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The New Rambler

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COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS*

The Rev. Canon A. R. Winnett, B.D., Ph.D.

We meet this morning as lovers of Johnson on ground that is doubly hallowed, for within this ancient abbey church and royal foundation of St. Peter at Westminster there were laid, on 20th December, 1784, the remains of him after whom our Society is named and whose memory it seeks to honour. Here rests that body in which Samuel Johnson lived and worked and suffered, and whose terminal pain he refused to assuage by opiates, so that he might render up his soul to God unclouded. It is fitting that in this House of Kings should lie one who for so long held sovereign sway in the realm of English letters and who was by every standard of judgment a king amongst men. Our presence here this morning bears witness to his continuing reign in the hearts and affections of those who have felt the power of his unique personality.

In life as well as in death Johnson was linked with this venerable abbey. One of its prebendaries, Dr. John Taylor, was Johnson's friend from their schooldays together at Lichfield. When Mrs. Johnson - his beloved Tetty - died, it was to Taylor that Johnson turned for comfort, sending a messenger to him at his house in Little Dean's Yard at three in the morning. To Taylor he writes: "Let me have your company and instruction. Do not live away from me. My distress is great.... Remember me in your prayers for vain is the help of man." Again as his own end draws near and he confesses his life to be "very solitary and very cheerless", he writes to Taylor: "Do not omit giving me the comfort of knowing that after all my losses I have yet a friend left." This lifelong friendship is all the more remarkable because Taylor was hardly the kind of clergyman whom we should have expected Johnson to approve, being a hearty squarson-farmer "whose talk was of bullocks." Through Taylor the words, if not the voice, of Johnson were heard in this abbey and in the adjacent church of St. Margaret, for Johnson wrote sermons for Taylor and most of the sermons "left for publication" by Taylor were from the beginning known to be the work of Johnson.

We can discern a further appropriateness in the fact

* Address delivered at the Annual Commemorative Service in Westminster Abbey on Saturday, 16 December, 1967.

of Johnson's burial within this mediaeval, and originally monastic, church. There was an element of the mediaeval in Johnson. His High-Church piety had affinities with that of the pre-Reformation period. We recall his practice of fasting, his rigid adherence to episcopacy, and the tears to which he was moved by certain lines of the Dies Irae. The reverence which Johnson felt for the monastic life is well known. "I have never read of a hermit," he said, "but in imagination I kiss his feet; never of a monastery, but I could fall on my knees and kiss the pavement." He wrote to Boswell of the kindness he received from the English Benedictines in Paris: "Sir, I have a cell appropriated to me in their convent." In what was once a Benedictine church we are today gathered round his grave.

It is customary to describe the Christian character in terms of the Pauline triad of faith, hope and charity or love. Faith for Johnson was not the easy thing suggested by the glib exhortation "Only believe": rather it was the result of struggle with a temperament by nature sceptical. For him, as for Browning's Bishop Blougram, faith meant

unbelief
Kept quiet like the snake 'neath Michael's foot.

The American scholar, Bertrand Bronson, has an essay entitled "Johnson Agonistes", that is, Johnson the contender, the wrestler. There was in Johnson a far from peaceful co-existence of belief and unbelief, and the violence which he displayed against Hume's scepticism is the measure of what it cost him to hold fast to his faith.

If Johnson's temperament was not naturally believing, neither was it naturally hopeful. He knew that man could not live without hope, even though hope was constantly beset by disappointment. "Hope," so he wrote in the Idler, "is happiness, and its frustrations, however frequent, are less dreadful than its extinction." It is out of these frequent frustrations of earthly hopes that the higher hope characteristic of religion is born, for (to quote the Idler again) "None would have recourse to an invisible power but that all other subjects have eluded their hopes."

"The greatest of these," says St. Paul, "is charity", and the theologians teach that the primary object of charity is God, whom we are bidden to love above and beyond all else.

Yet it was in this love that Johnson knew himself to be deficient. "There are many good men," he told Boswell, "whose fear of God predominates over their love", and he counted himself among their number. Repentance, amendment, trust and gratitude are prominent in Johnson's prayers, but love for God hardly finds a place in them. If, however, we take charity in its other aspect of love and compassion for one's fellow-men, and for the needy among them in particular, Johnson was pre-eminently a man of charity. Let us call to witness the French prisoners for whose relief he so eloquently pleaded, the unfortunates to whom he gave a refuge in his household, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Desmoulins, Miss Carmichael and Dr. Levett, and the prostitute whom he took into his home and set up in a virtuous way of life, not forgetting the poor girl in a bedgown at the sacrament to whom he gave a crown, "though I saw Hart's Hymns in her hand."

We who love Johnson claim for him no supernatural degree of sainthood. Rather we see him as one of like passions with ourselves, struggling, doubting, tempted, conscious of his weakness, making resolves but somehow failing to keep them, yet persevering to the end and victorious at the last, having perfected his repentance and found in his final moments that peace for which he had so long sought.

Those of us who "look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come" may surely believe that among the "social joys" which there await us will be that of meeting, and holding converse with, the rare and beloved spirit of Samuel Johnson.

In humble gratitude and in affectionate and reverent tribute to his memory I place this wreath upon his grave.

On the afternoon of Saturday, 16th December, Canon Winnett marked the tercentenary year by addressing the Society on "Jonathan Swift - Churchman". The Chair was taken by Dr. W. R. Matthews. Canon Winnett's paper is to be published later by Moor Park College.

JOHNSON AND THE ANTIQUARIAN WORLD*

R. W. Ketton-Cremer, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.S.L.

In the sphere of what might loosely be called cultural activity, there are today few more popular subjects than archaeology. It has caught the public interest in an extraordinary way. Some of this is due to the frequent and successful appearances of certain leading archaeologists on television. The public imagination has similarly been fired by the results of excavation. Besides this wide popular interest, our own century has seen a sensational advance in archaeological techniques. An excavation is now an operation of the most expert and delicate character. In the workrooms and laboratories, likewise, there are wonderful new techniques for preservation and restoration, for the analysis of plant-fibres and bone-structures, for ascertaining the date of organic materials by the application of the radio-carbon technique. Modern archaeology is an exact science.

In the age of Johnson, archaeology had not yet become a science; nor was it treated with the respect of today. Classical antiquities were closely studied, and with great expertise - the texts of inscriptions, for example, and everything pertaining to Greek and Roman architecture. No volumes could be nobler in conception, or more splendidly illustrated, than Wood's Ruins of Palmyra and Ruins of Baalbae, both issued in the 1750s; or Stuart and Revett's Antiquities of Athens, a work of the 1760s. But the study of the antiquities of our own land tended to be the preserve of amateurs, and its practitioners were often regarded as something of a joke. You will not find the word archaeology, in its modern sense of a science, an independent branch of learning, in Johnson's Dictionary. All he has is archaiology, "from the Greek archaios, ancient, and logos, a discourse - a discourse on antiquity". But Johnson does give a definition of the word antiquary - "a man studious of antiquities: a collector of ancient things."

The Society of Antiquaries of London dates its foundation from the year 1717. There had been earlier societies of the same nature and with the same type of membership, which had flourished and faded away. But the Society founded in 1717,

* Abridged from a paper read to the Johnson Society of London on 18 November, 1967; the Rev. Canon Adam Fox, D.D. in the Chair.

with the herald Peter le Neve as its first President, has continued without a break until the present day; and last month it celebrated in its apartments at Burlington House its 250th anniversary.

The Society used to meet, from its foundation until the year 1753, at the Mitre in Fleet Street. It then rented a house in Chancery Lane; and finally, when Somerset House was completed in 1781, it occupied a set of apartments there, until in the nineteenth century it moved to Burlington House. So it was established on what we now regard as Johnsonian territory, and Johnson must have been well aware of its existence and activities. He numbered several of its members among his friends; but there is no record that he ever attended a meeting as a guest. And, as I have endeavoured to show, it was a very different body from the present Society. In certain of its aspects, eighteenth-century antiquarianism was a legitimate object of satire; and Johnson did not resist the temptation to poke occasional fun at it. Nor, indeed, did some of its own members. Francis Grose issued an entertaining series of satirical etchings, showing himself and his fellow-antiquaries investigating such objects as Queen Boadicea's chamber-pot. Horace Walpole much resented a review by the then President, Dr. Milles, of his Historic Doubts on King Richard III. He bided his time until the Society published a learned discourse by Samuel Pegge on the authenticity or otherwise of Dick Whittington and his Cat. Pegge advanced, with great solemnity, the idea that Whittington's cat may have been a ship of the particular build known by that name, and not the domestic cat hallowed in legend and pantomime. This paper led to the Society being brought into one of Samuel Foote's exuberant comedies, The Nabob, which gave Walpole an excuse for resigning from a body which had brought itself into public ridicule. It really made a very funny scene, and would do so again if The Nabob were ever to be revived. It presents a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, receiving the latest consignment of obviously spurious antiquities from its members: and then the Nabob, Sir Matthew Mite, appears, preceded by four Indian porters, who bear amongst other treasures the lost books of Livy, which he had lately purchased in Naples.

