maid in all conscience.

I was pleased with the wit and astonished at the impudence of the girl, and dismissed her with thanks for her instructions; assuring her that when I kept four maids, she should be house-maid if she pleased. Were a servant to do my business with cheerfulness, I should not grudge at five or six pounds *per annum* ; nor would I be so unchristian as to put more upon any one than they can bear ; but to pray and pay too, is the Devil, it is very hard that I must keep four servants, or none !

VII. SERVANTS—A YOUNG WOMAN SEEKS A PLACE IN LONDON

JOHNSON, *The Rambler,* No. 12, April 28, 1750

"I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose state, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence, has been lately so much impaired by an unsuccessful lawsuit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means as their education affords them for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vigilant enquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people that were better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombazine, the great silk-mercer's **lady,** wanted **a maid, and a** fine place it **would** be, **for**

there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, take care of a little miss just come from nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions I waited on Madam Bombazine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice was at once loud and squeaking, and her face brought to my mind the picture of the full moon. Are you the young woman, says she, that are come to offer yourself ? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town talk. But they know they shall have a bellyfull that live with me. Not like people that live at the other end of the town, we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come of ? I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.—-A great misfortune, indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a day!—So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman I suppose—such gentlewomen !—Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions, I only answered your enquiry.—Such gentlewomen ! people should set up their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town, there are gentlewomen, if they would pay their debts : I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen. Upon this, her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of continuing her insult; but happily the next word was, pray, Mrs. Gentlewoman, troop down stairs. You may believe I obeyed her.

I returned and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office to a commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house and wanted a maid.

To Mrs. Standish I went, and, after having waited six hours was at last admitted to the top of the stairs, when she came out of her room with two of her company. There was a smell of punch. So, young woman, you want a place, whence do you come ? From the country, madam. —Yes, they all come out of the country. And what brought you to town, a bastard ? Where do you lodge ? At the Seven Dials ? What, you never heard of the foundling house ! Upon this, they all laughed so obstreperously, that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards; but in two hours, I was told, she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant, to bring up poor girls to write at that rate. I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff!—You may walk. I will not have love letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street.

Two days after, I went on the same pursuit to Lady Lofty, dressed, as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that showed me in. Is this the lady that wants a place ? Pray what place would you have, miss ? a maid of honour's place ? Servants nowadays!—Madam, I heard you wanted— Wanted what—Somebody finer than myself! A pretty servant indeed—I should be afraid to speak to her—I suppose Mrs. Minx, these fine hands cannot bear wetting —A servant indeed! Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head person in this house—You are ready dressed, the taverns will be open.

I went to inquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up however. Are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place ? What, you have hired that nasty

gown, and are come to steal a better! Madam, I have another, but being obliged to walk—Then these are your manners, with your blushes and your courtesies, to come to me in your worst gown. Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other. Wait on me, you saucy slut I Then you are sure of coming—I could not let such a drab come near me—Here, you girl, that came up with her, have you touched her ? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me—Such trollops ! Get you down. What, whimpering ? Pray walk.[1]

I went away with tears ; for my cousin had lost all patience. However, she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one I was asked where I had lived ? And upon my answer was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow girls about. At the other house I was a smirking hussy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For her part, it was a rule with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and go away laughing—Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again.—At sunset the first two days I was told that my lady would see me to-morrow, and, on the third, that her woman stayed.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways; and if I

[1] The problem of how to dress when seeking a place was an acute one. John Macdonald, a highly competent and well-recommended valet, records in his *Memoirs* a similar failure three times in succession from being alternatively too well or too plainly dressed.—*Memoirs of an Eighteenth-Century Footman,* ed. John Beresford, 1927. PP- 179-80.

went on in that manner she could not tell who would keep me; she had known many, who had refused places, sell their clothes, and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side ; I was reasoning against interest and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routs at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room in expectation of the common questions. At last Mr. Courtly cried out, Is that colour your own child ? Yes, says the lady, if she has not robbed the kitchen hearth. This was so happy a conceit that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hope of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to inquire what I could do ? But first turn about, and let me see your fine shape : Well, what are you fit for, Mrs. Mum ? You would find your tongue, I suppose in the kitchen. No, no, says Mr. Courtly, the girl's a good girl yet, but I am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder—Come, child, hold up your head: what ? you have stole nothing—Not yet, says the lady; but she hopes to steal your heart quickly—Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself: Stole ? no—but if I had her I should watch her ; for that downcast eye—Why cannot you look people in the face ? Steal! says her husband, she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribbons before they were left off by her lady. Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one from whom you have received no injury ? Insult! says the lady; are you come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting ? What will this world come to, if a gentleman

may not jest with a servant ? Well, such servants ! pray be gone, and see when you have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted—a fine time—Insulted! get down stairs, you slut, or the footman shall insult you.

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the waggon to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morning she came and told me that she had one trial more for me : Euphemia wanted a maid, and perhaps I might do for her; for like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and, with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand ; therefore I might serve her ; for with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me that she sent for me not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour ; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make her wish for my company ; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me.

The thought of being so near to such a place and missing it brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning my acknowledgements. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story ; which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to show my gratitude better than by giving this account to the RAMBLER.

Zosima.

VIII. THE APPRENTICE

H. CAREY, *Sally in our Alley*, c. 1715

Of all the girls that are so smart,
There's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.
There is no lady in the land
Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets,
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
To such as please to buy 'em:
But sure such folk could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work,
I love her so sincerely;
My master comes like any Turk,
And bangs me most severely:
But let him bang his bellyful,
I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes betwixt
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm drest all in my best
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blamed
Because I leave him in the lurch
As soon as text is named ;
I leave the church in sermon-time
And slink away to Sally ;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again,
O, then I shall have money ;
I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
I'll give it to my honey :
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I'd give it all to Sally ;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

May master and the neighbours all
Make game of me and Sally ;
And, but for her, I'd better be
A slave and row a galley ;
But when my seven long years are out,
O, then I'll marry Sally ;
O, then we'll wed, and then we'll bed—
But not in our alley !

II

PREJUDICES, FOLLIES AND FASHIONS

A. Th' inestimable estimate of Brown,
Rose like a paper kite, and charmed the town ;
But measures planned and executed well
Shifted the wind that raised it, and it fell; [1]
He trod the very selfsame ground you tread,
And victory refuted all he said,
B. And yet his judgment was not framed amiss,
It's error, if it erred, was merely this—
He thought the dying hour already come,
And a complete recovery struck him dumb.
But that effeminacy, folly, lust,
Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must,
And that a nation shamefully debased,
Will be despised and trampled on at last,
Unless sweet penitence her powers renew,
Is truth, if history itself be true.

COWPER, *Table Talk*, 1781.

Complaints of degeneracy are common to all ages. In the eighteenth century the spirit of complacent confidence expressed in *The Roast Beef of Old England* and a hearty contempt for foreigners was popular rather than literary. Increasing wealth, the advance in importance of the middle classes and the foreshadowing of an advance towards democracy produced their natural effect. They were stigmatized as effeminacy, decadence, insubordination. Goldsmith's phrase, " Where wealth accumulates and men decay," reduces to an epigram much talk about luxury and many tedious pamphlets on the supposed decline of the population and is closely connected with theories of the state of nature and the

[1] An allusion to Pitt and the ' wonderful year ', 1759.

noble savage. But the current of reform, which gathers strength as the century goes on, produced, and was produced by, a profound dissatisfaction with the corruption, materialism and brutalities of the age. There were many cross-currents in the literature of discontent. Brown's famous *Estimate* (i) went into seven (so-called) editions in a year and then collapsed before the elation at the successes of 1759 and the belief that in Pitt the country had found salvation—not only as an organizer of victory but as a deliverer from political corruption. The confidence was short-Jived and the chorus of denunciation went on. Much of it is based on the familiar assumption that a change of manners is a change of morals : Richardson's attack on the modern woman (vii) expresses a perennial point of view; Han way's diatribe against tea-drinking (vi) is typical of much contemporary talk on luxury and decadence and was the occasion of a review and a crushing remark by Johnson. Fielding's social satire (ii) is from an opposite point of view and cuts far deeper, as does that of Swift (iii). Lackington describes the career of the successful tradesman which was so apt to rouse the rancour of rivals and moralists (x). In his own person and in his work as a bookseller [x] he is significant of the rise of the middle classes.

I. A VIEW OF THE NATIONAL CHARACTER AND THE MANNERS OF THE AGE IN 1757

J. BROWN, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times,* 1757, p. 17 ff., *20,* 26, 29, 51

Before we enumerate the concurrent causes of our present misfortunes and decline, let us, by way of contrast, muster the few remaining virtues we have left; to which, in part, it is owing, that our misfortunes are not heavier, and our decline more rapid.

Among these, the first and most important, is the spirit of liberty. This, happily, still subsists among us: Not indeed in its genuine vigour; for then it would work its genuine effects. . . . But it is remarkable, that in proportion as this spirit hath grown weak in *deeds,* it hath

[1] See above, I, vi, v,

gained strength in *words,* and of late run out, into unbounded license. . . .

Let us now trace the spirit of liberty through such of its effects, as are not destroyed by opposite principles and manners.

The first that occurs is *Humanity.* By this is not meant that smoothness and refined polish of external manners, by which the present age affects to be distinguished : for this, it is apprehended, will belong to another class. By *Humanity,* therefore, is meant, " that pity for distress, that moderation in limiting punishments by their proper ends and measures, by which this nation hath always been distinguished."

The lenity of our laws in capital cases ; our compassion for convicted criminals ; even the general humanity of our highwaymen and robbers, compared with those of other countries; these are concurrent proofs that the spirit of humanity is natural to our nation.

The many noble foundations for the relief of the miserable and friendless; the large annual supplies from voluntary charities to these foundations ; the frequent and generous assistance given to the unfortunate who cannot be admitted into these foundations; all these are such indisputable proofs of a national humanity, as it were the highest injustice not to acknowledge and applaud. . . .

Now the slightest observation, if attended with impartiality, may convince us, that the character of the manners of this age and nation, is by no means that of *abandoned wickedness* and *profligacy.* This degree of degeneracy, indeed, is often imputed to the times : but to what times hath it not been imputed ? . . .

This, we may truly affirm, is far from the character of the manners of our times : which, on a fair examination, will probably appear to be that of a " *vain, luxurious* and *selfish* EFFEMINACY ".

It may probably be asked, why the ruling manners of our women have not been particularly delineated ? The

reason is, because they are essentially the same with those of the men, and are therefore included in this estimate. The sexes have now little other apparent distinction, beyond that of person and dress : their pecuhar and characteristic manners are confounded and lost : the one sex having advanced into *boldness* as the other have sunk into *effeminacy.*

II. THE FOLLIES AND VICES OF THE TOWN

A Modern Glossary [abridged], Fielding, *Covent Garden Journal,* No. 4. January 14, 1752

AUTHOR. A laughing stock. It means likewise a poor fellow, and in general an object of contempt.

BEAR. A country gentleman ; or, indeed, any animal upon two legs that doth not make a handsome bow.

CAPTAIN Any stick of wood with a head to it, and a piece
COLONEL of black ribband upon that head.

CREATURE. A quality expression of low contempt, properly confined only to the mouths of ladies who are Right Honourable.

CRITIC. Like *Homo,* a name common to all human race.

DRESS. The principal accomplishment of men and women.

DULNESS. A word applied by all writers to the wit and humour of others.

EATING. A science.

FINE. An adjective of a very peculiar kind, destroying, or, at least, lessening the force of the substantive to which it is joined : As *fine* gentleman, *fine* lady, *fine* house, *fine* clothes, *fine* taste—in all which *fine* is to be understood in a sense somewhat synonymous with useless.

FOOL. A complex idea, compounded of poverty, honesty, pity and simplicity.

GREAT. Applied to a thing, signifies bigness ; when to a man, often littleness, or meanness.

HONOUR. Duelling.

HUMOUR. Scandalous lies, tumbling and dancing on the rope.

KNOWLEDGE. In general, means knowledge of the Town; as this is, indeed, the only kind of knowledge ever spoken of in the polite world.

NOBODY. All the people in Great Britain, except about 1200.

PATRIOT. A candidate for a place at Court.

POLITICS. The Art of getting such a place.

RICHES. The only thing upon earth that is really valuable, or desirable.

TASTE. The present whim of the Town, whatever it be.

WIT. Profaneness, indecency, immorality, scurrility, mimicry, buffoonery. Abuse of all good men, and especially of the clergy.

WORTH. Power. Rank. Wealth.

WISDOM. The art of acquiring all three.

WORLD. Your own acquaintance.

III. A WOMAN OF QUALITY

The Furniture of a Woman's Mind, 1727. SWIFT, *Works*, ed. Scott, xiv. 193

A set of phrases learn'd by rote;
A passion for a scarlet coat;
When at a play, to laugh or cry,
Yet cannot tell the reason why;
Never to hold her tongue a minute,
While all she prates has nothing in it;
Whole hours can with a coxcomb sit,
And take his nonsense all for wit;
Her learning mounts to read a song,
But half the words pronouncing wrong;
Has every repartee in store
She spoke ten thousand times before;
Can ready compliments supply
On all occasions cut and dry;
Such hatred to a parson's gown,
The sight would put her in a swoon;

For conversation well endued,
She calls *it* witty to be rude ;
And planning raillery in railing,
Will tell aloud your greatest failing ;
Nor make a scruple to expose
Your bandy leg, or crooked nose ;
Can at her morning tea run o'er
The scandal of the day before ;
Improving hourly in her skill,
To cheat and wrangle at quadrille.

In choosing lace, a critic nice,
Knows to a groat the lowest price ;
Can in her female clubs dispute,
What linen best the silk will suit,
What colours each complexion match,
And where with art to place a patch.

If chance a mouse creeps in her sight,
Can finely counterfeit a fright ;
So sweetly screams, if it comes near her,
She ravishes all hearts to hear her.
Can dextrously her husband teaze,
By taking fits when e'er she please ;
By frequent practice learns the trick
At proper seasons to be sick ;
Thinks nothing gives one airs so pretty,
At once creating love and pity ;
If Molly happen to be careless,
And but neglects to warm her hair-lace,
She gets a cold as sure as death,
And vows she scarce can draw her breath ;
Admires how modest women can,
Be so robustious like a man,

In party, furious to her power,
A bitter Whig, or Tory sour ;
Her arguments directly tend
Against the side she would defend ;
Will prove herself a Tory plain,
From principles the Whigs maintain;

And, to defend the Whiggish cause
Her topics from the Tories draws.

IV. DUELLING

FIELDING, *Amelia*, 1751, IX, iii.

The next day Booth and his lady, with the doctor, [Dr. Harrison] met at Colonel James's, where Colonel Bath likewise made one of the company. . . . When the ladies had gone, which was as soon as Ameha could prevail on Mrs. James to depart, Colonel Bath, who had been pretty brisk with champagne at dinner, soon began to display his magnanimity. 'My brother tells me, young gentleman/ said he to Booth, 'that you have been used very ill lately by some rascals, and I have no doubt but you will do yourself justice/

Booth answered that he did not know what he meant. 'Since I must mention it then/ cries the colonel, 'I hear you have been arrested; and I think you know what satisfaction is to be required from a man of honour/

'I beg, sir/ says the doctor, 'no more may be mentioned of that matter. I am convinced no satisfaction will be required of the captain till he is able to give it/

'I do not understand what you mean by able/ cries the colonel. To which the doctor answered, 'That it was of too tender a nature to speak more of.'

'Give me your hand, doctor/ cries the colonel; 'I see you are a man of honour, though you wear a gown. It is, as you say, a matter of a tender nature. Nothing, indeed, is so tender as a man's honour. Curse my liver, if any man—I mean, that is, if any gentleman, was to arrest me, I would as surely cut his throat as——'

'How, sir I' said the doctor, 'would you compensate one breach of the law by a much greater, and pay your debts by committing murder ?'

'Why do you mention law between gentlemen ?' says the colonel. 'A man of honour wears his law by his

side ; and can the resentment of an affront make a gentleman guilty of murder ? and what greater affront can one man cast upon another than by arresting him ? I am convinced that he who would put up an arrest would put up a slap in the face.'

Here the colonel looked extremely fierce, and the divine stared with astonishment at this doctrine ; when Booth, who well knew the impossibility of opposing the colonel's humour with success, began to play with it; and, having first conveyed a private wink to the doctor, he said there might be cases undoubtedly where such an affront ought to be resented; but that there others where any resentment was impracticable : ' As, for instance,' said he, ' where the man is arrested by a woman.'

' I could not be supposed to mean that case,' cries the colonel; ' and you are convinced I did not mean it.'

' To put an end to this discourse at once, sir/ said the doctor, 'I was the plantiff at whose suit this gentleman was arrested.'

' Was you so, sir ? ' cries the colonel; ' then I have no more to say. Women and the clergy are upon the same footing. The long-robed gentry are exempted from the laws of honour.'

' I do not thank you for that exemption, sir/ cries the doctor ; ' and, if honour and fighting are, as they seem to be, synonymous words with you, I believe there are some clergyman, who in defence of their religion, or their country, or their friend, the only justifiable causes of fighting, except bare self-defence, would light as bravely as yourself, colonel; and that without being paid for it.'

