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J O N A T H A N S W I F T. 1696 - 1717.

EARLY SATIRES AND POLITICS

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P A R T O N E .

Satires published in 1704.

CHAPTER I.ANCIENTS AND MODERNS IN THE 1690'S; TEMPLE - WOTTON - BENTLEY.

The quarrel between the ancients and moderns had raged in England and France throughout the seventeenth century. In England the emphasis had been on science (1), and in France on the arts, particularly French arts (2), but in both countries the literary side of the question became a great storm centre in the last twenty years of the century. On January 27th. 1687 Charles Perrault read his poem, "Le Siècle de Louis le Grand" to the French Academy, in which he named several of his countrymen whom he considered equal to the ancients. His poem brought Boileau and La Bruyère into the field against him but he continued the struggle in "Parallèles des anciens et des modernes" (1688-97). He was supported by the greater moderation of Fontenelle who wrote "Discours sur la nature de L'Eglogue" and "Digression sur les anciens et les modernes". (3).

An equally moderate view was put forward by St. Evremond, exiled in England since 1661, in "Sur les poèmes anciens", and it was he who persuaded Sir William Temple to read Fontenelle's "Discours" and "Digression" (4). Temple had retired from politics in 1681 and devoted most of his time to writing. In 1692 the second volume of his "Miscellanea" appeared, containing an "Essay upon the ancient and modern learning".

At the opening of the essay Temple politely praises

Fontenelle's "Pluralité des Mondes", which he has just read, but criticises the Frenchman for falling "so grossly into the censure of the old poetry and preference of the new". But, as yet, Temple is quite fair when he writes generally on the subject. "Whoever converses much among the old books will be something hard to please among the new; yet these must have their part too in the leisure of an idle man and have many of them their beauties as well as their defaults. Those of story, or relations of matter of fact, have a value from their substance as much as from their form, and the variety of events is seldom without entertainment or instruction, how indifferently soever the tale is told. Other sorts of writings have little of esteem, but what they receive from the wit, learning or genius of the authors and are seldom met with of any excellence because they do but trace over the paths that have been beaten by the ancients, or comment, critic and flourish upon them; and are at best but copies after those originals" (5). To decide "whether the ancients or moderns can be probably thought to have made the greatest progress in the search and discoveries of the vast region of truth and nature, it will be worth inquiring", says Temple, "what guides have been used . . . by the one and the other". Modern scholars, he continues, go to the universities of their own country and the few that go to foreign ones seek "books rather than men for their guides, though these are living, and those in comparison but dead instructors", for they are few and can at best point the way, not answer questions. Consider, on the other hand, from what sources the ancients drew - Thales and Pythagoras founded

Greek philosophy and the latter, in search of knowledge, travelled (a) to Memphis, Thebes, Heliopolis, Babylon, Chaldea, Egypt, Ethiopia, Arabia, India, Crete, and Delphos. (6) - (b)

Temple's century was the century of Bacon and the Royal Society; yet he could accuse his contemporaries of seeking knowledge from books. Swift followed him in this mistake when, in the fable of the spider and the bee, he makes the spider, spinning everything out of his own entrails, stand for the moderns; while the bee, ranging everywhere, represents the ancients. (c)

When he has written half the essay, the politeness with which Temple has treated the moderns at the outset has disappeared and the onslaught begins. There have been no new philosophers for 1,500 years, "unless Descartes and Hobbes should pretend to it". Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus remain uneclipsed. "There is nothing new in astronomy to vie with the ancients, unless it be the Copernican system, nor in physic, unless Harvey's circulation of the blood. But whether either of these be modern discoveries, or derived from old fountains is disputed. Nay, it is so too whether they are true or no, for though reason may seem to favour

- a) W. Smith "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology" (1844-9) vol.III. p.616f speaks of these travels as a "current belief". The "Encyclopaedia Britannica", fourteenth edition, (1929) vol.xviii. p. 802 says they are "no doubt mostly apocryphal".
- b) Wotton insisted that it should be Delphi ("Reflections" 1697 p.59) Boyle defended Delphos ("Examination" 1698 pp.96f) but Bentley proved it wrong ("Enlarged Dissertation" preface pp.xc-xciii.)
- c) See below pp. 67-72

them more than the contrary opinions, yet sense can very hardly allow them; and to satisfy mankind both these must concur". (7)