"A man studious of antiquities: a collector of ancient things". There is nothing discreditable in being a collector: most of us are, in one way or another. But the eighteenth-century collector, Sir Hans Sloane or Horace Walpole or William Beckford, did offer a target to the satirist. The distinction

between the genuine antiquary and the fashionable virtuoso was never clearly defined. There was a strong tendency, all through the century, to subordinate strict antiquarianism to what was vaguely known as Taste. Pope had something to say about collectors:

> He buys for Topham, drawings and designs,
> For Pembroke statues, dirty gods, and coins;
> Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne alone,
> And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane.

In several papers in the Rambler and Idler, Johnson echoed the same slightly deprecating note.

But before we come to these essays, I would like to draw your attention to Johnson's early pamphlet Marmor Norfolciense, published in 1739. Its full title was Marmor Norfolciense: or an Essay on an ancient Prophetical Inscription in monkish rhyme, lately discovered near Lynn in Norfolk: and it appeared under the pseudonym of Probus Britannicus. It was really an attack on the Hanoverians, and on their minister Sir Robert Walpole, and is one of the most strongly Tory and indeed Jacobite things Johnson ever wrote. The "monkish" inscription, supposed to have been discovered near Walpole's constituency of King's Lynn and his great new house at Houghton, is a brilliant piece of mock-medieval Latin, which Johnson translates into excellent English couplets and interprets with all the solemnity of an antiquarian commentator. Pope, the greatest living writer, pronounced that it was "very humorous"; but like most political pamphlets it was soon forgotten. Many years later, in 1775, when Johnson had accepted his pension and these early indiscretions had lapsed into oblivion, some enemy reprinted Marmor Norfolciense with a sarcastic dedication to him. According to Boswell he only heard about this when Boswell told him, and then took it very calmly, saying "Now here is somebody who thinks he has vexed me sadly; yet if it had not been for you, you rogue, I should probably never have seen it."

In nos. 82 and 83 of The Rambler, Johnson considers very fully the character of a virtuoso, a Man of Taste, which in the eighteenth century, as I have already said, was sometimes not so very different from that of an antiquary. He describes a young man with a passion for collecting every sort of curiosity both of nature and art. He allowed his tenants to pay their rent in butterflies, and once forgave a farmer his arrears for bringing him a white mole. He had assembled all

sorts of rubbish from the ancient world, all kinds of junk from the modern. "I flatter myself," he told the Rambler, "that I am writing to a man who will rejoice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country; and therefore I shall tell you that Britain can, by my care, boast of a snail that has crawled upon the wall of China; a humming bird which an American princess once wore in her ear; the tooth of an elephant who carried the Queen of Siam; a ribbon that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana." And then comes a passage which might well have been aimed at Horace Walpole, except for the fact that it was written in 1750, and Walpole did not really begin to amass his collection at Strawberry Hill until well after that date:

> In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to choose only by intrinsic worth, and real usefulness without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of Cromwell's hair in a box turned from a piece of royal oak; and keep in the same drawer, sand scraped from the coffin of King Richard, and a commission signed by Henry VII. I have equal veneration for the ruff of Elizabeth and the shoe of Mary Queen of Scots; and should lose, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of Raleigh, and a stirrup of King James.

These were exactly the kinds of things that Horace Walpole was soon to be collecting in sober fact - summed up by Macaulay as "Queen Mary's comb, Wolsey's red hat, the pipe which Van Tromp smoked during his last sea fight, and the spur which King William struck into the flank of Sorrel."

Eventually the Rambler's young virtuoso spent all his estate - he mortgaged the last remnant in order to purchase 30 medals at the famous Harleian sale - and in the following number Johnson reflected on the manner in which antiquarian learning and genuine taste were often subordinated to triviality. "The virtuoso therefore cannot be said to be wholly useless; but perhaps he may sometimes be culpable for confining himself to business below his genius, and losing in petty speculations, those hours, by which, if he had spent them in nobler studies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world."

Almost a year later, in the 177th Rambler, Johnson returned to a similar theme. He gives a description of a club of antiquaries, "one of those little societies which are formed in taverns and coffee-houses." I don't think any of

the characters are taken directly from the life, and the little club was certainly not a skit on the Society of Antiquaries; but the characters, if not the club itself, are of a type which is still with us today, the dedicated specialist and collector. One eagerly collects black-letter books, another has just received in a handful of change the one halfpenny which made his set of coinage complete; another has at last acquired a first edition of the ballad of The Babes in the Wood; and none of them liked or sympathised with the others. "Their conversation was, therefore, fretful and waspish, their behaviour brutal, their merriment bluntly sarcastic, and their seriousness gloomy and suspicious." Here at least the antiquarian world has improved in our own day, at any rate in social converse - though occasionally in antiquarian journals one comes across reviews to which some of Johnson's adjectives might be applied.

Nearly a decade later, in 1759, Johnson returned in The Idler to the theme of the virtuoso collector. Such people, he maintained with his usual pungency, are whimsical and irresponsible. They value things because of their oddity and not because of their beauty:

> Some prints are treasured up as inestimably valuable, because the impression was made before the plate was finished. Of coins the price rises not from the purity of the metal, the excellence of the workmanship, the elegance of the legend, or the chronological use. A piece, of which neither the inscription can be read, nor the face distinguished, if there remain of it but enough to show that it is rare, will be sought by contending nations, and dignify the treasury in which it shall be shown.

I have quoted these papers in The Rambler and The Idler at some length, but I do not want to give the impression that Johnson was opposed to the antiquarian world as a whole. That was very far from being the case. He was satirizing certain foibles of the antiquarian or virtuoso temperament, and nothing more. Some of the leading antiquaries of the day, and those most prominent in the Society of Antiquaries - such as William Stukeley and Richard Gough - he does not seem to have encountered at all. But quite a number of his friends and acquaintances were Fellows of the Society: Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir William Chambers, Daines Barrington, the irrepressible George Steevens - that most difficult and quarrelsome character, who nevertheless cultivated Johnson and delighted, as he put it

"in the roarings of the old lion" - and two others in particular, Dr. Thomas Percy and Dr. Thomas Warton. Johnson never doubted the value of antiquarian enquiry and research, as is especially evident throughout his and Boswell's accounts of their Scottish journey. He once said that he had visited every cathedral in England: and he carried the details of them in his mind, comparing, for example, the chapter-house at Lincoln with that at York. Towards the end of his life he visited Stonehenge, and satisfied himself that it was neither built of artificial stone, nor by the Danes, as some wild theorists had asserted.

With that notable antiquary Dr. Percy, he once had what Boswell describes as "a scene of too much heat" on the subject of another antiquary, Thomas Pennant. At dinner with Percy, Johnson happened to praise Pennant's antiquarian tours. Unfortunately Pennant had written disrespectfully of Alnwick, the domain of Percy's noble relative the Duke of Northumberland, saying that the grounds were more like those of a suburban villa than a baronial castle. Percy was extremely touchy where anything to do with his family was concerned, and a most unfortunate row took place. Afterwards Boswell tried to mediate by letter between them, and elicited a charming letter from Johnson, still upholding the merits of Pennant, but speaking of Percy with the warmest regard. "If he is really offended, I am sorry; for he is a man whom I never knew to offend anyone. He is a man very willing to learn, and very able to teach; a man, out of whose company I never go without having learned something. It is sure that he vexes me sometimes, but I am afraid it is by making me feel my own ignorance.... Percy's attention to poetry has given grace to his studies of antiquity. A <u>mere</u> antiquarian is a rugged being."

But Johnson's favourite among his antiquarian friends was surely Thomas Warton, that amiable, indolent, ale-loving Oxford don, Professor of Poetry at Oxford - a dignity which he attained at the somewhat early age of 26, and retained for the rest of his life. A very happy occasion in Johnson's life must have been his visit to Warton at Oxford in 1754. He was a celebrity now, the author of the poems and <u>Irene</u> and <u>The Rambler</u>, with the <u>Dictionary</u> to be published in the following year: and the University and his own college did him honour. He and Walpole went for long walks, and the tireless antiquary showed him the ruins of the abbeys of Rewley and Osney. "After at least half an hour's silence, Johnson said, 'I viewed them with indignation.'" Warton's sonnets, most of them of an antiquarian cast, are among the best of his poems; and I will

close this paper by reading the beautiful sonnet which he wrote on a blank leaf of his copy of Dugdale's Monasticon.