' Sir, you are privileged/ says the colonel with great dignity ; ' and you have my leave to say what you please. I respect your order, and you cannot offend me.'

' I will not offend you, colonel/ cries the doctor ; ' and our order is very much obliged to you, since you profess so much respect to us, and pay none to our Master.'

' What Master, sir ? ' said the colonel.

' That Master/ answered the doctor,' who hath expressly

forbidden all that cutting of throats to which you discover so much inclination.'

'O! your servant, sir,' said the colonel; 'I see what you are driving at; but you shall not persuade me to think that religion forces me to be a coward.'

'I detest and despise the name as much as you can,' cries the doctor; 'but you have a wrong idea of the word, colonel. What were all the Greeks and Romans? were these cowards? and did you ever hear of this butchery, which we call duelling, among them?'

'Yes, indeed, have I,' cries the colonel. 'What else is all Mr. Pope's Homer full of but duels. Did not what's his name, one of the Agamemnons, fight with that paltry rascal Paris? and Diomedre with what d'ye call him there? and Hector with I forget his name, he that was Achilles's bosom friend; and afterwards with Achilles himself? Nay, and in Dry den's Virgil, is there anything almost besides fighting?'

'You are a man of learning, colonel,' cries the doctor, 'but——'

'I thank you for that compliment,' said the colonel.—'No, sir, I do not pretend to learning; but I have some little reading, and I am not ashamed to own it.'

'But are you sure, colonel,' cries the doctor, 'that you have not made a small mistake? for I am apt to believe both Mr. Pope and Mr. Dryden (though I cannot say I ever read a word of either of them) speak of wars between nations, and not of private duels; for of the latter I do not remember one single instance in all the Greek and Roman story. In short, it is a modern custom, introduced by barbarous nations since the times of Christianity; though it is a direct and audacious defiance of the Christian law, and is consequently much more sinful in us than it would have been in the heathens.'

'Drink about, doctor/ cries the colonel; 'and let us call a new cause; for I perceive we shall never agree on this. You are a churchman, and I don't expect you to speak your mind.'

[r] We are both of the same Church, I hope/ cries the doctor.

' I am of the Church of England, sir/ answered the colonel, ' and I will fight for it to the last drop of my blood.'

' It is very generous in you, colonel/ cries the doctor, ' to fight so zealously for a religion by which you are to be damned.'

' It is well for you, doctor,' cries the colonel, ' that you wear a gown ; for, by all the dignity of a man, if any other person had said the words you have just uttered, I would have made him eat them ; ay, d—n me, and my sword into the bargain.'

Booth began to be apprehensive that this dispute might grow too warm ; in which case he feared that the colonel's honour, together with the champagne, might hurry him so far as to forget the respect due, and which he professed to pay, to the sacerdotal robe. Booth therefore interposed between the disputants, and said that the colonel had very rightly proposed to call a new subject; for that it was impossible to reconcile accepting a challenge with the Christian religion, or refusing it, with the modern notion of honour. ' And you must allow it, doctor/ said he, ' to be a very hard injunction for a man to become infamous ; and more especially for a soldier, who is to lose his bread into the bargain.'

' Ay, sir,' says the colonel with an air of triumph, ' what have you to say to that ? '

' Why, I say,' cries the doctor, ' that it is much harder to be damned on the other side/

' That may be/ said the colonel; ' but d—n me, if I would take an affront of any man breathing, for all that. And yet I believe myself to be as good a Christian as wears a head. My maxim is, never to give an affront, nor ever to take one ; and I say that it is the maxim of a good Christian, and no man shall ever persuade me to the contrary.'

' **Well,** sir/ said the doctor,' since that is your resolution, I hope **no man will** ever give you an affront/

'I am obliged to you for your hope, doctor/ cries the colonel, with a sneer; 'and he that doth will be obliged to you for lending him your gown; for, by the dignity of a man, nothing out of petticoats, I believe, dares affront me.'

V. GAMING

Walpolc to Sir II. Mann, Feb. 2, 1770. *Letters,* ed. Toynbee, vii. P- 365-

The gaming at Almack's, which has taken the *pas* of White's, is worthy the decline of our Empire, or Commonwealth, which you please. The young men of the age lose five, ten, fifteen thousand pounds in an evening there. Lord Stavordale, not one and twenty, lost eleven thousand there last Tuesday, but recovered it by one great hand at hazard: he swore a great oath,—'Now if I had been playing *deep,* I might have won millions.' His cousin, Charles Fox, shines equally there and in the House of Commons. He was twenty-one yesterday se'nnight; and is already one of our best speakers. Yesterday he was made a Lord of the Admiralty. We are not a great age, but surely we are tending to some great revolution. Adieu!

VI. TEA-DRINKING

J. HAN WAY, *A Journal of an Eight Days Journey* . . . to *which is added an Essay on Tea* . . . 2nd ed. 1757, ii. 272-5

It is the curse of this nation, that the *laborer* and *mechanic* will *ape* the *lord*; and therefore I can discover no way of abolishing the use of tea unless it be done by the irresistible force of *example.* It is an *epidemical* disease; if any seeds of it remain it will engender an universal infection. To what a *height* of folly must a nation be arrived: when the *common people* are not satisfied with *wholesome food* at *home,* but must go to the remotest regions to please a *vicious palate*! There is a certain lane near *Richmond,* where beggars are often seen in the summer season, drinking their *tea.* You may see *laborers* who are *mending the roads*

drinking their tea; it is even drank in *cinder-carts*; and what is not less absurd, sold out in cups to *Hay-makers.* He who should be able to drive *three Frenchmen* before him, or she who might be a breeder of such a race of men, are to be seen *sipping* their tea !

" *Was it the breed of such as these*
"Thut quelled the proud Hesperides ?"

Were they the *sons* of *tea-sippers,* who won the fields of *Cressy* and *Agincourt,* or dyed the *Danube's* streams with *Gallic blood* ? What will be the *end* of such *effeminate* customs extended to those persons who must get their bread by the *labours* of the *field* ! From the pride of imitating her *[sic] betters,* and the habit of drinking this *deluding* infusion, nurses in general, in this part of the island, contract a *passion* for this *bitter* draught, which bears down all the duties of humanity before it ! Nor are these alone distempered with this *canine appetite* for tea ; you know it to be almost *literally* true, in many instances : every mistress of a family knows it to be true, of their servants in general, especially the *females,* who *demand* your *submission* to this *execrable* custom, and you *submit,* as if the evil was *irremediable.* Nay, your servants *servants,* down to the very beggars, will not be satisfied unless they consume the produce of the remote country of *China.* They consider it as their *magna charta,* and will die by the sword or famine rather than not follow the example of their mistresses. . . . Consider the *tendency* of these pernicious and *absurd* customs.

Look into all the cellars in *London,* you will find *men* or *women* sipping their tea, in the morning *or* afternoon, and very often both morning *and* afternoon : those will have their *tea* who have not *bread.* I once took a ramble for two months, attended only by a servant: I strolled far into distant parts of *England,* and when I was tired of riding, I walked, and with as much decency as I could, often visited little huts, to see how the people lived. I still found the same *game* was playing; and *misery* itself had no power to banish *tea,* which had frequently introduced

that misery. I have been told that in some places where the people are so poor, that no one family possesses all the necessary *apparatus* for tea, they carry them to each others houses, to the distance of a mile or two, and *club* material for this *fantastic* amusement. What a wild infatuation is this! it took its rise from *example*; by *example* it is supported; and *example* only can abolish the use of *it*.

VII. THE MODERN WOMAN, 1751

S. RICHARDSON, *The Rambler*, No. 97. Tuesday, Feb. 19, 1751

In the time of the SPECTATOR, excepting sometimes an appearance in the Ring,[1] sometimes, at a good and chosen play, sometimes on a visit at the house of a grave relation, the young ladies contented themselves to be found employed in domestic duties; for the routs, drums, balls, assemblies, and such-like markets for women were not known.

Modesty and diffidence, gentleness and meekness, were looked upon as the appropriate virtues and characteristic graces of the sex. And if a forward spirit pushed itself into notice, it was exposed in print as it deserved.

The churches were almost the only places where single women were to be seen by strangers. Men went thither expecting to see them, and perhaps too much for that only purpose.

But some good often resulted, however improper might be their motives. Both sexes were in the way of their duty. The man must be abandoned indeed who loves not duty in another; nor were the young fellows of that age so wholly lost to a sense of right, as pride and conceit have since made them affect to be. When, therefore, they saw a fair one, whose decent behaviour and cheerful piety showed her earnest in her first duties, they had the less doubt, judging politically only, that she would have a conscientious regard to her second.

[1] **A circular course in Hyde Park, for driving and riding.**

With what ardour have I seen watched for, the rising of a kneeling beauty; and what additional charms has devotion given to her recommunicated features ?

The men were often the better for what they heard. Even a Saul was once found prophesying among the prophets whom he had set out to destroy. To a man thus put into good humour by a pleasing object, religion itself looked more amiable. The MEN SEEKERS of the SPECTATOR'S time loved the holy place for the object's sake, and loved the object for her suitable behaviour in it. . . .

Every inquiry he made into the lady's domestic excellence, which, when a wife is to be chosen, will surely not be neglected, confirmed him in his choice. He opens his heart to a common friend, and honestly discovers the state of his fortune. His friend applies to those of the young lady, whose parents, if they approve his proposals, disclose them to their daughter.

She, perhaps, is not an absolute stranger to the passion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his assiduities, his constant attendance at a church, whither, till of late, he used seldom to come, and a thousand little observances that he paid her, had very probably first forced her to regard, and then inclined her to favour him.

That a young lady should be in love, and the love of the young gentleman undeclared, is an heterodoxy which prudence, and even policy, must not allow. But thus applied to, she is all resignation to her parents. Charming resignation, which inclination opposes not.

Her relations applaud her for her duty; friends meet; points are adjusted; delightful perturbations and hopes, and a few lover's fears fill up the tedious space, till an interview is granted; for the young lady had not made herself cheap at public places.

The time of interview arrives. She is modestly reserved ; he is not confident. He declares his passion ; the consciousness of her own worth, and his application to her parents, take from her any doubt of his sincerity; and she owns herself obliged to him for his good opinion. The

inquiries of her friends into his character have taught **her** that his good opinion deserves to be valued.

She tacitly allows of his future visits ; he renews them ; the regard of each for the other is confirmed; and when he presses for the favour of her hand, he receives a declaration of an entire acquiescence with her duty, and a modest acknowledgement of esteem for him.

He applies to her parents, therefore, for a near day ; and thinks himself under an obligation to them for the cheerful and affectionate manner with which they receive his agreeable application. . . .

Their home is the place of their principal delight, nor do they ever occasionally quit it but they find the pleasure of returning to it augmented in proportion to the time of their absence from it.

Oh Mr. RAMBLER ! forgive the talkativeness of an old man ! When I courted and married my *Lætitia,* then a blooming beauty, every thing passed just so ! But how is the case now ? The ladies, maidens, wives, and widows, are engrossed by places of open resort and general entertainment, which till every quarter of the metropolis, and being constantly frequented, make home irksome. Breakfasting places, dining places ; routs, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas, masquerades for the evening, and even all night; and, lately, public sales of the goods of broken housekeepers, which the general dissoluteness of manners has contributed to make very frequent, come in as another seasonable relief to those modern timekillers.

In the summer there are in every country town assemblies ; *Tunbridge, Bath, Cheltenham, Scarborough*! **What** expense of dress and equipage is required **to qualify the** frequenters for such emulous appearance ?

By the natural infection of example, the lowest people have places of sixpenny resort, and gaming tables **for** pence. **Thus** servants are now induced **to** fraud **and** dishonesty, **to** support extravagance, and supply their losses.

As to the ladies, who frequent those public places, they are not ashamed to show their faces wherever men dare go,

nor blush to try who shall stare most impudently, or who shall laugh loudest on the public walks.

The men who would make good husbands, if they visit those places, are frighted at wedlock, and resolve to live single, except they are bought at a very high price. They can be spectators of all that passes, and if they please, more than spectators at the expense of others. The companion of an evening, and the companion for life, require very different qualifications.

Two thousand pounds in the last age, with a domestic wife, would go farther than ten thousand in this. Yet settlements are expected, that often, to a mercantile man especially, sink a fortune into uselessness : and pin money is stipulated for, which makes a wife independent, and destroys love, by putting it out of a man's power to lay any obligation upon her, that might engage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to all this the card tables are added, how can a prudent man think of marrying ?

And when the worthy men know not where to find wives, must not the sex be left to the foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age, whom they help to make such ? And need even these wretches marry to enjoy the conversation of those who render their company so cheap.

And what, after all, is the benefit which the gay coquette obtains by her flutters ? As she is approachable by every man, without requiring, I will not say any incense or adoration, but even common complaisance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage : she has companions indeed, but no lovers; for love is respectful and timorous ; and where among all her followers will she find a husband ?

VIII. A LONDON SUNDAY—THE GROWTH OF LUXURY

C. JENNER, *Time Was* in *Town Eclogues,* 2nd ed., 1773, pp. 8,10,12-13

The spring had now enliven'd ev'ry scene,
And clad the dusky Park in partial green ;

Gay op'ning buds peep'd through the winter rust,
And kindly show'rs had half wash'd off their dust.
On that dull day which, ev'ry week affords
A glut of 'prentices, in bags and swords;
When sober families resort to pray'r,
And cits take in their weekly meal of air;
Whilst, eastward of St. Paul's, the well-drcss'd spark
Runs two long miles, to saunter in the Park:
Prudentio strolling down the Mall was seen,
To loll upon a bench, and vent his spleen:
He meets *Avaro* on th' accustom'd seat,
And thus, in grumbling strains, the vet'rans greet.

AVARO.

Time was, when satin waistcoats and scratch wigs,
Enough distinguish'd all the city prigs,
Whilst ev'ry sunshine Sunday saw them run
To club their sixpences at *Islington*;
When graver citizens, in suits of brown,
Lin'd ev'ry dusty avenue to town,
Or led the children and the loving spouse,
To spend two shillings at *White Conduit House:*
But now, the 'prentices, in suits of green,
At *Richmond* or at *Windsor* may be seen;
Where in mad parties they run down to dine
To play at gentlefolks, and drink bad wine:
Whilst neat post-chariots roll their masters down
To some snug box, a dozen miles from town.

PRUDENTIO.

'Tis true my friend; and thus throughout the nation
Prevails the general love of dissipation:
It matters little where their sports begin,
Whether at *Arthur's*, or the *Bowl and Pin*;
Whether they tread the gay *Pantheon's* round,
Or play at skittles at *St Giles'* pound,
The self-same idle spirit drags them en,
and peer and porter are alike undone

Whilst thoughtless imitation leads the way
And laughs at all the grave and wise can say.

IX. A LONDON SHOP

DEFOE, *The Complete English Tradesman,* 1726, i. 312-15

It is a modern custom, and wholly unknown to our ancestors, who yet understood trade, in proportion to the trade they carried on, as well as we do, to have tradesmen lay out two-thirds of their fortune in fitting up their shops.

By fitting up, I do not mean furnishing their shops with wares and goods to sell; for in that they came up to us in every particular, and perhaps went beyond us too; but in painting and gilding, fine shelves, shutters, boxes, glass-doors, sashes and the like, in which they tell us now, 'tis a small matter to lay out two or three hundred pounds, nay, five hundred pounds, to fit up a pastry-cook's, or a toy-shop. . . .

It will hardly be believed in ages to come, when our posterity shall be grown wiser by our loss, and, as I may truly say, at our expense, that a pastry-cook's shop, which twenty pounds would effectually furnish at a time, with all needful things for sale; nay, except on an extraordinary shew as on Twelfth-day at night for cakes, or upon some great feast, twenty pounds can hardly be laid out at one time in goods for sale, yet that fitting up one of these shops should cost upwards of 300 1. *Anno Domini,* 1710, let the year be recorded: The fitting up to consist of the following particulars:

1. Sash windows, all of looking-glass plates, 12 inches by 16 inches in measure.

2. All the walls of the shop lined up with galley-tiles, and the back-shop with galley-tiles in pannels, finely painted in forest-work and figures.

3. Two large pier looking-glasses and one chimney glass in the shop, and one very large pier-glass seven foot high in the back-shop.

4. **Two** large branches **of** candlesticks, **one in** the shop, **and one in the back-room.**

5. Three great glass lanterns in the shop and eight small ones.

6. Twenty-five sconces against the wall, with a large pair of silver standing candle sticks in the back room, value 25 1.

7. Six fine large silver salvers to serve sweet-meats.

8. Twelve large high stands of rings, whereof three silver, to place small dishes for tarts, jellys &c. at a feast.

9. Painting the ceiling and gilding the lanterns, the sashes, and the carved work, 55 1.

These with some other odd things to set forth the shop, and make a shew, besides china basins and cups, amounted to, as I am well informed, above 300 1.