There is nothing to justify Temple's rejection of the circulation of the blood. At the College of Physicians of London, Harvey "had mentioned the discovery in his lectures every year since 1616". He published "Exercitatio anatomica de motu cordis et sanguinis in animalibus" in 1628 and, despite the ensuing controversy, "the great discovery... was accepted throughout the medical world" before his death in 1657. (8) On the other hand Temple had reason to reject the Copernican theory, for though "De revolutionibus orbium coelestium" was published in 1543 it had few supporters in the following fifty years. The church was indifferent and the people ridiculed it. In the seventeenth century Bacon rejected it and the Tychonic system was frequently preferred. Not until about 1700 was it accepted by scholars as well as mathematicians and the greater part of the eighteenth century passed before the people accepted it. Even the twentieth century has seen the Tychonic system preferred. (9)

Temple then proceeds to lament that music can no longer enchant men and beasts and that magic is a lost art. Modern architecture, he affirms, cannot compare with the pyramids, the Colossus, and aqueducts. (10)

The lodestone, continues Temple, is the greatest invention of later ages and "consequently the greatest improvement has been made in the art of navigation; to this we owe the discovery and commerce of so many vast countries, which were very little, if

at all, known to the ancients". As a result we have gained "great increases of wealth and luxury, but none of knowledge ... further than the extent and situation of country, the customs and manners of so many original nations, which we call barbarous and I am sure have treated them as if we hardly esteem them to be a part of mankind. I do not doubt but many great and more noble uses would have been made of such conquests or discoveries if they had fallen to the share of the Greeks and Romans:" the North West passage and the Pacific are unexplored and the Dutch have been forbidden to explore from the East Indies, lest the discovered lands give another European power a commercial ascendancy . (11) If the ancients had discovered America, Australia and the Cape they might have made better use of them than the moderns, but as they did not, the speculation is pointless. It is, however, typical of Temple's method.

A little later he launches an attack on intellectual pretensions, which, taken at its best, compares with Swift's attack on universal pretension in "A Tale of a Tub" and "The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit" and, at its worst, is a denial of all intellectual progress. "The height of our statures may be six or seven feet and we would have it sixteen... We are born to grovel upon the earth and we would fain soar up to the skies. We cannot comprehend the growth of a kernel or a seed, the frame of an ant or bee ... and yet we will know the substance, the figures, the courses, the influences of all those

glorious celestial bodies and the end for which they were made; we pretend to give a clear account how thunder and lightning is produced and we cannot comprehend how the voice of a man is framed. The motion of the sun is plain and evident to some astronomers, and of the earth, to others, yet we none of us know which of them moves (a), and meet with many seeming impossibilities in both and beyond the fathom of human reason or comprehension. Nay we do not so much as know what motion is, nor how a stone moves from our hand when we throw it across the street... But, God be thanked, his [i.e. man's] pride is greater than his ignorance and what he wants in knowledge he supplies by sufficiency. When he has looked about him as far as he can, he concludes there is no more to be seen; when he is at the end of his line he is at the bottom of the ocean". (12)

The charlatans which science threw up deserved such treatment but it is very unfair to most of the scientists of the seventeenth century - to the students of natural history, the astronomers, and to men like Halley and Newton.

The outburst continues with rhetorical questions - Has Gresham College outshone Plato's Academy? Has Harvey outdone Hippocrates, or Wilkins & Archimedes? Are d'Avila and ^SÁtrada better historians than Herodotus and Livy? Does Boileau ^Sroar above Virgil? etc. etc. French, Italian and Spanish are "imperfect dialects of the noble Latin". "What a difference must this make", argues Temple, illogically, "in the comparison

(a) For contemporary attitude to Copernicus see p.3.f. above

and excellence of books, and how easy and just a preference it must decree to those of the Greek and Latin before any of the modern languages". (13)