Deem not, devoid of elegance, the sage,
By Fancy's genuine feelings unbeguiled,
Of painful pedantry the poring child:
Who turns, of these proud domes, th' historic page,
Now sunk by Time, and Henry's fiercer rage.
Think'st thou the warbling Muses never smiled
On his lone hours? Ingenuous views engage
His thoughts, on themes, unclassic falsely styled,
Intent. While cloistered Piety displays
Her mouldering roll, the piercing eye explores
New manners, and the pomp of elder days,
Whence culls the pensive bard his pictured stores.
Nor rough, nor barren, are the winding ways
Of hoar Antiquity, but strown with flowers.

Those last two lovely lines sum up what so many antiquaries feel about their chosen study; and Johnson must surely have responded to them too.

HENRY ANGUS MORGAN

With the death last year of our former Chairman, Mr. H. A. Morgan, the Society has lost a loyal friend and a born Johnsonian. He will be remembered for the many papers which he gave to the Society and his gift for introducing and thanking a speaker. Always a joy to listen to, he never failed to delight us by drawing widely upon his knowledge of literature and life in his fluent and apposite contributions to discussion. As a token of regard for his many services to the Society, Mr. Morgan was made an Honorary Life Member in 1965.

The Society was represented at the Cremation Service by the Secretary and Mr. E. M. Bonner. A chaplet, similar to the one used at the Annual Commemoration, was sent on behalf of the Society.

DR. JOHNSON ON PROSE FICTION

James B. Misenheimer, Jr., Ph.D.
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The sparseness of Johnson's criticism of prose fiction is not indicative of lack of interest, on his part, in the rise of the novel during his own century. It suggests, rather, his virtually uninterrupted preoccupation with the various older genres, particularly poetry, drama, and biography. His comments of the "new fiction" are restricted almost altogether to his fourth Rambler, in which he distinguishes between the old tales of adventure and what he calls the new "comdey of romance", and to his miscellaneous random observations on particular novelists, who either do or do not meet the requirements which he hopes will guide their efforts in modern fiction. Some of these requirements he sets forth in the Rambler essay. The criticism which he left shows that he viewed the new genre as he viewed the other literary forms: manifestly, his interest in the novel centered primarily around the possibilities which it offers as a vehicle for moral instruction. That Johnson remained essentially unconcerned with the technique of prose fiction is quite apparent from his criticism of Richardson, as well as from his definitions, in the Dictionary, of the terms "novel" and "romance."[1]

In his Rambler, No. 4 (March 31, 1750), Johnson emphasizes the basic realism of the modern works of fiction by contrasting this realism with the farfetched, idyllic, and often ludicrous characteristics of the older "heroick romance," in which giants snatch ladies away from nuptial rites, later to be rescued by knights, and in which there is an equal assortment of hermits and woods, battles and shipwrecks. He questions the reasonableness of the reception of such works, as follows:

> Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.[2]

At the same time that, in effect, he voices his disapproval of what he considers the extravagancies of the fiction of past ages, he admits that few of its readers were so credulous as to credit the unreality which they read; and he seems to doubt that these early romances noticeably influenced human conduct for either good or bad:

> In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself.[3]

Interestingly enough, however, Johnson, who in his youth loved the romances of chivalry, is said to have attributed to these stories "that unsettled turn of mind which prevented his ever fixing in any profession."[4] Also, in his Rambler, No. 115, he introduces a character named Imperia, who, "having spent the early part of her life in the perusal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of Cleopatra; expected nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands." Thus was her mind "vitiated only by false representations..."[5] Still, it would be erroneous to think of Johnson as dogmatically condemning the early romances; for, although he feels that they are not, ordinarily, purveyors of moral wisdom and enlightenment, and although he knows that they may, at times, function as the agents of pride or cause an "unsettled turn of mind," he realizes, too, that a certain profit may be derived from them. Boswell records this observation:

> Yet there are good reasons for reading romances; as - the fertility of invention, the beauty of style and expression, the curiosity of seeing with what kind of performances the age and country in which they were written was delighted; for it is to be apprehended, that at the time when very wild improbable tales were well received, the people were in a barbarous state, and so on the footing of children...[6]

Such merits as these older writings possess could not,

however, in Johnson's thinking, take the place of realistic portrayals which inspire virtue and make vice odious to behold and to practice. The terms in which Johnson condemns Gray's The Bard are just as applicable to his view of the function of prose fiction. He says of the lack of truth in Gray's poem:

> To select a singular event, and swell it to a giant's bulk by fabulous appendages of spectres and predictions, has little difficulty, for he that forsakes the probable may always find the marvellous. And it has little use: we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find something to be imitated or declined. I do not see that The Bard promotes any truth, moral or political.[7]

It should be obvious that, though Johnson is able to concede certain positive qualities to the "heroick romance," he feels unequivocally that it lacks the substance and, hence, the stability of truth. He was, therefore, pleased to see that the authors of modern fiction were endeavouring to portray life realistically. Francis Gallaway has remarked that "Johnson described the modern novel as a food for mature minds in contrast to the romance with its appeal to the childish intellect."[8]

What evidences of the maturity of the new fiction does Johnson acknowledge? The opening sentences of the fourth Rambler provide the answer:

> The works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.
>
> This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comick poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder; it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroick romance...
>
> The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world.[9]

In view of this realistic tendency in the prose fiction of his day, Johnson included in the fourth Rambler some requirements which he hoped would heighten the moral tone of the novel and which he believed would help to establish the genre as a literary form worthy of serious study and consideration. Among these requirements were, one, accuracy in the portrayal of character and, two, the inculcation of moral order and regularity within the reading public, many of whom were members of the younger generation. He believed that the very closeness to real life of such works increases their influence as moral instruments; consequently, he urged novelists to write with a moral purpose and view clearly in mind:

> When an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man; young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.
>
> For this reason these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.[10]

If Johnson's idea of exhibiting only the best examples seems to conflict with his conviction, in biography, of presenting the whole truth, then one should remember that, on the one hand, Johnson is speaking of lives lived and, on the other, of lives imagined; and that he believes a large portion of the readers of novels to be "the young, the ignorant, and the idle," whereas the readers of biography are, as a rule, older, more experienced in the affairs of the world, and thus better able to shun both the grossness and the occasional splendour of evil. Events and characters should be selected with the moral end uppermost in the consciousness of the author:

> It is ... not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears; for many characters ought

> never to be drawn: nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings [modern novels] is surely not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by TREACHERY for INNOCENCE, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue.[11]

Johnson concludes his essay by urging the authors of prose fiction to depict characters who are as virtuous as probability will permit and by recommending that vice always be portrayed as disgusting and as having no alignment with either "the graces of gaiety" or "the dignity of courage."

Johnson's judgment of prose fiction on the basis of its relation to life and of its conveyance of moral guidance and regularity is in vivid evidence in his remarks on novelists such as Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, and Fanny Burney. His praise of Richardson almost invariably includes some denunciative criticism of Fielding, whose works he considered irreverent. He told Boswell that "there is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners; and there is the difference between the characters of Fielding and those of Richardson. Characters of manners are very entertaining; but they are to be understood, by a more superficial observer, than characters of nature, where a man must dive into the recesses of the human heart."[12] Boswell later remarks that Johnson, in comparing the two writers, used the expression "that there was as great a difference between them as between a man who knew how a watch was made, and a man who could tell the hour by looking on the dial-plate."[13] Mrs. Piozzi reports Johnson as saying that "Richardson had picked the kernel of life, while Fielding was contented with the husk."[14] To his friend Erskine, Johnson once observed that "there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's, than in all 'Tom Jones'...."[15] It is, to be sure, such opinions as these which reveal the basis of Johnson's admiration for "an author who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of

virtue."[16] Johnson went after "the kernel of life," as one would surely expect him to do; and he found it in Richardson (if somewhat to the dismay of the twentieth century). Seeing in the Lovelace of Clarissa an expansion of the gay Lothario of Nicholas Rowe's The Fair Penitent, he writes: "But he has excelled his original in the moral effect of the fiction.... It was in the power of Richardson alone to teach us at once esteem and detestation; to make virtuous resentment overpower all the benevolence which wit, elegance, and courage naturally excite, and to lose at last the hero in the villain."[17] "In the moral effect of the fiction" - here, says Robert E. Moore, is "the phrase which gets at the center of Clarissa."[18] Here is the phrase which also gets at the significance, for Johnson, of a didactic aesthetic in his view of prose fiction.

But Richardson and Fielding were not the only novelists about whom Johnson spoke and wrote. Of Fanny Burney's Evelina, he observes: "Windsor Forest ... though so delightful a poem, by no means required the knowledge of life and manners, nor the accuracy of observation, nor the skill of penetration, necessary for composing such a work as Evelina: he who could ever write Windsor Forest, might as well write it young as old. Poetical abilities require not age to mature them; but Evelina seems a work that should result from long experience, and deep and intimate knowledge of the world...."[19] He thought that the novels of Henry Mackenzie had nothing whatsoever of value to offer the world, and he considered Sterne an impossible oddity. Almost every comment that Johnson made about the modern novel and its authors asseverates his belief that prose fiction, like the other literary forms, fulfills its proper function only when it communicates truth, order, and moral discipline for the benefit of man.