Add to this the more necessary part, which was:

1. Building two ovens, above twenty-five pounds.

2. Twenty pounds in stock for pies and cheese-cakes, &c.

So that in short here was a trade, which might have been carried on for about 30 or 40 1. stock, required 300 1. expence to fit up the shop and make a shew to invite customers.

X. THE TRADESMAN'S PROGRESS

Memoirs of . , . James Lackington [1] *written by himself,* new ed., 1792, 393-7

As I never had any part of the *miser* in my composition, I always proportioned my expenses according to my profits ; that is, I have for many years expended two-thirds of the profits of my trade ; which proportion of expenditure I never exceeded. If you will please to refer to Dr. Johnson's " Idler " for " the progress of Ned Drugget " you will there see much of the progress of your humble servant depicted. Like Ned, in the beginning I opened and- shut my own shop, and welcomed a friend by a shake of the hand. About a year after, I beckoned across the way for *a pot of good porter.* A few years after that, I sometimes

[1] Lackington's bookshop in Finsbury-square, known as " The Temple of the Muses," was one of the minor sights of London.

invited my friends to dinner, and provided them with a **roasted *fillet*** *of veal*; in a progressive course the *ham* was introduced, and a pudding was the next addition made to the feast. For some time a glass of *brandy and water* was a luxury ; a glass of Mr. Beaufoy's *raisin wine* succeeded ; and as soon as *two-thirds* of my profits enabled me to afford good *red port,* it immediately appeared: nor was sherry long behind. . . .

My country *lodging* by regular gradation was transformed into a country *house* : and the inconveniences attending a *stage-coach* were remedied by a *chariot.* For four years *Upper Holloway* was to me an *elysium* ; then *Surrey* appeared unquestionably the most beautiful county in England and *Merlon* the most rural village in Surrey. So now Merton is selected as the seat of occasional philosophical retirement. . . . But I assure you, my dear friend, that in every step of my progress, envy and malevolence has pursued me close.

When by the advice of that eminent physician, Dr. Lettsom, I purchased a horse and saved my life by the exercise it afforded me, the old adage, *set a beggar on horse-back and he'll ride to the devil,* was deemed fully verified; but when Mrs. Lackington mounted another, " they were very sorry to see people so young in business run on at so great a rate ! " The occasional relaxation which we enjoyed in the country was censured as an abominable piece of pride ; but when the *carriage* and *servants* in *livery* appeared, " they would not be the first to hurt a foolish tradesman's character; but if (as was but too probable) the *docket* was not already struck, the gazette would soon settle that point." . . . But I have been lately informed **that** these *good-natured* and *compassionate* people have for some time found it necessary to alter their story. It seems **that at** last they have discovered the secret springs from **whence** I drew my **wealth** ; however they do not quite agree **in their accounts, for although** some can **tell** you the very ***number*** **of** my **fortunate lottery ticket, others are as positive that I found bank-notes in an old book to the amount of**

many thousand pounds, and if they please, can even tell you the title of the very fortunate old book that contained this treasure. But you shall receive it from me, which you will deem authority to the full as unexceptionable, I assure you then upon my honour that I found the whole of what I am possessed of in—SMALL PROFITS *bound* by INDUSTRY and *clasped* by (ECONOMY.

XI. THE DECAY OF SUBORDINATION

BOSWELL, *Life of Johnson*, iii. 261-2 (April 10, 1778)

We dined together with Mr. Scott ... at his chambers in the Temple, nobody else there. The company being small, Johnson was not in such spirits as he had been the preceding day, and for a considerable time little was said. At last he burst forth, " Subordination is sadly broken down in this age. No man, now, has the same authority which his father had,—except a gaoler. No master has it over his servants-: it is diminished in our colleges; nay, in our grammar-schools." BOSWELL. " What is the cause of this, Sir ? " JOHNSON. " Why the coming in of the Scotch/'(laughing sarcastically). BOSWELL. " That is *to* say, things have been turned topsy-turvy.—But your serious cause." JOHNSON. " Why, Sir, there are many causes, the chief of which is, I think, the great increase of money. No man now depends upon the Lord of a Manor, when he can send to another country, and fetch provisions. The shoe-black at the entry of my court does not depend on me. I can deprive him but of a penny a day, which he hopes somebody else will bring him; and that penny I must carry to another shoe-black, so the trade suffers nothing. I have explained in my *Journey to the Hebrides*, how gold and silver destroy feudal subordination. But, besides, there is a general relaxation of reverence. No son now depends upon his father as in former times. Paternity used to be considered as of itself a great thing, which had a right to many claims. That is, in general, reduced to very small bounds. My hope is that as anarchy produces tyranny, this extreme relaxation will produce *freni strictio."*

III

THE THEATRE

Hard is his lot, that here by Fortune plac'd,
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste ;
With ev'ry motive of caprice must play,
And chase the new-blown bubbles of the day,
Ah ! let not Censure term our fate our choice,
The stage but echoes back the public voice.
The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
For we that live to please, must please to live.

JOHNSON, Prologue to be spoken by Garrick at the opening of Drury Lane Theatre in 1747.

Sacred to SHAKESPEARE, *was this spot design'd*
To pierce the heart, and humanize the mind.
But if an empty house, the actor's curse,
Shews us our Lears, *and* Hamlets, *lose their force ;*
Unwilling, we must change the nobler scene,
And, in our turn, present you Harlequin ;
Quit poets, and set carpenters to work,
Shew gaudy scenes, or mount the vaulting Turk.
For tho' we actors, one and all, agree
Boldly to struggle for our—vanity ;
If want comes on, importance must retreat;
Our first, great, ruling passion, is—to eat.

GARRICK, Prologue at the opening of Drury Lane Theatre, 1750.

It was generally agreed that this was an age of decadence in the drama but of great excellence in acting, and among many noted actors Garrick is of course pre-eminent. His is the great name in the history of the stage from 1741 to 1776 (vi, vii, viii, ix).

The craze for pantomimes, elaborate spectacles, known as " entertainments ", dancing and acrobatics was deplored (ii)

and is a common subject of satire (iii, iv). Pantomimes were pilloried in *The Dunciad.* Popular taste seems to have reacted from the badness of contemporary ranting tragedy (iv), and the dulness of the pseudo-classic play written according to French rules. But in spite of the prestige of French taste Shakespeare was increasingly admired and his plays were frequently acted. The attention given to the text of his plays, though often absurd, marks the beginning of the reaction against the alterations and adaptations which had long held their ground (v.a.). For instance, *The Tempest* and *The Midsummer Night's Dream* were adapted *to* the taste of the age by being made into spectacular operas. Tate had given *King Lear* a happy ending (approved by Johnson) and the catastrophe in *Romeo and Juliet* had been altered to pile up the agony. Although Garrick did much to popularize Shakespeare on the stage, his alterations are. notorious (viii), and his famous Jubilee at Stratford (vii) is remarkable for the absence of any work of Shakespeare's from the programme.

I. THE BEGINNINGS OF ITALIAN OPERA IN ENGLAND

ADDISON, *The Spectator,* No. 18. March 21, 1710/11

It is my design in this paper to deliver down a faithful account of the Italian opera, and of the gradual progress which it has made upon the English stage ; for there is no question but our great grand-children will be very curious to know the reason why their forefathers used to sit together like an audience of foreigners in their own country, and to hear whole plays acted before them in a tongue which they did not understand.

Arsinoe [1] was the first opera that gave us a taste of Italian music. The great success this opera met with, produced some attempts of forming pieces upon Italian plans, which should give a more natural and reasonable entertainment than what can be met with in the elaborate trifles of that nation. This alarmed the poetasters and

[1] *Arsinoe, Queen of Cyprus, an Opera after the Italian manner,* by Motteux, first played at Drury Lane Theatre, January 16, 1705.

fiddlers of the town, who were used to deal in a more ordinary kind of ware ; and therefore laid down an established rule, which is received as such to this day, ' That nothing is capable of being well set to music, that is not nonsense.'

This maxim was no sooner received, but we immediately fell to translating the Italian operas ; and as there was no great danger of hurting the sense of those extraordinary pieces, our authors would often make words of their own which were entirely foreign to the meaning of the passages they pretended to translate ; their chief care being to make the numbers of the English verse answer to those of the Italian, that both of them might go to the same tune. . . . It oftentimes happened likewise, that the finest notes in the air fell upon the most insignificant words in the sentence. I have known the word ' and ' pursued through the whole gamut, have been entertained with many a melodious ' the ,' and have heard the most beautiful graces, quavers, and divisions bestowed upon ' then ', ' for ' and ' from '; to the eternal honour of our English particles.

The next step to our refinement was the introducing of Italian actors into our opera ; who sung their parts in their own language, at the same time that our countrymen performed theirs in our native tongue. The king or hero of the play generally spoke in Italian, and his slaves answered him in English. The lover frequently made his court, and gained the heart of his princess, in a language which she did not understand. One would have thought it very difficult to have carried on dialogues after this manner without an interpreter between the persons that conversed together ; but this was the state of the English stage for about three years.

At length the audiences grew tired of understanding **half** the opera ; and therefore, to ease themselves entirely of the fatigue of thinking, have so ordered it at present, **that the whole opera** is **in an unknown** tongue. We no longer understand the language of our own stage ; insomuch

that I have often been afraid, when I have seen our Italian performers chattering in the vehemence of action, that they have been calling us names, and abusing us among themselves; but I hope, since we put such an entire confidence in them, they will not talk against us before our faces, though they may do it with the same safety as if it were behind our backs. In the mean time, I cannot forbear thinking how naturally an historian who writes two or three hundred years hence, and does not know the taste of his wise forefathers, will make the following reflections: 'In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Italian tongue was so well understood in England, that operas were acted on the public stage in that language.'

One scarce knows how to be serious in the confutation of an absurdity that shows itself at the first sight. It does not want any great measure of sense to see the ridicule of this monstrous practice; but what makes it the more astonishing, it is not the taste of the rabble, but of persons of the greatest politeness, which has established it.

If the Italians have a genius for music above the English, the English have a genius for other performances of a much higher nature, and capable of giving the mind a much nobler entertainment. Would one think it was possible (at a time when an author lived that was able to write the Phaedra and Hippolitus [1]) for a people to be so stupidly fond of the Italian opera, as scarce to give a third day's hearing to that admirable tragedy? Music is certainly a very agreeable entertainment; but if it would exclude arts that have a much greater tendency to the refinement of human nature, I must confess I would allow it no better quarter than Plato has done who banishes it out of his commonwealth.

At present our notions of music are so very uncertain,

[1] By Addison's friend, Edmund Smith; first played April 21, 1707. It was based on Racine's *Phedre,* and much praised by the critics.

that we do not know what it is we like ; only, in general, we are transported with any thing that is not English : so it be of a foreign growth, let it be Italian, French, or High Dutch, it is the same thing. In short our English music is quite rooted out, and nothing yet planted in its stead.

II. COLLEY CIBBER ACCOUNTS FOR THE DECLINE OF THE DRAMA

An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber . . . written by himself, 1740, 299-302

I have upon several occasions already observed that when one company is too hard for another, the lower in reputation has always been forced to exhibit some new-fangled foppery to draw the multitude after them. Of these expedients, singing and dancing had formerly been the most effectual, but, at the time I am speaking of, our *English* music had been so discountenanced, since the taste of *Italian* operas prevailed, that it was to no purpose to pretend to it. Dancing therefore was, now, the only weight in the opposite scale, and as the New Theatre sometimes found their account in it, it could not be safe for us wholly to neglect it. To give even dancing, therefore, some improvement, and to make it something more than motion without meaning, the fable of *Mars* and *Venus* was formed into a connected presentation of dances in character, wherein the passions were so happily expressed and the whole story so intelligibly told by a mute narration of gesture only, that even thinking spectators allowed it both a pleasing and a rational entertainment, though at the same time, from our distrust of its reception, we durst not venture to decorate it with any extraordinary expense of scenes or habits, but upon the success of this attempt it was rightly concluded that if a visible expense in both were added to something of the same nature, it could not fail of drawing the Town proportionably after it. From this original hint then (but every way unequal to it)

sprung forth that succession of monstrous medleys that have so long infested the stage, and which arose upon one another alternately, at both houses outvying in expense, like contending bribes on both sides at an election, to secure a majority of the multitude. But so it is, Truth may complain and Merit murmur with what justice it may, the few will never be a match for the many, unless authority should think fit to interpose and put down these poetical drams, these gin-shops of the stage, that intoxicate its auditors and dishonour their understanding with a levity for which I want a name. . . .

Notwithstanding then this our compliance with the vulgar taste, we generally made use of these pantomimes but as crutches to our weakest plays. Nor were we so lost to all sense of what was valuable as to dishonour our best authors in such bad company. We had still a due respect to several select plays that were able to be their own support, and in which we found our constant account without painting and patching them out like prostitutes with these follies in fashion. If therefore we were not so strictly chaste in the other part of our conduct, let the error of it stand among the silly consequences of two stages. Could the interest of both companies have been united in only one theatre, I had been one of the few that would have used my utmost endeavour of never admitting to the stage any spectacle that ought not to have been seen there, the errors of my own plays, which I could not see, excepted. And though, probably, the majority of spectators would not have been so well pleased with a theatre so regulated, yet sense and reason cannot lose their intrinsic value because the giddy and the ignorant are blind and deaf, or numerous, and I cannot help saying it is a reproach to a sensible people to let folly so publicly govern their pleasures.

111. PANTOMIMES AND THE TASTE OF THE TOWN

FIELDING, *Pasquin*, 1736, Act V

SNEERWELL (a critic). Pray, Mr. Fustian, how came they to give the name of entertainments to their pantomimical farces?

FUSTIAN (an author). Faith, sir, out of their peculiar modesty; intimating that after the audience had been tired with the dull works of Shakspeare, Jonson, Vanbrugh, and others, they are to be entertained with one of these pantomimes, of which the master of the playhouse, two or three painters, and half a score dancing-masters are the compilers: what these entertainments are, I need not inform you who have seen 'em; but I have often wondered how it was possible for any creature of human understanding, after having been diverted for three hours with the productions of a great genius, to sit for three more and see a set of people running about the stage after one another, without speaking one syllable, and playing several juggling tricks, which are done at Fawks's after a much better manner; and for this, sir, the town does not only pay additional prices, but loses several line parts of its best authors, which are cut out to make room for the said farces.

SNEERWELL. Tis very true; and I have heard a hundred say the same thing, who never failed being present at them.

FUSTIAN. And while that happens, they will force any entertainment upon the town they please, in spite of its teeth.

IV. THE PLAY AND THE PLAY-GOERS

GOLDSMITH, *The Citizen of the World*, 3rd ed., 1774, Letter xxi (1760)

The English are as fond of seeing plays acted as the Chinese; but there is a vast difference in the manner of conducting them. We play our pieces in the open air, the English theirs under cover; we act by daylight, they

by the blaze of torches. One of our plays continues eight or ten days successively; an English piece seldom takes up above four hours in the representation.

My companion in black, with whom I am now beginning to contract an intimacy, introduced me a few nights ago to the play-house, where we placed ourselves conveniently at the foot of the stage. As the curtain was not drawn before my arrival, I had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of the spectators, and indulging those reflections which novelty generally inspires.

The rich in general were placed in the lowest seats, and the poor rose above them in degrees proportioned to their poverty. The order of precedence seemed here inverted; and those who were undermost all the day, now enjoyed a temporary eminence, and became masters of the ceremonies. It was they who called for the music, indulging every noisy freedom, and testifying all the insolence of beggary in exaltation.

They who held the middle region seemed not so riotous as those above them, nor yet so tame as those below; to judge by their looks many of them seemed strangers there as well as myself; they were chiefly employed, during this period of expectation, in eating oranges, reading the story of the play, or making assignations.

Those who sat in the lowest rows, which are called the pit, seemed to consider themselves as judges of the merit of the poet and the performers; they were assembled partly to be amused, and partly to show their taste: appearing to labour under that restraint which an affectation of superior discernment generally produces. My companion, however, informed me, that not one in an hundred of them knew even the first principles of criticism; that they assumed the right of being censors, because there was none to contradict their pretensions; and that every man who now called himself a connoisseur, became such to all intents and purposes.

Those who sat in the boxes appeared in the most unhappy situation of all. The rest of the audience came merely

for their own amusement; these rather to furnish out a part of the entertainment themselves. I could not avoid considering them as acting parts in dumb show; not a curtsey or nod, that was not the result of art; not a look nor a smile that was not designed for murder. Gentlemen and ladies ogled each other through spectacles; for my companion observed, that blindness was of late become fashionable; all affected indifference and ease, while their hearts at the same time burned for conquest. Upon the whole, the lights, the music, the ladies in their gayest dresses, the men with cheerfulness and expectation in their looks, all conspired to make a most agreeable picture, and to till an heart that sympathizes at human happiness with an inexpressible serenity.

The expected time for the play to begin at last arrived; the curtain was drawn, and the actors came on. A woman, who personated a queen, came in curtseying to the audience, who clapped their hands upon her appearance. Clapping of hands is, it seems, the manner of applauding in England; the manner is absurd, but every country, you know, has its peculiar absurdities. I was equally surprised, however, at the submission of the actress, who should have considered herself as a queen, as at the little discernment of the audience, who gave her such marks of applause before she attempted to deserve them. Preliminaries between her and the audience being thus adjusted, the dialogue was supported between her and a most hopeful youth, who acted the part of her confidant. They both appeared in extreme distress, for it seems the queen had lost a child some fifteen years before, and still kept its dear resemblance next her heart, while her kind companion bore a part in her sorrows.