Documentation

1. "In defining a romance as 'a tale of wild adventures in war and love' and a novel as 'a small tale, generally of love,' he was merely repeating the distinction made in Dryden's time." Joseph B. Heidler, The History, from 1700 to 1800, of English Criticism of Prose Fiction (Urbana, Illinois, 1928), p.70, n.95.
2. Samuel Johnson, "The Rambler," No. 4, The Works of Samuel Johnson, LL.D., ed. Arthur Murphy (London, 1801), IV, 21. Hereafter cited as "The Rambler."
3. "The Rambler," No. 4, IV, 22.
4. James Boswell, Life of Johnson, ed. George Birkbeck Hill, rev. and enl. by Lawrence F. Powell (Oxford, 1934-50), I, 49.

5. "The Rambler," No. 115, V, 283-284.
6. Boswell, IV, 16-17.
7. Samuel Johnson, "Life of Gray," Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford, 1905), III, 438. Hereafter cited as Lives.
8. Francis Gallaway, Reason, Rule, and Revolt in English Classicism (New York, 1940), p.117.
9. "The Rambler," No. 4, IV, 20-21.
10. Ibid., No. 4, IV, 22-23.
11. Ibid., No. 4, IV, 23-24.
12. Boswell, II, 48-49.
13. Ibid., II, 49.
14. Hester Lynch Piozzi, Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson, LL.D., ed. S. C. Roberts (Cambridge, England, 1925), p.198.
15. Boswell, II, 174.
16. Boswell, I, 203.
17. "Life of Rowe," Lives, II, 67.
18. Robert E. Moore, "Dr. Johnson on Fielding and Richardson," PMLA, LXVI (March 1951), 165.
19. Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay, ed. Austin Dobson (London, 1904), I, 246-247.

JOHNSON IN MINIATURE?

Professor Philip Mahone Griffith, the University of Tulsa, has kindly sent the following note on the photograph reproduced on page 33 of the June 1967 issue of The New Rambler:

> I was intrigued by Mr. Raymer's wood carving of Johnson, and I recalled a silver pipe that I had seen (24.6.67) when I visited The Hunterian Museum, The University, Glasgow. Dr. Anne Robertson, Keeper of the Cultural Collections, and of the Hunter Coin Cabinet, provided me with the following description recorded in the Museum about the pipe: "Antique Silver Churchwarden Pipe of the 18th century; silver mark 1735636: believed to have belonged to Dr. Samuel Johnson. It came into the possession of Charles Mackenzie ('Henry Compton') grandfather of Compton Mackenzie, Esq., and presented by the latter, during his period of office as Lord Rector of Glasgow University, to the Glasgow University Ossianic Society on the occasion of the celebration of the Society's Centenary, 11th December, 1931." In Mr. Raymer's carving, Dr. Johnson is standing on a thistle-plinth. Perhaps - it does not seem to me improbable from the walking stance and the cane - the miniature was done during or after the Scottish journey. The Churchwarden Pipe may well have been acquired during the journey. In any event it is amusing to speculate.

SAMUEL JOHNSON'S *REVIEW* OF SOAME JENYNS' *A FREE ENQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF EVIL*: A RE-EXAMINATION

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Samuel Johnson's views concerning the nature and origin of evil are of continuing significance in an age in which such problems remain unsolved. His ideas are important because they are as immediate to the Space Age as they were to the Augustan World. Though not a systematic philosopher, Johnson spoke out sharply against philosophic statements which violated his particular brand of orthodox Christian apologetics. His *Review* of Soame Jenyns' *A Free Enquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (1757) contains some of his best articulated thoughts concerning this philosophic problem while at the same time proclaiming the absurdity of the explanation of evil provided by a popular philosophic system - the chain of being.

His attack on Jenyns' *Free Enquiry* is principally an attack on the idea of subordination, of the universe as a chain of being - a 'Great Chain of Being' as Professor Lovejoy terms it. Though this was the most important view of the cosmos in the eighteenth century, Johnson utterly rejected it. Lovejoy provides a clue as to why he did when he says: "... the notion of the Chain of Being, with the assumptions on which it rested, was obviously not a generalization derived from experience, nor was it, in truth, easy to reconcile with the known facts of nature."[1] Johnson could not accept Jenyns' account of evil because he found many disparities between it and what he observed in life and nature.

That Johnson was a sceptic and an empiricist concerning problems of evil is evident in the *Review*. He does not use his orthodox Christian theology to support his assertions; for such theology would be no surer logical basis than Jenyns' use of the idea of subordination since it depends ultimately on an acceptance by faith. Nor was his purpose to answer Jenyns by substituting a theodicy of his own. It was, rather, to point out fallacious logic in Jenyns' ideas.

Johnson's *Review* is not merely an aggregation of nay-saying responses to Jenyns' deistical statements: he also

inserts his own notions as to the nature of evil. To him, evil does not exist as an absolute. Instead, a thing is evil only if it is felt to be so. His words are: "There is no Evil but must inhere in a conscious being, or be referred to it; that is, Evil must be felt before it is Evil."[2] This is his basic attitude as he reviews Jenyns' Free Enquiry.

The Free Enquiry is written in the form of a series of six letters to a friend. In Letter I, Jenyns deals with evil in general; Letter II, with evils of imperfection; Letter III, with natural evils; Letter IV, with moral evil; Letter V, with political evils; and Letter VI, with religious evils. In typical eighteenth-century book-reviewing practice, Johnson quotes extensively from this work. Then he looks critically at Jenyns' dogmatical assertions through the prism of his empiricism and scepticism. In Letter I, Jenyns says that the true solution of the problem, Whence came Evil? is "that all Evils owe their existence solely to the necessity of their own natures...."[3] By this he says he means that they could not have been prevented "without the loss of some superior Good, or the permission of some greater Evil than themselves...."[4] Therefore, evils exist even in opposition to the will of a Creator. This implies no lessening of His power; it is just that they could not be excluded in the proper subordination of created beings "without working contradictions." Various evils which beset man are not the result of a fallen nature; man merely occupies the place in the scale where these happen to appear. The origin of evil is thus assigned to man's particular place in the scale of being - to his necessary imperfection in this scheme. And Jenyns places himself within the tradition of a popular eighteenth-century philosophic position.

In reply, Johnson says that Jenyns "adopts the system" of Pope, who, he had earlier said, was "in haste to teach what he had not learned." And Johnson's empiricism was too strong to allow him to let such views remain unchallenged. He attacks Jenyns' assertion that the production of good without evil is one of the impossibilities of infinite power. Johnson says: "...whether Evil can be wholly separated from Good or not, it is plain that they may be mixed in various degrees, and as far as human eyes can judge, the degree of Evil might have been less without any impediment to good."[5] In this statement concerning the important issue of the intensity of evil, the phrase, "as far as human eyes can judge," clearly reveals his empiricism.

In Letter II, concerning evils of imperfection -

imperfection which arises from Man's particular place in the chain, Jenyns states that these evils are actually not evils at all; they are, rather, the "absence of some comparative Good." His support for this is, again, based on the notion of the chain of being. He posits that there are advantages to "brutes" which man does not enjoy, as well as many to man which are denied the angels, and that we can observe the goodness of the Creator in striving with our "necessary imperfection." This goodness Jenyns sees exemplified in (1) the setting of bounds to inconveniences it cannot totally prevent, (2) the balancing of wants, and (3) the repaying of the sufferings of all by particular situations and circumstances. For example, poverty (or the want of riches) is usually compensated by having more hopes, fewer fears, a greater share of health, and a "more exquisite relish of the smallest enjoyments, than those who possess them are usually blessed with." These points he expresses figuratively by using the macrocosm-microcosm analogy in which he equates the Universe to a large and well-regulated Family.

These ideas, Johnson asserts, are little more than a translation of Pope's Essay on Man into prose. And this is surely, as he says, "to cut the Gordian knot with very blunt instruments." It is in the discussion of this particular letter that Johnson gives some of his most pointed objections to the idea of the chain of being. He says that he had often considered it, but had "always left the enquiry in doubt and uncertainty." He does grant the rationality of certain premises on which the regular subordination of beings is based: that very finite being, when compared with infinity, must be imperfect and that that which is imperfect "must have a certain line which it cannot pass." But Jenyns' idea that each being in its place contributes to the happiness of the whole Johnson cannot imagine. He refutes this notion in these words:

> It does not appear even to the imagination, that of three orders of being, the first and the third receive any advantage from the imperfection of the second, or that indeed they may not equally exist, though the second had never been, or should cease to be, and why should that be concluded necessary, which cannot be proved even to be useful?[6]

Johnson disputes the idea that subordination implies imperfection. For, as he says, "The means respecting themselves may be as perfect as the end." Imperfection does not necessarily

imply evil. It could be, he admits, that "Imperfection may imply privative Evil, or the absence of some good." That privative evil implies suffering is also not evident. In fact, "this privation produces no suffering, but by the help of knowledge." To clarify this, he uses the image of the infant (the means) as a possible example of an imperfect man (the end). "An infant at the breast," he says, "is yet an imperfect man, but there is no reason for belief that he is unhappy by his immaturity, unless some positive pain be superadded."[7]

In Letter III Jenyns states that natural evils proceed from the same origin as those imaginary evils of imperfection. Man must suffer these inconveniences by the necessity of his assigned place in the regular subordination of beings. The nature of these evils is that they encompass the sufferings of sensitive beings; hence he "acknowledges" that these are real evils and not imaginary ones. These evils he enumerates as (1) poverty, (2) labour, (3) inquietudes of mind, (4) pains of body, and (5) death. They are a part of man's status as man in the chain of beings. For example, poverty is a necessity; for, as he says, if all had been rich, none would submit to the commands of the other. Therefore, governments would be dissolved, the arts neglected, and lands left uncultivated.

Of this letter Johnson says it is much the same as the two previous ones: "...there is a mixture of borrowed truth, and native folly, of some notions just and trite, with others uncommon and ridiculous."[8] His polemics become particularly pungent when he attacks Jenyns' supposition that there is "some principle of union through all animal life" by means of which "Evils suffered on this globe, may by some inconceivable means contribute to the felicity of the inhabitants of the remotest planet."[9] Johnson sharply replies: "How the Origin of Evil is brought nearer human conception by an <u>inconceivable</u> means, I am not able to discover."[10] Jenyns goes so far as to propose that just as man has animals for sport as well as for food, there may be beings above us "who may deceive, torment, or destroy us for the ends only of their own pleasure or utility." Johnson is unable to resist reducing this idea to absurdity. He says, in part:

> As we drown whelps and kittens, they amuse themselves now and then with sinking a ship, and stand round the fields of <u>Blenheim</u> or the walls of <u>Prague</u>, as we encircle a cockpit. As we shoot a bird flying, they take a man in the midst of his business or pleasure, and knock him down with an apoplexy.[11]

Letter IV is Jenyns' attempt to clear up the origin of moral evil - to determine why one action is evil and another good. Here he rejects the idea that man once existed in a state of perfection; this would, of course, be antithetical to his notion of subordination. He says that it is the consequences which render any action good or evil. Johnson agrees that this is so, but adds that it is not possible for man to determine what actions "will ultimately produce happiness." Therefore he must depend on revelation to "lay down a rule to be followed" to avoid the dangerous "temptation of doing Evil that Good may come."

Jenyns' fifth and sixth letters on political and religious evils assert that it is impossible for Omnipotence to give imperfect man a perfect government or a perfect religion. Political evils are said to have their origin in moral evils. These are defined as tyranny and oppression, violence and corruption, and war and desolation. To change these would require a "compleat Alteration in Human Nature." Religious evils Jenyns finds the most difficult to explain. Religion must necessarily lack universality, authenticity, perspicuity, and policy. Johnson dismisses the content of both letters summarily by stating that there is nothing really new in either. He dismisses the entire treatise by noting that "we are devolved back into dark ignorance" through Jenyns' failure to really tell us anything about the origin and nature of evil.

Such re-examination of Johnson's Review of the Free Enquiry gives further evidence that Johnson's whole cast of mind was essentially sceptical and empirical. He could not, therefore, accept a philosophic system such as the Chain of Being in which he could point out too many inconsistencies with what he observed in life and nature. He was not inconsistent with his brand of orthodox Christian apologetics. Rather his basic objectivity - given impetus by scepticism and empiricism - would not allow him to reply on the basis of another philosophic-theological system. By letting empirical reasoning guide him, he reached conclusions about evil which are still valid. We see, as he did, that evil "must be felt before it is Evil" and that, though secondary causes of evil may be rationally deduced, the problem of the first cause "lies still in its ancient obscurity."

Documentation

1. Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (New York, 1936),p.183.
2. Samuel Johnson, Review of 'A Free Enquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil' in The Works of Samuel Johnson, ed. Arthur Murphy (London, 1792), VII, 38.
3. Soame Jenyns, Miscellaneous Pieces, in Verse and Prose (London, 1770), p.251. 4. Ibid. 5. Johnson, p.25.
6. Ibid, p.29. 7. Ibid., p.38. 8. Johnson, p.38.
9. Jenyns, p.45. 10. Johnson, p.45. 11. Ibid., p.46.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE: FANNY BURNEY'S EMPLOYER (Part one)*

T. S. Blakeney, Esq.

Dr. Johnson had no real contacts with Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, although he wrote one or two dedications to her. But Fanny Burney was very much a member of the Johnson circle, and although her employment as Assistant Keeper of the Robes to the Queen took place after Johnson's death, we are justified in saying that anything of interest in Fanny's life is of interest to the Johnson Society.

Furthermore, Queen Charlotte has a claim to consideration in her own right, for with the exception of her granddaughter, Queen Victoria, she had a place on the English throne (making due allowance for the difference between a Queen Regnant and a Queen Consort) for longer than any other crowned head in our history. Her husband had, for all practical purposes, abdicated in 1810; on paper, George III is credited with over 59 years on the throne, but for the last nine of these he was hopelessly deranged mentally**, and the institution of the Regency really meant that the old King was off the throne. Indeed, had he recovered his senses it is likely that he would have abdicated genuinely; in 1789, after the first Regency crisis, he said, on recovering his health, that had a Regency been set up, he would have declined to resume his own role.

Queen Charlotte, however, took her place on the throne when she was crowned in September 1761, and she remained active till 1818, the year of her death. Owing to the Regent's separation from his wife, Caroline, Princess of Wales, the Queen had to continue to perform all the feminine tasks there were for the head of the State.

It may seem surprising that although she held her place for 57 years, Queen Charlotte has excited little interest. To historians, indeed, she counts for little, for she played no

* Part two will appear in the June 1968 issue.

** I shall, for the purposes of this paper, disregard the recent suggestions (B.M.J., 8 Jan. 1966) that the King was not insane, but only an instance of intermittent porphyria. The matter is dealt with further in the Bulletin of the Inst. of Hist. Research, Nov. 1967. However important as a study of causes, to the layman, judging by the symptoms, the distinction seems to be rather a Pickwickian one.

active part in politics, as her predecessor on the throne, Queen Caroline, wife of George II, had done. This was because George III deliberately kept her away from politics; he made no secret of his dislike of politically-minded women, and the Queen dutifully accepted the situation, and indeed came to think along the same lines, saying that meddling in Politics "I abhor equal to Sin."

The Queen, as a Princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, was born in 1744 - six years after her future husband. She had been brought up on frugal lines, for the annual Ducal income in Mecklenburg-Strelitz would hardly have done for a single month for an English Duke such as Bedford or Devonshire; and it had to serve not only the reigning Duke and family, but the Duke's three brothers, two sisters, and a Dowager Duchess. Accustomed therefore, to making her own clothes and darning her stockings, it was a staggering change to be transported at the age of 17 to a foreign country to marry the most eligible bachelor in Europe. Her selection to become Queen of England had been made over her head and she did not even know of her prospects until all had been arranged by her parents and she was required to pack up and go. Her mother's death just at this time must have made the girl's lot the harder; she spoke no English, but (apart from her native German) she had adequate French and some Italian. Her education was no better than that of any Princess in those days, and her religious upbringing had been strictly Lutheran. Her experience of the world was virtually nil.

The sudden change in her lot might well have gone to her head, or made her nervous, but then, as all through her life, she exhibited the quality of rising to an occasion. Many years later, when discussing with her grand-daughter, Princess Charlotte of Wales, the latter's proposed marriage to a suitor of whom the Queen by no means approved, Queen Charlotte remarked it was necessary to "put the best leg formost" (she never completely mastered English idiom). She acted on this principle over her own marriage; she had been given absolutely no say in the matter; she and George III had never met or corresponded; her mother's death deprived her of some measure of family help.

It could hardly have aided her to have, as one of the ladies sent from England to escort her to her new home, the Duchess of Hamilton, one of the famous Gunning beauties who had taken England by storm some years earlier. With a pleasing naivety, the Princess, who had no false ideas about her own want of good looks, asked if all English ladies were as beautiful.