Her lamentations grew loud. Comfort is offered, but she detests the very sound. She bids them preach comfort to the winds. Upon this her husband comes in, who, seeing the queen so much afflicted, can himself hardly refrain from tears, or avoid partaking in the soft distress.

After thus grieving through three scenes, the curtain dropped for the first act.

Truly, said I to my companion, these kings and queens are very much disturbed at no very great misfortune ; certain I am, were people of humbler stations to act in this manner, they would be thought divested of common sense. I had scarce finished this observation, when the curtain rose, and the king came on in a violent passion. His wife had, it seems, refused his proffered tenderness, had spurned his royal embrace; and he seemed resolved not to survive her fierce disdain. After he had thus fretted through the second act, the curtain was let down once more.

Now, says my companion, you perceive the king to be a man of spirit; he feels at every pore : one of your phlegmatic sons of clay would have given the queen her own way, and let her come to herself by degrees ; but the king is for immediate tenderness, or instant death : death and tenderness are leading passions of every modern buskined hero; this moment they embrace, and the next stab, mixing daggers and kisses in every period.

I was going to second his remarks, when my attention was engrossed by a new object; a man came in balancing a straw upon his nose, and the audience were clapping their hands in all the raptures of applause. To what purpose, cried I, does this unmeaning figure make his appearance ? is he a part of the plot ? Unmeaning do you call him, replied my friend in black; this is one of the most important characters of the whole play ; nothing pleases the people more than the seeing a straw balanced ; there is a great deal of meaning in the straw; there is something suited to every apprehension in the sight; and a fellow possessed of talents like these is sure of making his fortune.

The third act now began with an actor who. came to inform us, that he was the villain of the play, and intended to show strange things before all was over. He was joined by another, who seemed as much disposed for

mischief as he; their intrigues continued through this whole division. If that be a villain, said I, he must be a very stupid one, to tell his secrets without being asked; such soliloquies of late are never admitted in China.

The noise of clapping interrupted me once more; a child of six years old was learning to dance on the stage, which gave the ladies and mandarins infinite satisfaction. I am sorry, said I, to see the pretty creature so early learning so very bad a trade; dancing being, I presume, as contemptible here as *it* is in China. Quite the reverse, interrupted my companion; dancing is a very reputable and genteel employment here; men have a greater chance for encouragement from the merit of their heels than their heads. One who jumps up and flourishes his toes three times before he comes to the ground, may have three hundred a year; he who flourishes them four times, gets four hundred; but he who arrives at five is inestimable, and may demand what salary he thinks proper. The female dancers, too, are valued for this sort of jumping and crossing; and 'tis a cant word among them, that she deserves most who shows highest. But the fourth act is begun, let us be attentive.

In the fourth act the queen finds her long-lost child, now grown up into a youth of smart parts and great qualifications; wherefore, she wisely considers that the crown will fit his head better than that of her husband, whom she knows to be a driveller. The king discovers her design, and here comes on the deep distress: he loves the queen, and he loves the kingdom; he resolves therefore, in order to possess both, that her son must die. The queen exclaims at his barbarity, is frantic with rage, and at length, overcome with sorrow, falls into a fit; upon which the curtain drops and the act is concluded.

Observe the art of the poet, cries my companion. When the queen can say no more, she falls into a fit. While thus her eyes are shut, while she is supported in the arms **of Abigail, what horrors do** we **not fancy. We feel it in**

every nerve; take my word for it, that fits are the true aposiopesis of modern tragedy.

The fifth act began, and a busy piece it was. Scenes shifting, trumpets sounding, mobs hallooing, carpets spreading, guards bustling from one door to another; gods, demons, daggers, racks and ratsbane. But whether the king was killed, or the queen was drowned, or the son was poisoned, I have absolutely forgotten.

When the play was over, I could not help observing that the persons of the drama appeared in as much distress in the first act as the last. How is it possible, said I, to sympathize with them through five long acts; pity is but a short-lived passion; I hate to hear an actor mouthing trifles; neither startings, strainings, nor attitudes affect me, unless there be cause: after I have been once or twice deceived by those unmeaning alarms, my heart sleeps in peace, probably unaffected by the principal distress. There should be one great passion aimed at by the actor as well as the poet; all the rest should be subordinate, and only contribute to make that the greater; if the actor, therefore, exclaims upon every occasion in the tones of despair, he attempts to move us too soon; he anticipates the blow, he ceases to affect, though he gains our applause.

I scarce perceived that the audience were almost all departed, wherefore, mingling with the crowd, my companion and I got into the street; where, essaying an hundred obstacles from coach-wheels and palanquin poles, like birds in their flight through the branches of a forest, after various turnings, we both at length got home in safety. Adieu.

V. SHAKESPEARE IN JOHNSON'S DAY

(a) SHAKESPEARE ALTERED AND "IMPROVED"

[Shakespeare's ghost speaks the prologue by Bevil Higgons to *The Jew of Venice*, an adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice* by George Granville, Lord Lansdowne (1701, 2nd ed., 1713), acted repeatedly between 1701 and 1741.]

These scenes in their rough native dress were mine;
But now improv'd with nobler lustre shine;
The first rude sketches Shakespeare's pencil drew,
But all the shining master-strokes are new.
This play, ye critics, shall your fury stand,
Adorn'd and rescu'd by a faultless hand.

(b) JOHNSON'S VIEW OF SHAKESPEARE, Prologue, 1747. *Works*, 1825, vi. 324

When Learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal *Shakespeare* rose;
Each change of many colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new:
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain.
His pow'rful strokes presiding Truth impress'd,
And unresisted Passion storm'd the breast.

VI. PARTRIDGE (A COUNTRY SCHOOLMASTER) AT THE PLAY: GARRICK IN HAMLET

FIELDING, *Tom Jones*, 1749, XVI, v.

In the first row then of the first gallery did Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miller, her youngest daughter, and Partridge, take their places. Partridge immediately declared it was the finest place he had ever been in. When the first music was played, he said, " It was a wonder how so many fiddlers could play at one time, without putting one another out." While the fellow was lighting the upper candles, he cried out to Mrs. Miller, " Look look, madam, the very picture of the man in the end of the common-prayer book before the gunpowder-treason service." Nor could he help observing, with a sigh, when all the candles were lighted, " That here were candles enough burnt in one night to keep an honest poor family for a whole twelvemonth."

As soon as the play, which was Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break **silence till** the entrance of the ghost; upon which

he asked Jones, " What man that was in the strange dress ; something," said he, " like what I have seen in the picture. Sure it is not armour, is it ? " Jones answered. " That is the ghost." To which Partridge replied with a smile, " Persuade me to that, sir, if you can. Though I can't say I ever actually saw a ghost in my life, yet I am certain I should know one, if I saw him, better than that comes to. No, no, sir, ghosts don't appear in such dresses as that, neither." In this mistake, which caused much laughter in the neighbourhood of Partridge, he was suffered to continue, till the scene between the ghost and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr. Garrick, which he had denied to Jones, and fell into so violent a trembling, that his knees knocked against each other. Jones asked him what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the stage ? " O la ! sir," said he, "I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of anything; for I know it is but a play. And if it was really a ghost, *it* could do one no harm at such a distance, and in so much company; and yet if I was frightened, I am not the only person." "Why, who," cries Jones, " dost thou take to be such a coward here besides thyself ? " " Nay, you may call me coward if you will; but if that little man there upon the stage is not frightened, I never saw any man frightened in my life. Ay, ay: go along with you : Ay, to be sure ! Who's fool then ? Will you ? Lud have mercy upon such foolhardiness !—Whatever happens, it is good enough for you. Follow you ? I'd follow the devil as soon. Nay, perhaps it is the devil—for they say he can put on what likeness he pleases. Oh ! here he is again. No farther ! No, you have gone far enough already; farther than I'd have gone for all the king's dominions." Jones offered to speak, but Partridge cried, " Hush, hush ! dear sir, don't you hear him ? " And during the whole speech of the ghost, he sat with his eyes fixed partly on the ghost and partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open ; the same passions which succeeded each other in Hamlet, succeeding likewise in him,

When the scene was over, Jones said, " Why, Partridge, you exceed my expectations. You enjoy the play more than I conceived possible." "Nay, sir," answered Partridge, " if you are not afraid of the devil, I can't help it; but to be sure, it is natural to be surprised at such things, though I know there is nothing in them : not that it was the ghost that surprised me, neither ; for I should have known that to be only a man in a strange dress ; but when I saw the little man so frightened himself, it was that which took hold of me." " And dost thou imagine, then, Partridge," cries Jones, " that he was really frightened? " " Nay, sir," said Partridge, "did not you yourself observe afterwards, when he found it was his own father's spirit, and how he was murdered in the garden, how his fear forsook him by degrees, and he was struck dumb with sorrow, as it were, just as I should have been, had it been my own case ?—But hush ! O la ! what noise is that ? There he is again.—Well, to be certain, though I know there is nothing at all in it, I am glad I am not down yonder, where those men are." Then turning his eyes upon Hamlet, " Ay, you may draw your sword; what signifies a sword against the power of the devil ? "

During the second act, Partridge made very few remarks. He greatly admired the fineness of the dresses ; nor could he help observing the king's countenance. " Well," said he, " how people may be deceived by faces ! *Nulla fides frontt* is, I find, a true saying. Who would think, by looking in the king's face, that he had ever committed a murder ? " He then inquired after the ghost; but Jones, who intended he should be surprised, gave him no other satisfaction, than, " that he might possibly see him again soon, and in a flash of fire".

Partridge sat in fearful expectation of this ; and now, when the ghost made his next appearance, Partridge cried out, " There, sir, now; what say you now ? is he frightened now or no ? As much frightened as you think me, and, to be sure, nobody can help some fears. I would

not be in so bad a condition as what's his name, squire Hamlet, is there, for all the world. Bless me! What's become of the spirit? As I am a living soul, I thought I saw him sink into the earth." "Indeed, you saw right," answered Jones. "Well, well," cries Partridge, "I know it is only a play: and beside, if there was anything in all this, Madam Miller would not laugh so; for as to you, sir, you would not be afraid, I believe, if the devil was here in person. There, there—Ay, no wonder you are in such a passion, shake the vile wicked wretch to pieces. If she was my own mother, I would serve her so. To be sure, all duty to a mother is forfeited by such wicked doings—Ay, go about your business, I hate the sight of you."

Our critic was now pretty silent till the play, which Hamlet introduces before the king. This he did not at first understand, till Jones explained it to him; but he no sooner entered into the spirit of it, than he began to bless himself that he had never committed murder. Then turning to Mrs. Miller, he asked her, "If she did not imagine the king looked as if he was touched; though he is," said he, "a good actor, and doth all he can to hide it. Well, I would not have so much to answer for, as that wicked man there hath, to sit upon a much higher chair than he sits upon. No wonder he run away; for your sake I'll never trust an innocent face again."

The grave-digging scene next engaged the attention of Partridge, who expressed much surprise at the number of skulls thrown upon the stage. To which Jones answered, "That it was one of the principal burial-places about town." "No wonder then," cries Partridge, "that the place is haunted. But I never saw in my life a worse grave-digger. I had a sexton, when I was clerk, that should have dug three graves while he is digging one. The fellow handles a spade as if it was the first time he had ever had one in his hand. Ay, ay, you may sing. You had rather sing than work, I believe." Upon Hamlet's taking up the skull, he cried out, "Well! it is strange to see how fearless some men are: I never could bring

myself to touch anything belonging to a dead man, on any account.—He seemed frightened enough too at the ghost, I thought. *Nemo omnibus koris sapit."*

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play, at the end of which Jones asked him, " Which of the players he had liked best ? " To this he answered with some appearance of indignation at the question, " The king without doubt." " Indeed, Mr. Partridge," says Mrs. Miller, "you are not of the same opinion with the town ; for they are all agreed, that Hamlet is acted by the best player who ever was on the stage." " He the best player ! " cries Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer, " why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me, any man, that is, any good man, that had such a mother would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me ; but indeed, madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country ; and the king for my money; he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other.—Anybody may see he is an actor."

VII. THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON, 1769

BOSWELL, *London Magazine,* September, 1769

For my own part I am now returned to London, and I flatter myself that, after being agitated as much as any body, I have recovered my tranquillity, and am in condition to give you a few remarks on this celebrated jubilee of genius, which, I am persuaded, will engage the attention not only of all ranks in this island, but of the learned and ingenious in every part of Europe. For what was the Stratford Jubilee ? Not a piece of farce and rhodomontade,

as many of the envious foes of our Roscius attempted to make us believe, but an elegant and truly classical celebration of the memory of Shakespeare, that illustrious poet, whom all ages will admire as the world has hitherto done. It was truly an antique idea, a Grecian thought, to institute a splendid festival in honour of the bard. My bosom glowed with joy when I beheld a numerous and brilliant company of nobility and gentry, the rich, the brave, the witty, and the fair, assembled to pay their tribute of praise to Shakespeare ; nor could I help thinking that they at the same time paid a very just compliment to Mr. Garrick, the steward of the jubilee, who has done so much to make our nation acquainted with the inestimable riches of their own stage, in possessing so illustrious a dramatic author with such amazing variety and wonderful excellence as Shakespeare. Garrick may be called the colourist of Shakespeare's soul.—He

> —Dame Nature's pencil stole,
> Just where old Shakespeare dropt it.

Let conceited and disappointed authors and players vent their spleen upon him, he may assure himself that his fame will last for ever.

The morning of the first day was ushered in with a pleasing serenade by the best musicians from London in disguise. The Jubilee began with an oratorio in the parish church, at Stratford; the subject the story of Judith; the words by Mr. Bickerstaff, the music by Dr. Arne. It was a grand and admirable performance. But I could have wished that prayers had been read, and a short sermon preached. It would have consecrated our Jubilee to begin it with devotion, with gratefully adoring the supreme Father of all spirits, from above cometh every good and perfect gift. The procession with music from the church to the amphitheatre, led on by Mr. Garrick, had a very good effect. The amphitheatre was a wooden building, erected just on the bank of the Avon, *in* the form of an octagon, with eight pillars supporting the roof,

It was elegantly painted and gilded. Between the pillars were crimson curtains, very well imitated as hanging over each recess. In this amphitheatre was a large orchestra placed as it used to be formerly at Ranelagh. Here the company dined exceedingly well between three and four. Between five and six the musical performers appeared, and entertained us with several of the songs in *Shakespeare's Garland*, composed for the occasion. *Sweet Willy O*, tender and pathetic, *The Mulberry Tree*, of which the chorus is very fine ; *Warwickshire*, a ballad of great merit in its kind, lively spirited, full of witty turns, and even delicate fancies. Mr. Garrick's words and Mr. Dibdin's music, went charmingly together, and we all joined in the chorus. . . .

The performance of the dedication ode was noble and affecting : it was like an exhibition in Athens or Rome. The whole audience were fixed in the most earnest attention, and I do believe, that if any one had attempted to disturb the performance, he would have been in danger of his life. Garrick in front of the orchestra, filled with the first musicians of the nation, with Dr. Arne at their head, and inspired with an awful elevation of soul, while he looked from time to time at the venerable statue of Shakespeare, appeared more than himself. While he repeated the ode, and saw the various passions and feelings which it contains fully transfused into all around him, he seemed in ecstasy, and gave us the idea of a mortal transformed into a demi-god, as we read in the pagan mythology. . . .

I am surprised that your correspondents, who have so justly praised Mr. Angelo's fireworks, have not mentioned the pictures on the bank of the Avon, fronting the amphitheatre. There we beheld Time leading Shakespeare to immortality, Tragedy on one side, and Comedy on the other, copied from the fine ideas of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Behind these pictures were placed a number of lamps, which gave them a most beautiful transparency. In the same style were five pictures in the windows of the Town

Hall: in the middle Shakespeare, in the attitude of exclaiming:

" Oh! for a muse of fire !

On the windows on one side of him, Lear and Caliban : on the windows on the other side, Sir John Falstaff and Ancient Pistol. In the same style too was a piece of painting hung before the windows of the room where Shakespeare was born, representing the sun breaking through the clouds. . . .

The warlike mien of the Warwickshire militia, and the discharge of artillery, added considerably to the grandeur of our jubilee. We all wore, hung in a blue ribband at our breasts, a medal of Shakespeare, very well cast by Mr. Westwood of Birmingham. . . . We also wore favours, called Shakespeare's favours. Ladies, gentlemen, even servants and peasants wore them. Every human being had, or seemed to have, an idea of the classical festival. Taste beamed a ray on the lively and the stupid, on those who felt it, and on those who did not. The very shop-bills upon this occasion were pieces of genius. Mr. Jackson, from Tavistock-street, London, gave about the following one :

SHAKESPEARE'S JUBILEE

A ribband has been made on purpose at Coventry, called the *Shakespeare Ribband* : it is in imitation of the rainbow, which, uniting the colours of all parties, is likewise the emblem of the great variety of his genius.