However, she scored over her ladies in attendance, once on board the ship taking her to England, for the weather was atrocious, and whereas her ladies promptly followed Dr. Johnson's advice to travellers - "get a smart sea-sickness if you can" - the Princess, once accustomed to the boat, proved a good sailor, and strove to encourage her miserable companions by practising "God Save the King" on a guitar, and by singing Lutheran hymns to them.

At Harwich, where they landed, no proper reception arrangements had been made; to us today the whole thing sounds deplorable. The Mayor of Harwich did his best and the party posted up as far as Witham in Essex, where they were to stay the night. Lord Abercorn, owner of the house, had not troubled to remain to welcome them - he had gone to London to be ready for all the festivities of next day. However, they managed; though one wonders if the Princess did not think her fiance's mode of receiving her in her new country a trifle off-hand.

Next day they had to be up very early, to drive to London; they were met part way by other coaches, bringing formal clothes for the arrival in the Capital. It was only as they were approaching London that the poor girl was informed that the marriage ceremony was to take place that very day. Considering the long journey and the early start she had made; the rather informal reception so far accorded her; her youth; her strangeness to this country, to its people and to her bridegroom, it strikes one now as thoughtless to the point of callousness to have given her no day or two of rest before the wedding.

They were, in fact, married at 9 p.m. that evening, September 8th, 1761; if the Princess had thought she was among curious people, she was not likely to think differently when she found herself being given away at the altar by her uncle-in-law, William, Duke of Cumberland. "The Butcher" of Culloden may not have been as bad a character as he has sometimes been portrayed - naturally he gets a bad "Press" from Scotsmen, because he beat them - but he was by no means an elegant figure, being grotesquely fat and limping from a permanently suppurating wound in his leg. After the wedding a lengthy banquet took place; while the company were waiting for it, the young Queen, hedged round by etiquette and unable to talk in English, tried to entertain her guests by sitting down at a piano and singing to them. When she eventually retired for the night, at two o'clock next morning, she must have been up about 20 hours.

Next day a reception was held of all sorts of notables -

a difficult matter for the Queen, who had to be instructed how to receive people of different standing. She must have been glad when it was over, even if it had its lighter moments, as when Bubb Doddington, clad in fashionable but too tight clothes, bowed very low to her and split his trousers so seriously that he had to be escorted out surrounded by a phalanx of men.

The Queen's future life was laid down for her by her husband with little more regard for her wishes than he had shown on her arrival in England. It was not that George III was a bad-hearted man; on the contrary, he meant to be kind. But he was one of those people (we must all have met them) who can only see their own point of view. Provided such people get their own way, they can often be generous, but they prove very tiresome if crossed; and the King was so placed that he could usually get his own way. He did so politically, with reasonably bad results; and he did so domestically.

His brother, the Duke of Gloucester, said that George III had told him that he was delighted at having entirely under his control a girl of 17, and he was determined that she should be wholly devoted to him only and should have no other friend or society. He told her this on her arrival, saying that even with her mother-in-law, the Dowager Princess of Wales, she was to have as little communication as possible, and was to depend on him alone.

George III carried this out; there was no suitable London residence, though in due course the King bought what was called the Queen's House (now Buckingham Palace). Windsor Castle was virtually unusable, and such quarters as it had were occupied by various pensioners of the Court. The Dowager Princess of Wales occupied until her death in 1772 the best royal residence, at Kew; Queen Charlotte was allotted a house at Richmond, and later on a building, called Queen's Lodge, adjoining the Castle was used, being enlarged into a sort of barrack as her family grew.

The Queen had to learn English: a clergyman, J. J. Majendie (1709-1783) taught her; so, too, did her husband, by making a practice of reading Shakespeare aloud with her in the evenings. She had to learn the ways of the Court; she had to accommodate herself to the ways of the country; and she was (as we shall see) heavily pre-occupied with raising her immense family. Cut off from Society to a large extent, subject to the exacting requirements of a self-opinionated and obstinate husband,

it is scarcely to be wondered if mistakes were made. The Court was thought to be dull - as indeed it was; entertainments were too often of a routine nature and tedious, and people complained that when asked to one of them, the refreshments were of the poorest type. The Queen had, naturally, been brought up in the tradition of the age - one much approved by Johnson - in the great principle of subordination. What her husband said had to be obeyed, and George III wanted a say in almost everything.

It was an unfortunate start for the Queen and did not make for popularity, either in Society or with the public. The former was lax in tone and extravagant in its ways, the very antithesis of the Court; the public saw at first little of the Queen or of the King. And this was all in addition to a particular disability that had at the outset, and quite unfairly, prejudiced the public against her - her want of good looks.

It is fair to say that Queen Charlotte was plain to the verge of ugliness; Horace Walpole accurately picked out her features as soon as she arrived here - large mouth, everted nostrils, tolerable hair, good eyes - but the total effect, though not entirely unpleasing, was the reverse of good-looking. And the public had been fobbed off before she arrived with a totally false picture of her. Since her appearance was utterly unknown, an enterprising printer had taken the picture of a pretty girl, surrounded it with suitable emblems of royalty, and passed it off as the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. Sentimental English folk, with a fairy-story outlook about royalty, considered that all Princesses must necessarily be beautiful. The printer had played up to that and the actual Princess was ugly. The public was immediately disappointed and, as it were, never forgave her. The portrait painters do endorse the verdict about plainness; even Gainsborough, accustomed to make his women tall, languid beauties, could not make much of Queen Charlotte; and the other painters - Allan Ramsay, Zoffany, Benjamin West, Lawrence, Sir William Beechey, etc. - all corroborate one another. One other defect may be noted; in an age when "a fine girl" was one distinctly well-covered, critics fastened upon the Princess the fatal adjective, "lean".

Yet I think it may be claimed that the painter James Northcote was correct when he said that the Queen's was an elegant ugliness. If one knew nothing else about her, to me at any rate, the portraits would suggest that the Queen was

intelligent and had a sense of humour. As Walpole said, her hair-styles strike one today as odd (not that the 1960s is a period that can afford to criticize feminine hair-dos of other ages). So far as portraits allow one to judge, she gives me the impression of having a fair taste in dress - more so, I think, than her granddaughter, Queen Victoria, had.

But her most formidable task during the first 20 years or so of her married life was the raising of her family. Johnsonians are usually ready to be tolerant of Mrs. Thrale's foibles, having regard to the frequency with which she was pregnant. But Mrs. Thrale could bear no comparison with the Queen; a few statistics must suffice. The Queen was, as already said, only 17 when married; after four years, when she was 21, she had had three children and her husband may have been insane once, if not twice (and he was to have a further lapse a few months later). After seven years of marriage, she had had six children; eight in ten years, and twelve in sixteen years. Rather incredibly, she seems to have preserved till then her figure; but now her health broke down somewhat. Mrs. Papendiek, who was to succeed later on to the position at Court that Fanny Burney had held, thought that the dropsy from which the Queen later suffered, dated from the birth of Prince Octavius in 1779 (her thirteenth child); the boy was sickly, too, as were the fourteenth and fifteenth children.

If, when one looks at the long list of birth dates of her family, one feels that the King must have had little thought for his wife's health, it is a sentiment emphasized by other considerations. A Mrs. Thrale could at least take things easily when "expecting"; not so the Queen. The King kept her to her public duties. In May 1762, when she was six months gone with her first child, the King blandly wrote to Lord Bute that she had turned faint at a Drawing Room; but it was nothing, he added, only a little wind. On December 3rd, 1778, Lord Townshend, writing to his wife in the country, said that the Queen, obviously well advanced in her condition, was kept standing about at a Drawing Room till it was almost too dark to see, while the King talked to people - and she was then 7 months gone with her thirteenth child. But the most staggering instance was earlier; on June 5th, 1771 the Queen attended a Court function, and her eighth child, Prince Ernest, was born that same night.

Life with George III can hardly have been comfortable during these years. The King was an early riser, and apt to

get up about 5 o'clock in the morning, and even light his own fire. And of course he waked up his children too, whilst his wife, who never had a bedroom to herself till the King's insanity in 1788, would already be awake. Fortunately, she had been brought up in a strict school; fortunately, too, she realized that her husband was, at heart, a domestic man who was quite happy with the simple life of a Farmer George. Force of circumstances made him a politician also, but in that the Queen took no part.

I have heard it said that Queen Victoria seems never to have had a real friend; Queen Charlotte certainly formed friends to whom she would talk and write freely. Chief of these was Lady Harcourt, whose correspondence with the Queen is one of our main sources of information about the latter.

In a character sketch written by Lady Harcourt (who survived the Queen by a number of years) she says that the Queen's understanding was quick and solid; that she was an excellent conversationalist and enjoyed wit; was fond of reading and was well acquainted with the best authors, English, German and French, and had a very retentive memory for what she had acquired. She was musical and had some skill in drawing (quite usual feminine accomplishments in those days). Her sweetness of manner and animation of countenance, according to Lady Harcourt, offset her plain features. Her unknown charities were extensive and she was much given to delicate little attentions to those around her that endeared her to them. Her confidence was given to few, for fear of being accused of favouritism; in her private hours she liked those with her to talk freely, as she did in return. She was timid about politics and the like, and distrusted her own natural abilities, although in fact her judgment was sound.

This catalogue of virtues suggests some need for corroboration, although Lady Harcourt expressly says that she has tried to sketch the Queen faithfully. In fact, we find the picture is, essentially, confirmed by others. Sir Herbert Taylor, for example, who was intimate with all members of the Royal Family and was the Queen's Secretary in her declining years, calls her quiet and unostentatious; her charities were maintained freely but privately, and the accusation of avarice was quite groundless. Taylor was responsible for some years for handling her expenditure and says she could, had she really been avaricious, have accumulated a hoard, yet in fact she left hardly any money (Taylor was one of her executors). Dr. Doran,

an early biographer of the Queen, solemnly reproaches her for having left some debts behind her (though they were amply covered by sale of her effects) and says that the debts were due to her charities - which he does not admit as any excuse. In fact, the Queen's Will was proved at about £140,000, mostly in gems given to her - there was very little cash.

One obvious good testimony to the Queen is that her servants remained with her for many years - surely, a tribute to considerateness.

Fanny Burney, after the Queen's death, writing to Lady Harcourt, remarks that "equal to my honour of the Queen has long been my love for her"; and she bears out the observation that the Queen in private conversed very readily and freely with people, yet no one would have forgotten themselves by trying to be familiar.

The Gentleman's Magazine, on the death of the Queen, picked out three characteristics concerning her: that in her early days, particularly, she was noted for sprightly and even facetious conversation; that the manners of the English Court were purified; and that she was more generous than was known.

How shall we assess all this? There are various lines of approach, and since Johnsonians should be interested in books, let us start there. That the Queen had her own library we know from Fanny Burney who was allowed the keys of the Queen's book cupboards, to borrow books to read. Dr. Doran, rather stupidly, sneered at the Queen for getting people to search second-hand bookshops for her; we should most of us today regard this as evidence of good sense, since, as the Queen herself pointed out to Mrs. Delany, one could pick up things there not otherwise obtainable.

Her library was sold after her death, at Christie's, and occupied 24 days. There were about 4,600 lots and many times that number of volumes. Naturally, anyone in the Queen's position would both receive complimentary books, and would be expected to be patron of works coming out. Many volumes, too, she would not be expected to read. The largest branch of her library consisted of books on theological matters. This is something so out of vogue today that it is difficult for us to appreciate how seriously people then read such things as volumes of sermons and the like. And that the Queen read such solid works we know from her letters, where she frequently recommends

some treatise on a religious topic to her correspondent.

In addition there was a good deal of history, and of poetry and romances (in several languages); Letters, Voyages and travels; and that the Queen read daily is made clear from her MS diary preserved at Windsor, where references to reading (or it might be being read to) are of constant occurrence.

One of the main accusations against Queen Charlotte was avarice; Gillray portrays her as gobbling up gold in shovelfuls. As we have seen, Sir Herbert Taylor denied this - and he was in a position to know. But we are not dependent on his testimony alone; we can examine the Account Books of her various Treasurers, now in the British Museum (certain years, including those covering Fanny Burney's dwelling at the Court, are missing, but in the main they are complete from 1761 to 1817).

In 1761 the Queen was granted £40,000 p.a. from the Civil List and in 1762 this was increased by £10,000. By the 1790s a further £8,000 had been added, and £58,000 remained the total till the end, save for an additional £10,000 granted at the Regency in 1812, to make special provision for the care of the insane King who was placed in the charge of the Queen.

What strikes one is the care with which the accounts were kept. Readers of the correspondence (in Professor Aspinall's volumes) that was to pass between the King and the Prince of Wales over the latter's immense debts in the 1780s/90s will know that an invariable difficulty was to get the Prince to submit proper detailed accounts. This was not the way with the Queen; her accounts were carefully prepared and examined before being signed and presented annually, the Queen herself counter-signing them. Any excess of expenditure over income, or the reverse, at the end of the year, was carried forward to the next.

The lay-out of these accounts is the same annually; the Treasurer states first what sums he has handed over in cash into the Queen's hands against her receipts - obviously, this is a provision for personal expenditure during the year. The sums vary, but at first are usually about £5,000 p.a. (10% of the whole), though in later years becoming rather more. The latter factor reflects the provision that the Queen had to make by way of pin money for each daughter when they were of an age to handle their own expenditure in some degree.

Next the Treasurer shows the Queen's Household salaries: the Treasurer, the Controller, Attorney and Solicitor General, Lord Chamberlain, Ushers, Pages, Surgeon, Apothecary, Mistress of the Robes, Ladies of the Bedchamber, Maids of Honour and many more, down to Coachmen, Postillions, Footmen, Laundress, etc. Then come the accounts rendered by such persons as the Master of the Horse for all the men and activities under him; by the Lord Chamberlain; by the Mistress of the Robes; by the Governesses to the various children. Certainly, high salaries were not in evidence, yet places in the Household were much sought after. The much abused Mme. Schwellenberg, Fanny Burney's bete noire, received the surprisingly low salary of only £127 a year; Fanny herself had £200. But even the Treasurer and Controller of the Household had only £800, though certain perquisites were obtainable by a number of people, entitled "Poundage on Bills".

Glancing through these accounts, one notices the pensioners of the Queen. Fanny Burney, as we know, after a bare five years' service at Court, was granted a pension of £100 a year, and later she was to marry on little more than this, for General d'Arblay had nothing. Had the Queen really been a stingy employer, she might well have cut down on her pension list; it may fairly be held to her credit that she was generous to those who served her. Thus, even as late as the year 1793, 31 years after the birth of the Prince of Wales, his old wet-nurse is still receiving a pension from the Queen. So, too, is an individual called a "Rocker" - presumably of erstwhile royal cradles. Another feature, cropping up from time to time, is that of a marriage portion given by the Queen to one of her household who marries; to give a sum like £1,000, when one thinks of what its equivalent would be today (at least ten times), is evidence of a generous rather than of a mean disposition.

As her daughters got older and had their private allowances from the Queen; as prices rose, especially during the French Wars; the Queen had on one or two occasions to apply to the King for special relief. But in general the management of her money matters is in marked and welcome contrast to the profligacy and extravagance that reigned in the households of her sons. The Queen, indeed, stood out from the rest of her family in this respect. The daughters naturally did not have the same opportunities for extravagance as their brothers; in 1794 the three eldest (Charlotte, Augusta and Elizabeth) had £2,000 a year each from the Queen, out of which they had to provide their own clothes, jewels and the wages of their personal maids. The two eldest managed, but Elizabeth was no economist

and declared she would "have to go to gaol very soon". Appeals for help might be made privately to their devoted eldest brother, who was always generous and affectionate to his sisters, though of course head over ears in debt himself. In July 1796 Elizabeth had to beg £600 off the Prince to meet an emergency, and in 1809 she was lent £5,000 by the Duke of Cambridge.

The Queen's one extravagance was the development of Frogmore, both house and gardens. But for the care she generally exercised over her expenditure she got no credit, though the whole country could abuse the Prince of Wales and his brothers for their prodigality. Unfortunately, extravagance (so long as it does not hit us ourselves) is more attractive to watch than frugality, and to us today the outrageous extravagance of the Prince of Wales is more exciting than the strict care of his mother. Nevertheless, we cannot really doubt which of these attitudes is the more meritorious.

The Queen's temper, and her relationships with those around her, call for attention, as she is often portrayed as disagreeable. Indeed, the Duke of Clarence, in his bluff way, once said that his father had married a disagreeable woman. Among Queen Charlotte's papers at Windsor is a memorandum, dated August 1915, signed by Queen Mary, saying she had asked her aunt, the Dowager Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz (and daughter of George III's youngest son, the Duke of Cambridge) about this matter of temper, and the Grand Duchess said she had never heard any complaints on that score, but rather the reverse. Cornelia Knight might perhaps be quoted in opposition to this, but I think that Fanny Burney's Diary supplies evidence enough that the Queen was not disagreeable to her servants, and I have already quoted Sir Herbert Taylor and Lady Harcourt in a similar sense. Fanny herself was, clearly, fond of the Queen, and I think the feeling was reciprocated. They parted, indeed, in an orgy of sobs and tears.