Each change of many-coloured life he drew.[1]

JOHNSON.

I daresay Mr. Samuel Johnson never imagined that this fine verse of his would appear on a bill to promote the sale of ribbands. Since I have mentioned this illustrious author, I cannot but regret that he did not honour Shakespeare's jubilee with his presence, which would have added much dignity to our meeting. The masquerade ball was one of the best that has been seen in Britain.

[1] See above, p. 183.

There were many rich, elegant and curious dresses, many beautiful women, and some characters well supported. All the papers have already been pretty full on this subject, so I need say little ; only I must observe, that a masquerade is an entertainment that does not seem much suited to the genius of the British nation. . . . The reserve and taciturnity which is observable amongst us, makes us appear awkward and embarrassed in our characters. Many of our Stratford masks seemed angry when one accosted them.[1] The race at the Jubilee was neither better nor worse than other races; nor indeed could it be expected to be any how extraordinary, except, as an ingenious lady observed, we could have procured a race of Pegasuses in honour of our poet. It was much to be regretted that the bad weather prevented us from having the pageant, upon which Mr. Garrick had bestowed so much time in contriving, and so much expense in furnishing. It was to have been a procession of allegorical beings, with the most distinguished characters of Shakespeare's plays, with their proper dress, triumphal cars and all other kinds of machinery. . . .

VIII. THE STATUS OF A PLAYER

BOSWELL, *Life of Johnson,* ii. 263-4 (April 10, 1778)

I then slily introduced Mr. Garrick's fame, and his assuming the airs of a great man. JOHNSON. ' Sir, *it* is wonderful how *little* Garrick assumes. No, Sir, Garrick *fortimam reverenter habet.* Consider, Sir : celebrated men, such as you have mentioned, have had their applause at a distance ; but Garrick had it dashed in his face, sounded in his ears, and went home every night with the plaudits of a thousand in his *cranium.* Then, Sir, Garrick did not

[1] This was the occasion when Boswell made himself ridiculous as a Corsican chief : he wrote a detailed account of his own appearance at the masquerade for the *London Magazine,* in which he says of himself, ' so soon as he came into the room he drew universal attention '

find, but *made* his way to the tables, the levees, **and** almost the bed-chambers of the great. Then, Sir, Garrick had under him a numerous body of people; who, from fear of his power, and hopes of his favour, and admiration of his talents, were constantly submissive to him. And here is a man who has advanced the dignity of his profession. Garrick has made a player a higher character.' SCOTT. ' And he is a very spritely writer too.' JOHNSON'. ' Yes, Sir; and all this supported by great wealth of his own acquisition. If all this had happened to me, I should have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me, to knock down every body that stood in the way. Consider, if all this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they'd have jumped over the moon.—Yet Garrick speaks to *us.*' (Smiling.)

[Johnson on occasion spoke very differently of Garrick, e.g. October 19, 1769:] ii. 92.

1 complained that he had not mentioned Garrick in his Preface to Shakespeare ; and asked him if he did not admire him. JOHNSON. ' Yes, as " a poor player, who frets and struts his hour upon the stage " ;—as a shadow/ BOSWKLL. ' But has he not brought Shakespeare into notice ? ' JOHNSON. ' Sir, to allow that would be to lampoon the age. Many of Shakespeare's plays are the worse for being acted : *Macbeth,* for instance.' BOSWELL. ' What, Sir, is nothing gained by decoration and action ? Indeed, I do wish that you had mentioned Garrick.' JOHNSON. ' My dear Sir, had 1 mentioned him, I must have mentioned many more : —Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Cibber, —nay, and Mr. Cibber too; he too altered Shakespeare/

IX. BURKE'S EPITAPH ON GARRICK

W. WINDHAM, *Diary, 1860,* 301

To THE MEMORY OF DAVID GARRICK

Whose remains lie interred near the monument of William Shakespeare **and** close **to** the **body of Samuel Johnson.**

He was born at Hereford in the year 1716, and died in London in the year 1779.

Under him the English dramatic representation took a new form ; he brought it nearer to the standard of nature, and to the expression of real passion.

Shakespeare was the chosen subject of his study : in his action, and in his declamation [inexhaustible] he. expressed all the fire, the enthusiasm, the energy, the facility, the endless variety of that great poet. Like him he was equally happy in the tragic and the comic style.

He entered into the true spirit of the poets, because he was himself a poet, and wrote many pieces with elegance eind spirit.

He raised the character of his profession to the rank of a liberal art, not only by his talents, but by the regularity and probity of his life and the elegance of his manners. His friendships were sincere, his manners were amiable. He excelled in all relations of domestic and social life. His conversation was gay, cheerful and ingenious. His wit was without levity, affectation or malice, and as inoffensive as it was pointed. His society was therefore courted and cultivated by all those of his time who were the most distinguished by their taste and erudition.

His memory will be long honoured by all who are sensible how much a solid, refined, and moral taste, in its public pleasures, contributes to the improvement and glory of a great nation.

IV

TRAVELLING

In our way, Johnson strongly expressed his love of driving fast in a post-chaise. If (said he) I had no duties and no reference to futurity, I would spend my life in driving briskly in a post-chaise with a pretty woman ; but she should be one who could understand me, and would add something to the conversation.

BOSWELL (1779).

The badness of English roads in the eighteenth century is a common theme of social historians, their substantial improvement long before the days of Macadam has been less noticed.[1] Dr. Johnson would hardly have found rapid travelling in a post-chaise so delectable if the roads had been as bad as would appear from certain modern generalizations based on complaints of individual roads—nor would the complaints have been made if the badness had been universal. Gibbon, too, found driving in a post-chaise a " union of ease and motion ", with which he was always " delighted and improved ". But the favourable account given by Grosley (ii) must certainly not be taken as applicable to roads in general.

No one has a good word to say for the Grand Tour from an educational standpoint (iv) and similar criticisms are to be found in the seventeenth century. But in this period a new type of traveller appears—the modern tourist—who travels for pleasure both at home and abroad, and with the new-fashioned admiration for scenery goes in search of the romantic and the picturesque. In this, as in his love of mountains and in many other ways, the poet Gray is a pioneer, and his *Tour in the Lakes* (v) belongs in spirit rather to the

[1] See an interesting article by Prof. Gay, *Arthur Young on English Roads,* in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics,* May, 1927. See also Horace Walpole's remarks above, p. 97.

age of Wordsworth than the age of Johnson. It was not in quest of the picturesque that Johnson visited the Hebrides, and though scenery was one of the attractions of the Welsh tour with the Thrales in 1774, he records that when taken to see a cascade, he " trudged wearily and was not sorry to find it dry ".

I. THE STAGE-COACHMAN

FIELDING, *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, 1755 (Reprint in *World's Classics*, ed. A. Dobson, 1907, p. 33 it.)

Now there are two general ways of performing (if God permit) this conveyance ; viz. by land and water, both of which have much variety ; that by land being performed in different vehicles, such as coaches, caravans, waggons, *ike*, and that by water in ships, barges, and boats, of various sizes and denominations. Hut as all these methods of conveyance are formed on the same principles, they agree so well together, that it is fully sufficient to comprehend them all in the general view, without descending to such minute particulars as would distinguish one method from another.

Common to all of these is one general principle, that as the goods to be conveyed are usually the larger, so they are to be chiefly considered in the conveyance ; the owner being indeed little more than an appendage to his trunk, or box, or bale, or at best a small part of his own baggage, very little care is to be taken in stowing or packing them up with convenience to himself: for the conveyance is not of passengers and goods, but of goods and passengers.

Secondly, from this conveyance arises a new kind of relation, or rather of subjection in the society ; by which the passenger becomes bound in allegiance to his conveyer. This allegiance is indeed only temporary and local, but the most absolute during its continuance of any known in Great Britain, and, to say truth, scarce consistent with the liberties of a free people ; nor could it be reconciled with them, **did** it not move downwards, a circumstance universally apprehended to be incompatible to all kinds

of slavery. For Aristotle, in his Politics, hath proved abundantly to my satisfaction, that no men are born to be slaves, except barbarians; and these only to such as are not themselves barbarians: and indeed Mr. Montesquieu hath carried it very little farther, in the case of the Afiicans; the real truth being, that no man is born to be a slave, unless to him who is able to make him so.

Thirdly, this subjection is absolute, and consists of a perfect resignation both of body and soul to the disposal of another; after which resignation, during a certain time, his subject retains no more power over his own will, than an Asiatic slave, or an English wife, by the laws of both countries, and by the customs of one of them. If I should mention the instance of a stage-coachman, many of my readers would recognize the truth of what I have here observed; all, indeed, that ever have been under the dominion of that tyrant, who, in this free country, is as absolute as a Turkish Bashaw. In two particulars only his power is defective; he cannot press you into his service, and if you enter yourself at one place, on condition of being discharged at a certain time at another, he is obliged to perform his agreement, if God permit: but, all the intermediate time, you are absolutely under his government; he carries you how he will, when he will, whither he will, provided it be not much out of the road; you have nothing to eat, or to drink, but what, and when, and where he pleases. Nay, you cannot sleep, unless he pleases you should; for he will order you sometimes out of bed at midnight, and hurry you away at a moment's warning: indeed, if you can sleep in his vehicle, he cannot prevent it; nay, indeed, to give him his due, this he is ordinarily disposed to encourage; for the earlier he forces you to rise in the morning, the more time he will give you in the heat of the day, sometimes even six hours at an alehouse, or at their doors, where he always gives you the same indulgence which he allows himself; and for this he is generally very moderate in his demands. I have known a whole bundle of passengers charged no more

than half a crown for being suffered to remain quiet at an alehouse door, for above a whole hour, and that even in the hottest day in summer.

IL ROADS IN 1765. A FRENCH TRAVELLERS IMPRESSIONS

P. GROSLEY, *A Tour to London . . .*, Trans. 1772, i. 15-17

The high roads which, like all those of England, had been ruined during the civil wars, and entirely neglected till the reign of George the second, were then taken into consideration by the Parliament. Being covered with powdered flint stones, they are kept in perfect repair, though in England neither the duty of average nor the proper art of raising causeways are known.

It must be acknowledged, that the expense for keeping them in repair is not so considerable as elsewhere : In England the sea supplies the principal means of transporting goods of all sorts. The repairing of the high roads is at the expense of those who use them ; and turnpikes or barriers are shut against the carriages ; where they pay the price settled by a tariff fixed up, according to the number of horses which draw them. Neither rank nor dignity is exempted from these payments : the king himself is subject to them ; and the turnpike would be shut against his equipage, if some of his officers did not pay the money before passing. . . .

The high roads have all along a little bank raised above them, and two or three feet broad, with a row of posts at each side, whose tops are whitened that they may be seen during the night by the drivers of carriages. This is for the conveniency of those that walk afoot. In places where the narrowness of the ground is unfavourable to this arrangement, the proprietors of adjoining lands are obliged to give a passage through their fields, which are all enclosed with strong hedges. . . -[1]

[1] This is an account of the Dover Road which went through enclosed country; it does not apply to roads in general.

This great attention of the English to the conveniency of those who walk on foot has several causes : i. They set the highest value upon the lives of their fellow-creatures, and to this circumstance they sacrifice many others which might contribute to pleasure and conveniency. 2. Their laws are not made and executed entirely by persons who always ride in chariots. 3. As the English carriages move as swiftly in the country as slowly in town, the meeting with persons that walk on foot, and the fear of rnishing them, neither diminishes nor crosses this headlong impetuosity.

The high roads are very far from being exactly rectilinear ; not but that there are engineers in England skilful enough to draw a right line across a field; but that the dearness of land requires some caution, property is in England a thing sacred, which the laws protect from all encroachment, not only from engineers, inspectors, and other people of that stamp, but even from the king himself: add to this, that, as we shall find in the article of gardens, the right line is not in the taste of the English.

The farmhouses, which are situated on the side of the high roads, or near them, being built of brick, and covered with tiles, have glass windows, that are kept in the most exact order. The barns are likewise built of brick : there are only a few miserable ones thatched ; the appearance is as comfortable within as without. We met a considerable number of carriages loaded with corn and hay, which were going to the ports. Each of the drivers (who were all dither labourers or husbandmen) dressed in good cloth, a warm great-coat upon his back, and good boots on his legs, rode upon a little nag; he had a long whip in his hand to drive his team ; the horses were vigorous and in good plight, and drew with strong chains instead of traces. England however has no persons, who are by profession occupied for the good of the state: the wealth of the country people is the result of their own industry. Public authority deems it **sufficient to** animate **and encourage**

it: the magistrates would think they limited industry if they undertook to direct it.

III. HIGHWAYMEN

Walpole to Mann, Oct. 6, 1774. *Letters*, ed. Toynbee, ix. 63

Our roads are so infested by highwaymen, that it is dangerous stirring out almost by day. Lady Hertford was attacked on Hounslow Heath at three in the afternoon. Dr. Eliot was shot at three days ago, without having resisted; and the day before yesterday we were near losing our Prime Minister, Lord North; the robbers shot at the postilion and wounded the latter. In short, all the freebooters that are not in India, have taken to the highway. The ladies of the Bedchamber dare not to go to the Queen at Kew in an evening. The lane between me and the Thames is the only safe road I know at present, for it is up to the middle of the horses in water.

IV. THE GRAND TOUR

(a) COWPER, *The Progress of Error* (1782), 11. 369-384

From school to Cam and Isis, and thence home,
And thence with all convenient speed to Rome.
With reverend tutor, clad in habit lay,
To tease for cash, and quarrel with all day;
With memorandum-book for every town,
And every post, and where the chaise broke down,
His stock, a few French phrases got by heart,
With much to learn, and nothing to impart.
The youth, obedient *to* his sire's commands,
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands;
Surprised at all they meet, the gosling pair
With awkward gait, stretched neck, and silly stare,
Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,
And steeples towering high, much like our own,
But show peculiar light by many a grin
At Popish practices observed within.

(b) [STERNE], *The Sermons of Mr. Yorick,* Sermon xx, *The Prodigal Son*

The love of variety, or curiosity of seeing new things, which is the same, or at least a sister passion to it,—seems wove into the frame of every son and daughter of Adam ; we usually speak of it as one of nature's levities, though planted within us for the solid purposes of carrying forward the mind to fresh inquiry and knowledge. , . .

It is to this spur, which is ever in our sides, that we owe the impatience of this desire for travelling : the passion is no way bad,—but as others are,—in its mismanagement or excess;—order it rightly, the advantages are worth the pursuit;-—the chief of which are,—to learn the languages, the laws and customs, and understand the government and interest of other nations ;—to acquire an urbanity and confidence of behaviour, and fit the mind more easily for conversation and discourse;—to take us out of the company of our aunts and grandmothers, and from the track of nursery mistakes ; and by showing us new objects, or old ones in new lights, to reform our judgments—by tasting perpetually the varieties of nature, to know what *is good*—and by observing the address and arts of man, to conceive what *is sincere,*—and by seeing the difference of so many various humours and manners,—to look into ourselves, and form our own.

This is some part of the cargo we might return with; but the impulse of seeing new sights, augmented with that of getting clear from all lessons both of wisdom and reproof at home—carries our youth too early out, to turn this venture to much account ; on the contrary, if the scene painted of the prodigal in his travels, looks more like a copy than an original,—will it not be well if such an adventurer, with so unpromising a setting-out,—without *carte,*—without compass,—be not cast away for ever,—and may lie not be said to escape well—if he return to his country only as naked as he first left it ?

But you will send an able pilot with your son,—a scholar.—

If wisdom can speak in no other language but Greek or Latin,—you do well—or if mathematics will make a man a gentleman,—or natural philosophy but teach him to make a bow,—he may be of some service in introducing your son into good societies, and supporting him in them when he has done so ; but the upshot will be generally this, that, in the most pressing occasions of address- if he is a mere man of reading, the unhappy youth will have the tutor to carry,—and not the tutor to carry him.

But you will avoid this extreme ; he shall be escorted by one who knows the world, not merely from books—but from his own experience :—a man who has been employed in such services, and thrice made *the tour of Europe with success*:—

That is, without breaking his own or his pupil's neck ;—for if he is such as my eyes have seen ! some broken *Swiss valet-de-chambre,*—some general undertaker, who will perform the journey in so many months, *if God permit,* —much knowledge will not accrue ;—some profit at least, —he will learn the amount, to a halfpenny, of every stage from Calais to Rome ; - he will be carried to the best inns,-- - instructed where there is the best wine, and sup a livre cheaper, than if the youth had been left to make the tour and the bargain himself.-- Look at our governor ! I beseech you,—see, he is an inch taller as he relates the advantages.—

—And here endeth his pride—his knowledge, and his use.

But, when your son gets abroad, he will be taken out of his hand, by his society with men of rank and letters, with whom he will pass the greatest part of his time.

Let me observe, in the first place,—that company which is really good is very rare,—and very shy : but you have surmounted this difficulty and procured him the best letters of recommendation to the most eminent and respectable in every capital.

And I answer, that he will obtain all by them, which courtesy stands strictly obliged to pay on such occasion, but no more.