We are, I think, a little liable to be misled by the complaints Fanny Burney voiced about Court life. These were (after some initial homesickness) partly that she found her duties tedious and the hours long, but, largely, her dislike of Mme. Schwellenberg. We have, too, to beware of Fanny's literary exuberance; her style was fulsome, and tended towards a certain amount of gush, and to the high-lighting of effects. For example, reading her one cannot but note how constantly people do not just speak; it is always "She cried", or "I cried", and not a simple "I said". Fanny was a nice young woman, but

decidedly emotional: she seems to have wept as readily as a Dickensian heroine. When she felt she must leave the Court, she made unnecessarily heavy weather over it; though the Queen was sorry to lose her and hoped she might revoke her decision, no bad feelings were aroused by her departure; she got a pension after a very short term of service, and she remained on excellent terms with the Royal Family for the rest of her life.

That her stay at Court was not wholly displeasing to her is constantly evident; even amid the gloom of the King's madness in 1788, Fanny could write that she would not be elsewhere even for the £20,000 prize in the lottery. Her own sense of humour helped Fanny and her quick perceptiveness of other people's qualities enabled her to record her reactions with a delight that we can share today.

With the King and with her sons and daughters, the Queen's conduct plays a large part in our assessment of her character. As regards the first, it is not easy to be sure of her feelings. That she held Monarchy in high regard, and therefore never failed in duty and deference towards the King, is apparent throughout her life, but how much deeper her regard went is a more vexed question. Fanny Burney is a witness that the royal pair were not lacking in small outward signs of endearment, and on the King's side he frequently spoke in high eulogy of his wife, though he is said to have found her temper trying. On her side, and later in life, the Queen was to say to her grand-daughter, Princess Charlotte, when discussing the latter's marriage prospects, that she herself had never known love. Nor is it easy to see George III as an entirely agreeable character. His apparent lack of a sense of humour; his self-centredness; his constant condition - all his life - of near mental unbalance; all must have made him awkward to live with.

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The Honest Muse: A Study in Augustan Verse by Rachel Trickett. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, 1967. Price 50/-.

This learned and detailed study is concerned with the underlying ethos of the poetry, especially the satire, written during the century 1660-1760. Dryden, Pope and Johnson are the main authors treated, and the book traces through their writing "the emergence of a tone, first of public honesty and eventually of private sincerity." The relation between their work and the political and intellectual circumstances in which they wrote receives careful attention, which makes the book particularly welcome, since the tendency of the very many other studies which have been produced on Augustan verse has been rather to concentrate on its wit, imagery and stylistic devices.

For the men of the eighteenth century the term "honesty" took in the whole circle of the moral virtues, thus having the same connotation as the Latin honestum. Truth and virtue in its widest sense had become the ideal, as is seen in the development of satire, eulogy and elegy, the three predominant poetic genres of the age. A new, realistic approach in satire was matched by similar approaches in the other two. The emphasis was now upon fact, not fable, and upon history, not myth. The philosophical revolution of the seventeenth century, of which the foundation of the Royal Society is a sovereign symbol, and the hostility of the modernists to older forms of estimation and imagination in thought and literature brought about changes which are reflected in the writings of the succeeding century. The shift in ideas and terminology resulted in a new outlook and consciousness.

The greater realism in satire can be appreciated by considering the Restoration satiric school represented by Rochester, Oldham and the collection "Poems on Affairs of State." The whole topic is well handled in the fourth chapter ("The Conventions of Satire"). Dryden, Pope and Johnson aimed at striking the authentic note of experience and truth. Later (p.233), in her discussion of Johnson, Miss Trickett introduces an interesting argument to explain the notorious pose, quite contrary to his convictions, which Johnson assumes in "London" as a hater of city life and a lover of quiet retreat, a theme present in his model Juvenal and ubiquitous in English poetry. Pointing out that it recurs in one of the finest stanzas of the Ode "Stern winter now, by spring repress'd" (printed in 1774), Miss Trickett suggests that Johnson was in fact recognising the

value of those commonplaces which possess a deep emotional appeal: "He set about relating them, as far as he could, to truths of which he himself had no doubt."

In the tradition of formal satire two kinds are distinguishable, the Horatian and the Juvenalian (cp. Dryden's "Discourse concerning Satire"), but they are often found exerting a joint influence on English satirists (e.g. Dryden and Pope), as Miss Trickett observes. The booming orotundity of Juvenal, as opposed to the mild, arch conversational manner of Horace's satire, presents the rhetorically inclined imitator with rich opportunities, while the tone itself speaks of forthright sincerity. This consideration deserves emphasis in respect of Johnson's adherence to Juvenal for the writing of satire. In his "Life of Dryden" Johnson refers to the "pointed sentences" and the "declamatory grandeur" of Juvenal, both characteristics of his own style. His devotion to Horace (who enjoyed a special ascendancy in the eighteenth century) is obvious, but for satire he looked elsewhere. By following Juvenal he was enabled to deploy a style eminently suited to himself and his message; through it he could fulfil the honesty of his intention.

This book contains a great deal of instructive and interesting material for the student of Augustan literature both in its main argument and in the many incidental discussions. Miss Trickett and her publishers are to be warmly thanked and congratulated.

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The "Mr. Boswell" Exhibition*

Chance has twice brought me to special collections of great interest at the National Portrait Gallery. In April 1961 I was surprised and delighted to see the "Portraits of Pope" exhibition, and last October I had the unexpected pleasure of seeing the "Mr. Boswell" exhibition. Though

* Held at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery 18 August to 16 September 1967, and the National Portrait Gallery, London. 13 October to 30 November 1967.

different in form from the earlier Pope exhibit, which was made up entirely of representations of the man himself, the Boswell exhibit had its particular strength in that it was from Boswell's own point of view. It was as he would have wanted it. Although it was not presented as simply the art of portraiture, any show with fifteen portraits by Reynolds, including his two best-known of Johnson, would be significant to the student of art.

The exhibition was divided into six chronological sections from Boswell's "Early Years," through "Grand Tour and Corsica," to Edinburgh, London, Hebrides, and "Last Years." Of the 110 items shown, one quarter came from private collections, such as the Reynolds' Goldsmith loaned by Lord Sackville and Reynolds' appealing, shortsighted Baretti loaned by Viscountess Galway. The major part of the collection came from the National Portrait Gallery itself and from the Scottish National Gallery. Supplementary material from the British Museum, the London Museum, the University of London Library - contemporary eighteenth-century views of Covent Garden, Vauxhall, Piccadilly; theatre posters, books - and a few Boswell manuscripts from the Yale Collection, gave a "life and times" view. If I missed anything in this background material it was a picture of the Boswell house in Auchinleck.

The highlight of the collection was the National Portrait Gallery's recently purchased Reynolds' Boswell of 1785, but for me the youthful portrait of Boswell at the age of twenty-five by George Willison was particularly charming. I recall having seen it for the first time in Edinburgh, years before it was reproduced so handsomely as the frontispiece of Professor Pottle's James Boswell: the Earlier Years. Other works rewarding to the viewer were the attractive portraits of women in Boswell's life - Zelide, Elizabeth Bosville, Mrs. Thrale, Margaret Montgomerie (his cousin and later wife, another Willison portrait, loaned by Mrs. Donald F. Hyde); the portrait of General Paoli commissioned by Boswell: the Allan Ramsay portrait of Rousseau; and the Nollekens bust of Johnson.

The illustrated catalogue by Mr. John Kerslake I shall treasure. One is, I suppose, somewhat startled at the reproduction on the cover (used also on the posters announcing the exhibition) of the cruel caricature of Boswell in his later years by Sir Thomas Lawrence. Boswell by his very nature offered the caricaturist a tempting subject, seen also in the Rowlandson "Picturesque Beauties of Boswell." But this remarkable exhibition reveals Mr. Boswell amidst the Johnson circle as a vital figure of his age.

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JOHNSON PRESERV'D

Dr. Johnson's frequently misquoted stricture on opera as an "exotic and irrational entertainment" really referred, of course, to opera sung in Italian for an English audience, and not to the genre as such; so that he might not have been displeased to find himself the subject of a new chamber-opera, Johnson Preserv'd, by the young Yorkshire composer Richard Stoker, at Camden Town Hall, London, last July. The work was commissioned by the London company Opera Piccola, whose artistic director Jill Watt wrote the libretto. In eighteenth-century style, with recitatives, arias and ensembles, the piece incorporated many well-known examples of Johnsoniana, and two authentic poems - Johnson's "Illustrious maid", from Irene, and Boswell's verses in apology to his hostess for drunken behaviour at dinner. The plot concerned the commotion over Mrs. Thrale's remarriage to Piozzi, and the opera was set in the villa at Streatham in 1784 - artistic licence was thought justified so that she might be returned to her familiar setting. Misunderstandings attendant upon the shocking news, all heightened by Boswell's fondness for port, almost threaten to destroy his friendship with Johnson; but eventually the only fictitious character - Polly, the maid - is instrumental in effecting a reconciliation. Since the premiere, three German opera-houses have shown interest in producing the opera in German.