There is nothing *in* which we are so much deceived, as in the advantages proposed from our connections and discourse with the *literati,* &c, in foreign parts; especially if the experiment is made before we are matured by years or study.

Conversation is a traffic ; and if you enter into it without some stock of knowledge to balance the account perpetually betwixt you,—the trade drops at once :—and this is the reason,--however it may be boasted to the contrary,—why travellers have so little (especially good) conversation with natives,—owing to the suspicion,—or, perhaps, conviction, that there is nothing to be extracted from the conversation of young itinerants worth the trouble of their bad language, —or the interruption of their visits.

The pain on these occasions is usually reciprocal; the consequence of which is, that the disappointed youth seeks an easier society; and as bad company is always ready, and ever lying in wait,—the career is soon finished ; and the poor prodigal returns the same object of pity, with the prodigal in the Gospel.

(c) Letters of Philip Dot met Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, ed. Brarishaw, 1892, i. 336

London, April 30.O.S.1750.

My dear Friend,

Mr. Harte, who in all his letters gives you some dash of panegyric, told me in his last a thing that pleases me extremely ; which was, that at Rome you had constantly preferred the established Italian assemblies, to the English conventicles set up against them by dissenting English ladies. That shows sense, and that you know what you are sent abroad for. It is of much more consequence to know the *Mores multorum hominum* than the *Urbes.* Pray continue this judicious conduct wherever you go, especially at Paris, where, instead of thirty, you will find above three hundred English herding together, and conversing with no one French body.

The life of *les Milords Anglois* is regularly, or if you will,

irregularly, this. As soon as they rise, which is very late, they breakfast together, to the utter loss of two good morning hours. Then they go by coachfuls to the Palais, the Invalides, and Notre-Dame ; from thence to the English coffee-house, where they make up their tavern party for dinner. From dinner, where they drink quick, they adjourn in clusters to the play, where they crowd up the stage, drest up in very fine clothes, very ill made by a Scotch or Irish tailor. From the play to the tavern again, where they *get* very drunk, and where they either quarrel among themselves, or sally forth, commit some riot in the streets, and are taken up by the watch. Those who do not speak French before they go are sure to learn none there. . . . Thus, they return home, more petulant, but not more informed, than when they left it ; and show, as they think, their improvement by affectedly both speaking and dressing in broken French.

(d) Ibid., ii. 580

London, May 27, 1753.

My dear Friend, . . .

You are now but nineteen, an age at which most of your countrymen are illiberally getting drunk in port at the University. You have greatly got the start of them in learning ; and, if you can equally get the start of them in the knowledge and manners of the world, you may be very sure of outrunning them in Court and Parliament, as you set out so much earher than they. They generally begin but to see the world at one-and-twenty ; you will by that age have seen all Europe. They set out upon their travels unlicked cubs, and in their travels they only lick one another, for they seldom go into any other company. They know nothing but the English world, and the worst part of that too, and generally very little of any but the English language, and they come home at three or four-and-twenty refined and polished (as is said in one of Congreve's plays) like Dutch skippers from a whale-fishing.

V. A WALKING TOUR

GRAY, *Journal in the Lakes. Works, ed.* Gosse, 2884, i. 253 ff.

October 3. [1760,] Wind at S.E; a heavenly day. Rose at 7, and walked out under the conduct of my landlord to *Borrodalc.* The grass was covered with a hoar frost, which soon melted, and exhaled in a thin blueish smoke. Crossed the meadows obliquely, catching a diversity of views among the hills over the lake and islands, and changing prospect at every ten paces ; Left *Cockshut* and *Castlehill* (which we formerly mounted) behind me, and drew near the foot of *Walla-crag,* whose bare and rocky brow, cut perpendicularly down above 400 feet, as I guess, awefully overlooks the way ; our path here tends to the left, and the ground gently rising, and covered with a glade of scattering trees and bushes on the very margin of the water, opens both ways the most delicious view, that my eyes ever beheld. Behind you are the magnificent heights of *Walla-crag* ; opposite lie the thick hanging woods of Lord Egrcmont, and *Newland* valley, with green and smiling fields embosomed in the dark cliffs ; to the left the jaws of *Borrodalc,* with that turbulent chaos of mountain behind mountain, rolled in confusion ; beneath you, and stretching far away to the right, the shining purity of the *Lake,* just ruffled by the breeze, enough to show it alive, reflecting rocks, woods, fields, and inverted tops of mountains, with the white buildings of *Kesivick, Crosthwait* church, and *Skiddaw* for a back ground at a distance. Oh ! Doctor ! I never wished more for you ; and pray think, how the glass played its part in such a spot, which is called Carf-close-reeds. I choose to set down these barbarous names, that any body may enquire on the place, and easily find the particular station, that I mean. This scene continues to *Barrow-gate,* and a little farther, passing a brook called *Barrow-beck,* we entered *Borrodalc.* . . .

The hills here are clothed all up their steep sides with oak, ash, birch, holly, &c. : some of it has been cut 40 years ago, some within these 8 years, yet all is sprung again green,

flourishing, and tall for its age, in a place where no soil appears but the staring rock, and where a man could scarce stand upright.

Met a civil young farmer overseeing his reapers (for it is oat-harvest here) who conducted us to a neat white house in the village of Grange, which is built on a rising ground in the midst of a valley. Round it the mountains form an awful amphitheatre, and through it obliquely runs the Derwent clear as glass, and shewing under its bridge every trout that passes. Beside the village rises a round eminence of rock, covered entirely with old trees, and over that more proudly towers Castle-crag, invested also with wood on its sides, and bearing on its naked top some traces of a fort said to be Roman. By the side of this hill, which almost blocks up the way, the valley turns to the left and contacts its dimensions, till there is hardly any road but the rocky bed of the river. The wood of the mountains increases and their summits grow loftier to the eye, and of more fantastic forms : among them appear *Eagle's Cliff, Dove's Nest, Whitedale-pike,* &c. celebrated names in the annals of Keswick. The dale opens about four miles higher till you come to *Sea Whaite* (where lies the way mounting the hills to the right, that leads to the *Wacid-mines)* all farther access is here barred to prying mortals, only there is a little path winding over the Fells, and for some weeks in the year passable to the Dale's-men; but the mountains know well, that these innocent people will not reveal the mysteries of their ancient kingdom, the reign of Chaos and Old Night, Only I learned, that this dreadful road, dividing again leads one branch to *Ravenglas,*and the other to *Hawkshead.*

For me I went no farther than the farmer's (better than 4 m : from Keswick) at *Grange* : his mother and he brought us butter, that Siserah would have jumped at, though not in **a** lordly dish, bowls of milk, thin oaten cakes, and ale ; and we **had** carried **a** cold tongue thither with us.

V

GARDENING

'To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,
To swell the terras, or to sink the grot ;
In all, let Nature never be forgot.
But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare ;
Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd,
Where half the skill is decently to hide ;
He gams all points, who pleasingly confounds,
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.
Consult the Genius of the Place in all;
That tells the ivatcrs or to rise, or fall,
Or helps th' ambitious hill the heav'n to scale,
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale,
Calls in the country, catches op'ning glades,
Joins willing woods, and vanes shades from shades,
Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines ;
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

POPE, *Epistle to Lord Burlington.*

Gardening has an important place in eighteenth-century life and literature, and in it the age found perhaps its most characteristic expression. " Improvement " was the passion of the day, gardening (in close connection with architecture) was recognized as one of the arts, and fortunes were sunk in building, laying out grounds and transforming the face of the earth in accordance with the prevailing fashion. The garden was an arena in which the classic and romantic taste struggled for supremacy; poets and poetasters sang the praises of their patrons' gardens, while to question the taste of a garden was an insult to its owner. Pope's appeal for nature in gardening (i) is a reaction from the formal garden of William and Mary, but he characteristically bases it on

the taste of the ancients. The fashion of the next age found its most famous expression in the gardens of Stowe, laid out by Bridgman, and praised by Pope in the *Epistle to Lord Burlington.* Here the classic taste was represented by temples, columns, arches, pyramids, statues in profusion, and the claims of nature by the sunk fence or ha-ha, vistas and views. Nature progressively encroached (ii), the straight line was abhorred, (" Is there any thing more shocking than a stiff, regular garden ? " asked Batty Langley), old aveuues and formal pieces of water were sacrificed in an orgy of landscape gardening. All walks had to be serpentine, and the chief features were groves, vistas, ruins (real or artificial), streams and grottoes. The urn and the statue survived less as a tribute to antiquity than to the taste for the melancholy and sentimental. The most celebrated example of the landscape garden of the 'Go's is that of Shcnstone at the Leasowes. After the middle of the century the craze for *chinoiscrics* affected the garden and Chinese gardening became a temporary fashion (iii). The chief example was Kew where the pagoda still remains. The citizen's country box was often a caricature of the prevailing taste on a small scale, and was the subject of much ridicule, as indeed was the rage for improvement *in* general.

Gardening was also an important industry, the market gardens round London had a European reputation, and at tins time England appears to have been in advance of France in the cultivation of fruit and vegetables (1 v). Foreign visitors were impressed by the gardens of farmers and cottagers ; Mme. Roland in her journey from Dover to London in 1784, remarked that " every cabbage has its rose tree ".

I. THE FORMAL GARDEN

POPE, *Guardian,* No. 173. Sept. 29, 1713

I lately took a particular friend of mine to my house in the country, not without some apprehension that it would afford little entertainment to a man of his polite taste, particularly in architecture and gardening, who had so long been conversant with all that is beautiful and great in either. But it was a pleasant surprise to me to hear **him often** declare, he had found in my little retirement

that beauty, which he always thought wanting in the most celebrated seats, or if you will villas, of the nation. This he described to me in those verses, with which Martial begins one of his epigrams . . .

> ' Our friend Faustinas' country seat I've seen :
> No myrtles placed in rows and idly green,
> No wulow'd plantane, nor clipp'd box-tree, there
> The useless soil unprofitably share ;
> But simple Nature's hand, with nobler grace,
> Dilfuses artless beauties o'er the place.'

There is certainly something in the amiable simplicity of unadorned nature that spreads over the mind a more noble sort of tranquillity, and a loftier sensation of pleasure, than can be raised from the nicer scenes of art.

This was the taste of the ancients in their gardens, as we may discover from the descriptions extant of them. The two most celebrated wits of the world have each of them left us a particular picture of a garden ; wherein those great masters, being wholly unconlined, and painting al pleasure, may be thought to have given a full idea of what they esteemed most excellent In this way. These (one may observe) consist entirely of the useful part of horticulture, fruit-trees, herbs, water &c. The pieces I am speaking of, are Virgil's account of the garden of the old Corycian, and Homer's of that of Alcinous. . . .

How contrary to this simplicity is the modern practice of gardening! We seem to make it our study to recede from nature, not only in the various tonsure of greens into the most regular and formal shapes, but even in monstrous attempts beyond the reach of the art itself. We run into sculpture, and are yet better pleased to have our trees **in** the most awkward figures of men and animals, than in the most regular of their own. . . .

I believe it is no wrong observation, that persons of genius, and those who are most capable of **art,** are **always** most fond of nature : as such are chiefly sensible, **that all art consists in the imitation and study of nature. On the contrary,** people of **the common level of understanding**

are principally delighted with the little niceties and fantastical operations of art and constantly think that finest which is least natural. A citizen is no sooner proprietor of a couple of yews, but he entertains thoughts of making them into giants, like those of Guildhall. I know an eminent cook, who beautified his country seat with a coronation dinner in greens ; where you see the champion flourishing on horseback at one end of the table, and the Queen in perpetual youth at the other.

For the benefit of all my loving countrymen of this curious taste, I shall here publish a catalogue of greens to be disposed of by an eminent town gardener, who has lately applied to me under this head. He represents, that for the advancement of a politer sort of ornament in villas and gardens adjacent to this great city, and in order to distinguish those places from the more barbarous countries of gross nature, the world stands much in need of a virtuoso gardener who has a turn to sculpture, and is thereby capable of improving upon the ancients of his profession in the imagery of evergreens. My correspondent is arrived to such perfection, that he makes family pieces of men, women, or children. . . . I shall proceed to his catalogue, as he sent it for my recommendation.

' Adam and Eve in yew : Adam a little shattered by the fall of the tree of knowledge in the great storm : Eve and the serpent very flourishing.

' The Tower of Babel not yet finished.

' St George in box ; his arm scarce long enough, but will be in a condition to stick the dragon by next April.

' A green dragon of the same, with a tail of ground ivy for the present.

' N.B. These two not to be sold separately.

' Edward the Black Prince in cypress.

' A laurentine bear in flower, with a juniper hunter in berries.

' A pair of giants, stunted, to be sold cheap.

' **A Queen Elizabeth in phillyrea,** a **little inclining to the green-sickness,** but **of full growth. . . .**'

ENGLAND IN JOHNSON'S DAY

II. GARDENING DEVELOPMENTS

H. WALPOLE, *Essay on Modern Gardening,* 1785. First printed in *Anecdotes of Painting,* iv. 1771

[Walpole quotes Sir William Temple's description of the garden at Moor Park, the formal garden of the later seventeenth century which he thinks was designed after Bacon's essay.]

" We have seen what Moor-Park was, when pronounced a standard. But as no succeeding generation in an opulent and luxurious century contents itself with the perfection established by its ancestors, more perfection was still sought; and improvements had gone on, till London and Wise had stocked our gardens with giants, animals, and monsters, coats of arms and mottoes in yew, box and holly. Absurdity could go no farther, and the tide turned. Bridgman, the next fashionable designer of gardens, was far more chaste ; and whether from good sense, or that the nation had been struck and reformed by that admirable paper in the Guardian, No. 173,[1] he banished verdant sculpture, and did not even resort to the square precision of the foregoing age. He enlarged his plans, disdained to make every division tally to its opposite, and though he still adhered much to straight walks with high clipped hedges, they were only his great lines ; the rest he diversiied by wilderness, and with loose groves of oak, though still within surrounding hedges. . . .

But the capital stroke, the leading stage to all that has followed, was (I believe the first thought was Bridgman's) the destruction of walls for boundaries, and the invention of fosses—an attempt then deemed so astonishing, **that** the common people called them Ha ! Ha's to express **their** surprise at finding a sudden and unperceived check to their walk. . . .

I call a sunk fence the leading step for these reasons. No sooner was this simple enchantment made, than **levelling,** mowing and rolling, followed. The contiguous ground

[1] See above.

of the **park without** the sunk fence was to be harmonized with **the lawn within** ; and the garden **in** its **turn** was to be free from its prim regularity, that it might assort with the wilder country without. The sunk fence ascertained the specific garden, but that it might not draw too obvious a line the distinction between the neat and the rude, the contiguous out-lying parts came to be included in a kind of general design : and when nature was taken into the plan, under improvements, every step that was made, pointed out new beauties and inspired new ideas. At that moment appeared Kent, painter enough to taste the charms of landscape, bold and opinionative enough to dare and to dictate ; and born with a genius to strike out a great system from the twilight of imperfect essays. He leaped the fence, and saw that all nature was a garden. He felt the delicious contrast of hill and valley changing imperceptibly into each other, tasted the beauty of the gentle well, or concave scoop, and remarked how loose groves crowned an easy eminence with happy ornament, and while they called in the distant view between their graceful sterns, removed and extended the perspective by delusive comparison. . . .

Thus selecting favourite objects, and veiling deformities by screens of plantation ; sometimes allowing the rudest waste to add its soil to the richest theatre, he realized the conceptions of the greatest masters in painting. Where objects were wanting to animate his horizon, his taste as an architect could bestow immediate termination. His buildings, his seats, his temples, were more the works of his pencil than of his compasses. We owe the restoration of Greece and the diffusion of architecture to his skill in landscape.

But of all the beauties he added to the face of this beautiful country, none surpassed his management of water. Adieu to canals, circular basins, and cascades **tumbling down marble** steps, that last absurd magnificence of **Italian and French villas.** The forced elevation **of** cataracts **was no more. The gentle stream was taught to serpentize**

seemingly at its pleasure, and where discontinued by different levels, its course appeared to be concealed by thickets properly interspersed, and glittered again at a distance where it might be supposed naturally to arrive.

Succeeding artists have added new master-strokes to these touches ; perhaps improved or brought to perfection some that I have named. The introduction of foreign trees and plants, which we owe principally to Archibald duke of Argyle, contributed essentially to the richness of colouring so peculiar to our modern landscape. . . .

Having routed *professed* art, for the modern gardener exerts his talents to conceal his art, Kent, like other reformers, knew not how to stop at the just limits. He had followed nature, and imitated her so happily, that he began to think all her works were equally proper for imitation. In Kensington Gardens he planted dead trees to give a greater air of truth to the scene—but he was soon laughed out of this excess. His ruling principle was that *nature abhors a strait line*—his mimics, for every genius has his apes, seemed to think that she could love nothing but what was crooked.

III. GARDENS IN 1765

P. GROSLEY, /] *Tour to London* . . . , Trans. 1772, 115-23

The regular symmetry introduced into this science is, at present, totally neglected by the English, and no longer to be seen, even at the royal palaces, except at that of Hampton-court, where the Stuarts resided. . . . Charles II had planted the gardens of Hampton-court; and King William those of Kensington, according to the plans of the famous le Nostre. The last of these princes had added a grass plot, planted all over with yews and cypress-trees, and surrounded with arbours of the same sort, the whole cut with the utmost regularity; but dismal as a church-yard. This grass-plot is still to be seen under the very windows of the palace, and is called King William's citadel.

This taste is no longer fashionable in England. In all the gardens that I have seen I observed but one walk with rows of trees on each side, cut and laid out in the French manner : it is preserved only as a specimen of the ill-taste which now prevails in France. . . .

It is from wild and uncultivated woods, that is, from pure nature, that the present English have borrowed their models in gardening. The great avenues of their parks, kept in the best order, are roads cut through forests of trees of all sorts and sizes. The foot-ways imitate the little paths of woods by their sinuousities, and their manner of intersecting and communicating with each other.

Art scarce displays itself at all in these different plantations which separate and conceal these walks : it lies in the choice of the trees and shrubs. Daisies and violets, irregularly scattered, form the borders of them. These flowers arc succeeded by dwarf trees such as rose-buds, *[sic]* myrtle, Spanish broom &c. The next row are filled by cedars, pines from different parts of America, and other trees which rise only to a certain height, of whose growth is very slow: the last stage consists of trees capable of forming the highest and best furnished stems. . . .

The paths which they separate, and by which they are bordered, are little winding alleys, that never run the space of two fathoms upon the same line, or the same plan. In laying out these gardens, the object of the first labour is the inequality of the ground, which is gained even on the levellest surface, by digging into, and removing the earth.

In this mariner the gardens belonging to Lord Burlington's house at Chiswick are laid out. A ground very flat by nature, turned up by the spade, has produced terrasses and hills, each of which is crowned by a little temple in the antique taste ; finally, a river of an extraordinary breadth, whose winding course, either cutting, or skirting the sides of the principal parts of the garden, multiplies the prospects from the house. . . .

The taste, which at present, prevails among the English in the manner of laying out their parks and gardens, is

that of the Chinese, that is to say, the taste of which, like all those of that eastern nation, has been established amongst them from the most remote antiquity. It appeared ridiculous, however, to the French Jesuits, whose eyes were used to the symmetry and regularity of the gardens belonging to the royal palaces of France. " The Chinese, said father le Comte, neither lay out their gardens with accuracy, nor embellish them with proper ornaments : they notwithstanding, take; pleasure in those places, and spend vast sums of money upon them. They form grottoes, raise little artificial hills, and transport rocks by piece-meal, which they heap upon each other : and all with no other view than that of imitating nature."

IV. GARDENING AND COUNTRY LIFE

L E BLANC, *Letters on the English and French Nations,* Trans. 1747, i. 319-21

We see by all these books on gardening, that it must be better understood here, than any where else ; and indeed fruits and pulse are nowhere cultivated with so much care and industry. Though the climate is not so favourable here as in France, they have carried the art much further. You rind in the markets at London, green peas more early than at Paris, and pine apples at all seasons ; and various sorts of pulse, which we have not are very common. Brocoli, which is still so rare with us, they eat here in the public houses . . .

You do not only find fruit trees of all countries in England, but you also find a prodigious quantity of those trees, which have no other worth but their beauty, or the singularity of their form. The English import all sorts of trees, at a great expense, from different parts of the world ; and those which thrive in the open air, they naturalize, and adorn their gardens with them. Thus we find here the cedar of Libanus, the Persian plane-tree, the tulip-tree of the Iroqois, and *arbor Judae* &c. The same commerce that assembles men of all nations upon the Royal

Exchange in London, stocks the English gardens with trees of all climates. The English, in making this use of their riches, seem to me much wiser than those amongst us, who ruin themselves by changing their equipages every six months, and their snuff-boxes every week.

What makes the English love planting more than us, is, that those who by their birth or riches, are of the greatest distinction in the state, live more in the country, than those of the same rank do with us. Exclusive of the real usefulness of plantations, they are one of the greatest sources of the country amusements. As the nobility set the fashion to their inferiors, the farmer plants in imitation of his landlord. As he has groves of laurels, linden trees and phillyreas, in his gardens, his farmer will at least have a little model of it in his. In our villages, the farmers seldom plant anything but apple trees and cabbage ; the English farmer has not only a kitchen-garden well furnished and kept in order, but if there are two fathoms of ground before his house, he makes a flower garden of it, where he cultivates the rose and lily of the valley, a sufficient proof of his easy circumstances.

VI

SPAS AND WATERING-PLAGES ; THE SEA-SIDE

Your prudent grandmammas, ye modern belles,
Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells,
When health required it would consent to roam,
Else more attached to pleasures found at home.
But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,
Ingenious to diversify dull life,
In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,
Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,
And all, impatient of dry land, agree
With one consent, to rush into the sea.

Cowi'ER, *Retirement,* 1782.

The history of spas and watering-places is of importance in the history of manners. Inland spas, at first health resorts, became places of pleasure and fashion and made for the mixing of social classes (i). Sea-side places followed their example and extended their influence over wider circles. The fashion of visits to the sea-side began with a book by a Dr. Russell in 1750 recommending sea water, and especially the water at Brighton, in certain diseases. The water was at first drunk as well as bathed in. The fashion grew rapidly, helped by the social developments of the time.

I. BATH UNDER BEAU NASH (1705-61)

[O. GOLDSMITH], *The Life of Richard Nash of Bath, Esq.,* 1762, pp. iii-iv

He [Nash] was the first who diffused a desire of society, and an easiness of address among a whole people who were formerly censured by foreigners for a reservedness of behaviour, and an awkward timidity in their first

approaches. He first taught a familiar intercourse among strangers at *Bath* and *Tanbridge* which still subsists among them. That ease and open access first acquired there, our gentry brought back to the metropolis, and thus the whole kingdom by degrees became more refined by lessons originally derived from him.

P. 22 ff. About the year 1703, the city of *Bath* became in some measure frequented by people of distinction. The company was numerous enough to form a country dance upon the bowling green ; they were amused with a fiddle and hautboy, and diverted with the romantic walks round the city. They usually sauntered in line weather in the grove, between two rows of sycamore trees. Several learned physicians . . . had even then praised the salubrity of the wells, and the amusements were put under the direction of a master of the ceremonies. . . .

Still however, the amusements of this place were neither elegant, nor conducted with delicacy. General society among people of rank and fortune was by no means established. The nobility still preserved a tincture of *Gothic* haughtiness, and refused to keep company with the gentry at any of the public entertainments of the place. Smoking in the rooms was permitted ; gentlemen and ladies appeared in a disrespectful manner at public entertainments in aprons and boots. With an eagerness common to those whose pleasures come but seldom, they generally continued them too long, and thus they were rendered disgusting [1] by too free an enjoyment. . . . The city was in itself mean and contemptible, no elegant buildings, no open streets, nor uniform squares. The Pump-house was without any director; the chairmen permitted no gentlemen or ladies to walk home by night without insulting them. • . . In this situation of things it was, that Mr. Nash first came into that city. . . .

P. 34 ff. The balls, by his directions, were to begin at six and to end at eleven. Nor would he suffer them to continue a moment longer, lest invalids might commit irregularities,

1 Pistastefu).

to counteract the benefit of the waters. Every thing was to be performed in proper order. Each ball was to open with a minuet, danced by two persons of the highest distinction present. When the minuet concluded, the lady was to return to her seat, and Mr. *Nash* was to bring the gentleman a new partner. This ceremony was to be observed by every succeeding couple ; every gentleman was to dance with two ladies till the minuets were over, which generally continued two hours. At eight the country-dances were to begin ; ladies of quality, according to their rank, standing up first. About nine o'clock a short interval was allowed for rest, and for the gentlemen to help their partners to tea. That over, the company were to pursue their amusements till the clock struck eleven. Then the master of the ceremonies entering the ball-room, ordered the music to desist by lifting up his linger. The dances discontinued, and some time allowed for becoming cool, the ladies were handed to their chairs.

Even the royal family themselves had not influence enough to make him deviate from any of these rules. The Princess *Amelia* once applying to him for one dance more, after he had given the signal to withdraw, he assured her royal highness, that the established rules of *Bath* resembled the laws of *Lycurgus,* which would admit of no alteration, without an utter subversion of all his authority. . . .

He began therefore to reign without a rival, and like other kings, had his mistresses, flatterers, enemies and calumniators; the amusements of the place, however, wore a very different aspect from what they did formerly. Regularity repressed pride, and that lessened, people of fortune became fit for society. Let the morose and grave censure an attention to forms and ceremonies, and rail at those whose only business it is to regulate them; but, though ceremony is very different from politeness, no country was ever yet polite that was not first ceremonious. The natural gradation of breeding begins in savage disgust, proceeds to indifference, improves into attention, by degrees refines into ceremonious observance; and the

trouble of being ceremonious at length produces politeness, elegance, and ease. There is therefore some merit in mending society, even in one of the inferior steps of this gradation ; and no man was more happy in this respect than Nash. In every nation there are enough who have no other business or care but that of buying pleasure ; and he taught them, who bid at such an auction, the art of procuring what they sought, without diminishing the pleasure of others.

The city of *Bath,* by such assiduity, soon became the theatre of summer amusements for all people of fashion ; and the manner of spending the day there must amuse any, but such as disease or spleen had made uneasy to themselves. The following is a faint picture of the pleasures that scene affords. Upon a stranger's arrival at *Bath* he is welcomed by a peal of the Abbey bells, and in the next place, by the voice and music of the city waits. For these civilities, the ringers have generally a present made them of half-a-guinea, and the waits of half-a-erown, or more, in proportion to the person's fortune, generosity, or ostentation. These customs, though disagreeable, are however generally liked, or they would not continue. The greatest incommodity attending them is the disturbance the bells must give the sick. But the pleasure of knowing the name of every family that comes to town recompenses the inconvenience. Invalids are fond of news, and upon the first sound of the bells, every body sends out to inquire for whom they ring.

After the family is thus welcomed to *Bath,* it is the custom for the master of it to go to the public places, and subscribe two guineas at the assembly-rooms towards the balls and music in the pump-house, for which he is entitled to three tickets every ball night. His next subscription is a crown, half-a-guinea, or a guinea, according to his rank and quality, for the liberty of walking in the private walks belonging to *Simpson's* assembly-house ; a crown or half-a-guinea is also given to the booksellers, for which the gentleman is to have what books he pleases to read at his lodgings.

And at the coffee-house another subscription is taken for pen, ink, for such letters as the subscriber shall write at it during his stay. The ladies, *too,* may subscribe to the booksellers, and to an house by the pump-room, for the advantage of reading the news, and for enjoying each other's conversation.

Things being thus adjusted, the amusements of the day are generally begun by bathing, which is no unpleasing method of passing away an hour or so. . . .

In the morning the lady is brought in a close chair, dressed in her bathing clothes, to the bath ; and, being in the water, the woman who attends, presents her with a little floating dish like a basin ; into which the lady puts a handkerchief, a snuff-box, and a nose-gay. She then traverses the bath ; if a novice, with a guide, if otherwise, by herself; and having amused herself thus while she thinks proper, calls for her chair, and returns to her lodgings.

The amusement of bathing is immediately succeeded by a general assembly of people in the pump-house ; some for pleasure, and some to drink the hot waters. Three glasses, at three different times, is the usual portion for every drinker ; and the intervals between every glass are enlivened by the harmony of a small band of music, as well as by the conversation of the gay, the witty, or the forward.

From the pump-house the ladies, from time to time, withdraw to a female coffee-house, and from thence return to their lodgings to breakfast. The gentlemen withdraw to their coffee-houses, to read the paper, or converse on the news of the day, with a freedom and ease not to be found in the metropolis.

People of fashion make public breakfasts at the assembly-houses, to which they invite their acquaintances, and they sometimes order private concerts; or, when so disposed, attend lectures upon the arts and sciences, which are frequently taught there in a pretty superficial manner, so as not to teaze the understanding, while they afford the imagination some amusement. The private concerts are performed in the ball-rooms; the tickets a crown each.

Concert breakfasts at the assembly-house sometimes make also a part of the morning's amusement here, the expenses of which are defrayed by a subscription among the men. Persons of rank and fortune who can perform are admitted into the orchestra, and find a pleasure in joining with the performer.

Thus we have the tedious morning fairly over. When noon approaches and church (if any please to go there) is done, some of the company appear upon the parade, and other public walks, where they continue to chat and amuse each other, till they have formed parties for the play, cards, or dancing for the evening. Another part of the company divert themselves with reading in the booksellers' shops, or are generally seen taking the air and exercise, some on horseback, some in coaches. Some walk in the meadows round the town, winding along the side of the river Avon and the neighbouring canal; while others are seen scaling some of those romantic precipices that overhang the city.

When the hour of dinner draws nigh, and the company is returned from their different recreations, the provisions are generally served with the utmost elegance and plenty. Their mutton, butter, fish, and fowl, are all allowed to be excellent, and their cookery still exceeds their meat.

After dinner is over, and evening prayers ended, the company meet a second time at the pump-house. From this they retire to the walks, and from thence go to drink tea at the assembly-houses, and the rest of the evenings are concluded either with balls, plays, or visits. A theatre was erected in the year 1705, by subscription, by people of the highest rank, who permitted their arms to be engraven on the inside of the house, as a public testimony of their liberality towards it. Every Tuesday and Friday evening is concluded with a public ball, the contributions to which are so numerous, that the price of each ticket is trifling. Thus Bath yields a continued rotation of diversions, and people of all ways of thinking, even from the libertine to the methodist, have it in their power to complete the day with employments suited to their inclinations.

IL TUNBRIDGE WELLS IN 1722

DEFOE, *Tour,* i. Letter II, pp. 55-6

The ladies that appear here are indeed the glory of the place. The coming to the Wells to drink the water is a mere matter of custom ; some drink, more do not, and few drink physically. But company and diversion is in short the main business of the place ; and those people who have nothing to do any where else, seem to be the only people who have any thing to do at *Tunbricige.*

After the appearance is over at the Wells, (where the ladies are all undressed) and at the chapel, the company go home ; and as if it was another species of people, or a collection from another place, you arc surprised to see the Walks covered with ladies completely dressed and gay to profusion ; where rich clothes, jewels and beauty not to be set out by (but infinitely above) ornament, dazzles the eyes from one end of the range to the other.

Here you have all the liberty of conversation in the world, and any thing that looks like a gentleman, has an address agreeable, and behaves with decency and good manners, may single out whom he pleases, that does not appear engaged, and may talk, rally, and be merry, and say any decent thing to them ; but all this makes no acquaintance, nor is it taken so, or understood to mean so ; if a gentleman desires to be more intimate, and enter into any acquaintance particular, he must do it by proper application, not by the ordinary meeting on the Walks, for the ladies will ask no gentleman there, to go off of the Walk, or invite any one to their lodgings, except it be a sort of ladies of whom I am not now speaking.

As for gaming, sharping, intriguing, as also fops, fools, beaus, and the like, *Tunbridge* is as full of these as can be desired, and it takes oil" much of the diversion of those persons of honour and virtue, who go there to be innocently recreated.

III. HARROGATE IN 1763

A. CARLYLE, D.D., *Autobiography*,ed.J. H. Burton, 1860, 434-5, 442

Harrogate at this time was very pleasant, for there was a constant succession of good company, and the best entertainment of any watering-place in Britain, at the least expense. The house we were at [the Dragon] was not only frequented by the Scotch at this time, but was the favourite house of the English nobility and gentry. Breakfast cost gentlemen only *2d.* apiece for their muffins, as it was the fashion for ladies to furnish tea and sugar ; dinner is. ; supper *6d.* ; chambers nothing ; wine and other extras at the usual price, and as little as you please ; horses and servants at a reasonable rate. We had two haunches of venison twice a week during the season. The ladies gave afternoon's tea and coffee in their turns, which coming but once in four or five weeks, amounted to a trifle. The estates of the people at our table did not amount to less than £50,000 or £60,000 per annum, among whom were several members of Parliament ; and they had not had the precaution to order one newspaper among them all, though the time was critical; but Andrew Millar, the celebrated bookseller, supplied that defect, for he had two papers sent to him by every post, so that all the baronets and great squires—your Sir Thomas Claverings and Sir Harry Grays, and Drummond of Blairdrummond ~ depended upon him and paid him civility accordingly ; and yet when he appeared in the morning, in his old well-worn suit of clothes, they could not help calling him Peter Pamphlet; for the generous patron of Scotch authors, with his city wife and her niece, were sufficiently ridiculous when they came into good company. . . .

Harrogate abounded with half-pay officers and clergymen. The first are much the same at all times, ill educated but well bred; and when you now and then meet with a scholar such as Colonel Roberts, or my old friend whom 1 knew when Lieutenant Ward at Musselburgh a little

stuttering fellow, about the year 1749, who had read Polybius and Ca?sar twice over, and who rose to be a general and commander of the cavalry in Ireland—you will find him as intelligent as agreeable. Of the clergy I had never seen so many together before, and between this and the following year I was able to form a true judgment of them. They are in general—I mean the lower order—divided into bucks and prigs ; of which the first, though inconceivably ignorant, and sometimes indecent in their morals, yet I held them to be most tolerable, because they were unassuming, and had no other affectation but that of behaving themselves like gentlemen. The other division of them, the prigs, are truly not to be endured, for they are but half learned, are ignorant of the world, narrow-minded, pedantic and overbearing. And now and then you meet with a *vara avis* who is accomplished and agreeable, a man of the world without licentiousness, of learning without pedantry, and pious without sanctimony; but this *is* a *rata avis.*

This was the first time I bad seen John Bull at any of his watering-places, and I thought it not difficult to account for his resort to them. John is an honest and worthy person as any in the world, but he is seldom happy at home. He has in his temper a shyness that approaches to timidity, and a deference for the opinion of his servant that overawes him, and keeps him in constraint at home, while he is led into unreasonable expense. At his watering places he is free from these shackles ; his reserve is overcome by the frankness of those he meets; he is master of his servants, for he carries only two with him ; and the man of £10,000 per annum can spend no more than the man of £500, so that the honest man finds himself quite unfettered, and is ready to show his kind and sociable disposition ; he descends from his imaginary dignity by mixing with those who are richer than himself, and soon shows you what he really is, viz. the very best sort of man in the world. The late wars have been very favourable to the improving of his character, for instead of going into France, where he

was flattered, laughed at, and plundered, he is now obliged to make all his summer excursions round his own country, where his heart expands ; and, being treated as he deserves, returns home for the winter happy and much improved.

IV. THE SEA-SIDE

(a) BEFORE THE FASHION FOR SEA-BATHING. BRIGHTON IN 1724

DEFOE, *Tour,* i. Letter IT, p. 61

From this town [Lewes], following still the range of the *South Downs,* west, we ride in view of the sea, and on a line carpet ground, for about twelve miles to *Bright Hclmstone,* commonly called *Bredhemston,* a poor fishing town, old-built, and on the very edge of the sea. Here again, as I mentioned at *Folkestone* and *Dover,* the fishermen having large barks go away to *Yarmouth* on the coast of *Norfolk,* to the iishing fair there, and hire themselves for the season to catch herrings for the merchants, and they tell us that these make a very good business of it.

The sea is very unkind to this town, and has by continual encroachments, so gained upon them, that in a little time more they might reasonably expect it would eat up the whole town, above 100 houses having been devoured by the water in a few years past ; they are now obliged o get a brief granted them, to beg money all over *England* to raise banks against the water, the expense of which, the brief expressly says, will be eight thousand pounds which, if one were to look on the town, would seem to be more than all the houses in it are worth.

(b) BRIGHTHELMSTONE (BRIGHTON) IN THE SEVENTEEN SIXTIES

Seventh edition (1769) of Defoe's *Tour* [1]

Brighthelmstone is now become a polite place, by the

[1] It is to be noted that Defoe's *Tour,* under successive editors, has degenerated into a guide-book. In the 5th edition, 1753, Brighton still appears as a decayed fishing town ; the 6th edition is not in the British Museum.

annual resort of the gentry in the summer season, as being the nearest sea-port to *London* and very convenient for sea bathing; for the accommodation of whom there have been two handsome ball rooms built, and several machines for bathing. The gentry may also have the use of two circulating libraries, by which means the inhabitants have of late years been greatly benefited and the provisions in that neighbourhood greatly advanced in their price. The principal inns in this town are, the *Castle* and the *Two Ships.*

(c) MARGATE AND RAMSGATE

COWPER, *Correspondence,* ed. T. Wright, 1904, i. 155

COWPER TO WILLIAM UNWIN, July—1779

. . . When I was at Margate, it was an excursion of pleasure to go to see Ramsgate. The pier, I remember, was accounted a most excellent piece of stone-work, and such I found it. By this time, I suppose, it is finished; and surely it is no small advantage, that you have an opportunity of observing how nicely those great stones are put together, as often as you please, without either trouble or expense. But you think Margate more lively. So is a Cheshire cheese full of mites more lively than a sound one : but that very liveliness only proves its rottenness. I remember, too, that Margate, though full of company, was generally filled with such company, as people who were nice in the choice of their company, were rather fearful of keeping company with. The hoy went to London every week, loaded with mackerel and herrings, and returned loaded with company. The cheapness of the conveyance made it equally commodious for Dead fish and Lively company. So, perhaps, your solitude at Ramsgate may turn out another advantage; at ,least I should think it one. . . •

VII

SPORT

Your noble exercise will stand
The FIRST *amusement in the land,*
While Kentish cricketers of fame,
Immortalize their conquering name.
J. BARNBY, *The Kentish Cricketers,* 1773.

The sport of the eighteenth century is a curious mixture of old and new. Bull-baiting, bear-baiting and cock-fighting still go on, but at the end of the period, have become the subject of humanitarian protest, and the first two are no longer openly countenanced by the gentry. The classic description of a cock-fight is that of Pepys, equally applicable to this period, of which however Pegge's protest (iv) is characteristic. The transition from the bloody gladiatorial combat of the early part of the century to something very like the modern prize-fight (iii) is also characteristic of the age. Byrom's description of the fight between Sutton and Figg (ii) was used by Thackeray in *The Virginians.*

I. THE RACES AT NEWMARKET AND ELSEWHERE

W. PULTENEY, Earl of Bath, *The World,* No. 17. April 26, 1753

Twice in every year are solemnized those grand diversions, **with** which our nobility, gentry and others, entertain themselves at Newmarket; and as this is the vernal season **for** the celebration **of** those curious sports and festivals, **and as they are, at this time, likely to be held with** the utmost splendour **and** magnificence, I think it may not

be improper to amuse my town readers with one single paper upon the subject. . . .

I read in one of the newspapers of last week the following article : ' Tis said that garrets at Newmarket are let at four guineas each, for the time of the meeting/ What, said I to myself, are our principal nobility content to lie in garrets, at such an exorbitant price, for the sake of such amusements? Or are our jockey-gentry, and tradesmen, extravagant enough to throw away their loose corn, as I may properly call it on this occasion, so idly and ridiculously ? To be sure there is not a more noble diversion than this. In its original, it was of royal institution, and carried on in the beginning with much honour and integrity ; but as the best constitution will always degenerate, I am fearful this may be grown too much into a science, wherein the adepts may have carried matters to a nicety, not altogether reconcilable to the strictest notions of integrity ; and which may by degrees, by their affecting to become notable in the profession, corrupt the morals of our young nobility. The language of the place is generally to be understood by the rule of contraries. If any one says his horse is a pretty good one, but as slow as a *town-top,* for similes are much in use, you may conclude him to be an exceeding speedy one, but not so good at *bottom.* If he mentions his design of throwing a particular horse soon out of *training,* you may be assured he has a mind to match that horse as soon as he can, and so it is in every thing else they throw out. Foreigners who come here for curiosity cannot be shown a finer sight than these races, which are almost peculiar to this country: but I must confess that I have been sometimes put a little to the blush at incidents that are pretty pregnant in the place. Every body is dressed so perfectly alike, that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between his grace and his groom. I have heard a stranger ask a man of quality how often he dressed and watered his horses ? how much corn, and bread, and hay, he gave them ? how many miles he thought they could run in

such a number of minutes ? and how long he had lived with his master ? Those who have been at the place will not be surprised at these mistakes ; for a pair of boots, and buckskin breeches, a fustian frock, with a leather belt about it, and a black velvet cap, is the common covering of the whole town : so that if the inside does not differ, the outside of my lord and his rider arc exactly the same. There is another most remarkable affectation, which is this: those who are known to have the most, and perhaps best horses of the place, always appear themselves on the very worst, and go to the turf on some ordinary scrub tit, scarce worth five pounds. From persons thus mounted and accoutred, what a surprise must it be to hear a bet offered of a hundred pounds to fifty, and sometimes three hundred to two, when you would imagine the rider to be scarce worth a groat! In that circular convention before the race begins, at the Devil's Ditch, all are hail fellows well met, and every one is at liberty, tailor, distiller, or otherwise to offer and take such bets as he thinks proper : and many thousand pounds are usually laid on a side. When the horses are in sight, and come near Choke-Jade, immediately the company all disperse, as if the devil rose out of his ditch and drove them, to *get* to the turning of the lands, the red-post, or some other station, they choose, for seeing the push made. Now the contention becomes animating. 'Tis delightful to see two, or sometimes more, of the most beautiful animals of the creation, struggling for superiority, stretching every muscle and sinew to obtain the prize, and reach the goal! To observe the skill and address of the riders, who are all distinguished by different colours, of white, blue, green, red, and yellow, sometimes spurring or whipping, sometimes checking or pulling to give fresh breath and courage ! and it is often observed that the race is won as much by the dexterity of the rider, as by the vigour and fleetness of the animal.

When the sport is over, the company saunter away towards the Warren-Hill, before the other horses, left at

the several stables in the town, are rode out to take their evening exercise and their water. On this delightful spot you may see at once above a hundred of the most beautiful horses in the universe, all led out in strings, with the grooms and boys upon them, in their several liveries, distinguishing each person of rank they belong to.—This is indeed a noble sight ; it is a piece of grandeur, and an expensive one too, which no nation can boast of but our own. To this the crown contributes, not only by a very handsome allowance for keeping horses, but also by giving plates to be run for by horses and mares at different ages, in order to encourage the breed, by keeping up the price of them, and to make the breeders extremely careful of their race and genealogy.

The pedigree of these horses is more strictly regarded and carefully looked into than that of a knight of Malta. They must have no blemished quarter in the family on either side for many generations; their blood must have run pure and untainted, from the great, great, five times great grandfather and grandam, to be attested in the most authentic and solemn manner by the hand of the breeder. It is this care of the breed, and particularly with an eye to their strength, that makes all the world so fond of our horses. Many thousands are carried out of England every year; so that it is become a trade of great consequence, and brings a vast balance of money to this country annually. The French monarch rides no other horses but ours, in his favourite diversion of hunting. You may at any time see two or three hundred beautiful English geldings in those great and noble stables at Chantilly. Most of the German princes, and many of their nobility, are desirous of having English horses ; and, I dare say, his present Mfajestjy of P[russi]a, however military his genius may be, had rather mount an English horse at a *review* of his troops, than a *breach* at any siege in Europe.

The country races over the whole kingdom are what, I confess, give me some little disrelish to the sport. Every

county, and almost the whole of it, is mad during the time of the races. Many substantial farmers go to them with thirty or forty pounds in their pockets, and return without one single farthing. Here they drink and learn to be vicious, and the whole time is spent in riot and disorder. An honest butcher, that is taken in at a horse-race, is tempted, perhaps, in his return, to borrow an ox, or a few sheep, of his neighbour, to make up his losses. An industrious tradesman, or a good farmer, has sometimes turned highwayman, to be even with the rogue that bubbled him at the races. Upon the whole, if I consider only how much time is lost to all the labouring men in this kingdom, by country races, the damage they occasion is immense. Let us suppose it but a week's labour all over England; and (if we consider the number of plates in the different metropolises, besides the lesser country plates) this must be allowed a very moderate computation. . . . I dare answer for it that it must amount to many hundred thousands of pounds.—But as my paper was principally designed in honour of horses, I will not be led to urge anything against them. Horses of all kinds have ever been held in the highest esteem. . . . An emperor of Rome made his horse a consul; and it will be readily owned that the dignity was as properly conferred upon the beast, as the imperial diadem upon his master.

II. PRIZE-FIGHTS—OLD STYLE

EXTEMPORE VERSES UPON THE TRIAL OF SKILL BETWEEN THE Two GREAT MASTERS OF THE NOBLE SCIENCE OF DEFENCE, MESSRS. FIGG AND SUTTON (1725). J. BYROM.

Miscellaneous Poems, Manchester, 1773, i. 43. Reprinted, Chetham Society, N.S. 29, 1894

Long was the great *Figg* by the prize lighting swains
Sole monarch acknowledg'd of *Marybone* plains;

To the towns, far and near, did his Valour extend,
And swam down the river from *Thame* to *Gravesend;*
Where liv'd Mr. *Sutton,* pipe-maker by trade,
Who, hearing that *Figg* was thought such a stout blade,
Resolv'd to put in for a share of his fame,
And so sent to challenge the champion of *Thame.*

il

With alternate advantage two trials had past,
When they fought out the rubbers on *Wednesday* last.
To see such a contest, the house was so full,
There hardly was room left to thrust in your skull.
With a prelude of cudgels we first were saluted,
And two or three shoulders most handsomely fluted :
Till wearied at last with inferior disasters,
All the company cry'd : " *Come, the Masters, the Masters I* "

in

Whereupon the bold *Sutton* first mounted the stage,
Made his honours, as usual, and yearn'd to engage;
Then *Figg,* with a visage so fierce and sedate,
Came and enter'd the list with his clean-shaven pate ;
Their arms were encircled with armigers two,
With a red ribbon *Sutton's* and *Figg's* with a blue,
Thus adorn'd, the two heroes, 'twixt shoulder and elbow,
Shook hands and went to't, and the word it was *Bilbo.*

IV

Sure such a concern in the eyes of spectators
Was never yet seen in our amphitheatres :
Our commons and peers, from their several places,
To half an inch distance all pointed their faces;
While the rays of old *Phœbus* that shot through the sky-
light,
Seem'd to make on the stage a new kind of twilight,
And the Gods without doubt, if one could but have seen
'em,
Were peeping there thro' to do justice between 'em.

v

Figg struck the first stroke, and with such a vast fury,
That he broke his huge weapon in twain I assure you ;
And, if his brave rival this blow had not warded,
His head from his shoulders had quite been discarded ;
Figg arm'd him again, and they took t'other tilt,
And then *Sutton's* blade ran away from its hilt.
The weapons were frighted, but as for the men,
In truth they ne'er minded, but at it again.

IX

Again they both rush'd with so equal a fire on,
That the company cry'd, *Hold, enough of cold Iron*
To the Quarter Staff now, lads,—So first having dram'd it,
They took to their wood, and i' faith never sham'd it :
The first bout they had was so fair and so handsome,
That, to make a fair bargain, 'twas worth a king's ransom ;
And *Sutton* such bangs to his neighbour imparted,
Would have made any fibres but *Figgs* to have smarted.

x

Then after that bout they went on to another,—
But the matter must end on some fashion or other;
So *Jove* told the Gods he had made a decree,
That *Figg* should hit *Sutton* a stroke on the knee.
Though *Sutton* disabled, as soon as he hit him,
Would still have fought on, but *Jove* would not permit him,
Twas his fate, not his fault, that constrain'd him to yield,
And thus the great *Figg* became lord of the field.

III. PRIZE-FIGHTS—NEW STYLE

WINDHAM, *Diary, 1860*, p. 75 (May 2, 1780)

The circumstances of the fight which was the object of our excursion, need not be recorded. The winner's

name was Humphries (Richard, I think); and the butcher's, Sam Martin. The man by the way, of whom I won my bet, but of whom I probably may not get payment, was Young. The spectacle was upon the whole very interesting, by the qualities, both of mind and body, which it exhibited. Nothing could afford a finer display of character than the conduct and demeanour of Humphries, and the skill discovered far exceeded what I had conceived the art to possess. The mischief done could not have affected the most tender humanity.

IV. COCKFIGHTING

S. PEGGE, *Memoir on Cockfighting* (1770), " Archaeologia ", iii, 1775, p. 146 ff.

The cock is not only a most useful animal, but stately in his figure, and magnificent in his plumage. . . . He was highly esteemed in some countries, and in others even held sacred ; in so much that one cannot but regret, that a creature so useful and noble should, by a strange fatality, be so enormously abused by us. It is true . . . the massacre of Shrove-Tuesday is now in a declining way ; and, in a few years, it is to be hoped, will be totally disused ; but the cock-pit still continues a reproach to the humanity of Englishmen, and to their religion, the purest, the tenderest, and most compassionate of all others, not even excepting the Brachmanic. . . .

What aggravates the reproach and the disgrace upon us Englishmen, is those species of fighting which are called the *Battle-royal* and the *Welsh-main*, known nowhere in the world, as I think, but here. . . . These are scenes so bloody, as almost to be too shocking to relate ; and yet, as many may not be acquainted with the horrible nature of them, it may be proper, for the excitement of our aversion and detestation, to describe them in a few words. In the former an unlimited number of fowls are pitted; and when they have slaughtered one another for the diversion, *dit boni* ! of the otherwise generous and humane

Englishman, the single surviving bird is to be esteemed the victor, and carries away the prize. The Welsh main consists, we will suppose, of sixteen pair of cocks, of these the sixteen conquerors are pitted a second time ; the eight conquerors of these are pitted a third time ; the four conquerors the fourth time ; and lastly, the two conquerors of these are pitted a fifth time, so that, incredible barbarity ! thirty-one cocks are sure to be most inhumanly murdered for the sport and pleasure, the noise and nonsense, nay, I may say, the profane cursing and swearing, of those who have the effrontery to call themselves, with all these bloody doings, and with all this impiety about them, *Christians*. . . .

INDEX

(Supplementary to the Table of Contents ; autliors of extracts are not indexed.)