Then follows Temple's costliest piece of recklessness - the commendation of Aesop's Fables and the Epistles of Phalaris. Temple's words are " It may perhaps be further affirmed, in favour of the ancients, that the oldest books we have are still in their kind the best. The two most ancient that I know of in prose ... are Aesop's Fables and Phalaris's Epistles ... As the first has been agreed by all ages since for the greatest master in his kind and all others of that sort have been but imitations of his original; so I think the Epistles of Phalaris to have more race, more spirit, more force of wit and genius than any others I have ever seen, either ancient or modern. I know several learned men (or that usually pass for such, under the name of critics) have not esteemed them genuine, and Politian with some others have attributed them to Lucian; but I think he must have little skill in painting that cannot find out this to be an original; such diversity of passions upon such variety of actions and passages of life and government, such freedom of thought, such boldness of expression, such bounty to his friends, such scorn of his enemies, such honour of learned men, such esteem of good, such knowledge of life, such contempt of death, with such fierceness of nature and cruelty of revenge, could never be represented but by him that possessed them, and

I esteem Lucian to have been no more capable of writing than of acting what Phalaris did. In all one writ you find the scholar or the sophist, and in all the other the tyrant and the commander". (14)

Temple, then, insists recklessly and impatiently upon the genuineness of the epistles. But, as Boyle pointed out later in the preface to his edition (15), much has been said on both sides of the question and he himself was content to leave the matter open (a). Temple also emphasises, with the greatest contempt for anyone who disagrees with him, the excellence of the epistles. When Bentley later proved they were spurious (16) he made it clear that he thought very little of their contents (b)

After naming, for their greatness, some further and less suspect ancients - Herodotus, Thucydides, Hippocrates, Xenophon, Aristotle, Caesar, Sallust, Cicero, and Cato the Elder, Temple passes to the men he considers "the great wits among the moderns" - Boccaccio, Machiavelli, Padre Paolo, Cervantes, Guevara, Rabelais, Montaigne, Sidney, Bacon, Selden, Voiture, Rochefoucauld, Bussy Rabutin.⁽⁷⁾ But his omissions are as illuminating as his inclusions - he says nothing of Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Milton, Shakespeare, Newton, Descartes or Hobbes.

The progress of the restoration of learning, continues Temple, has been hindered by ecclesiastical disputes which have

(a) See below p 18f.

(b) See below p 24f.

wasted much thought and study; by politics and wars; by a "want or decay of favour in great kings and princes to encourage or applaud it" such as Francis I. Charles V. and Henry VIII; by increasing commercial interests which sap honour, the inspirer of "all the great and noble productions of wit and of courage"; and by money troubles from which the ancient philosophers were free; and lastly by "the scorn of pedantry, which the shallow, the superficial, and the sufficient among scholars, first drew upon themselves, and very justly, by pretending to more than they had". (18)

Temple's final point (19) brings him, strangely enough, into sympathy with the first historian of the "men of Gresham" to whom he had referred slightly. (a). After speaking of the effect of "Don Quixote" on Spanish chivalry, which it ridiculed almost out of existence, Temple expresses his fear of the "vein of ridiculing all that is serious and good, all honour and virtue, as well as learning and piety". Sprat had concluded his "History of the Royal Society" (20) by expressing a similar fear that "the wits and railleurs of this age" might harm the new science more than the serious dogmatists such as Henry Stubbe (b). This ridiculing, declares Temple, "is the itch of our age and climate and has overrun both the court and the stage"

(a) See above p 6.

(b) See R.F. Jones "Ancients and Moderns" (1936) pp 255-73.

he has known, he says, several "ministers of state that would rather have said a witty thing than a wise one". "But this is enough to excuse the imperfections of learning in our age and to censure the sufficiency of some of the learned; and this small piece of justice I have done the ancients will not, I hope, be taken any more than 'tis meant, for an injury to the moderns". (21) Temple has accused the moderns of presumption and ignorance, has disallowed all their claims to learning and he hopes his onslaught will not be taken too much "for an injury to the moderns"! The essay ends with a quotation from Alphonsus of Arragon which is irrelevant but which briefly sums up Temple's position - "That among so many things as are by men possessed or pursued in the course of their lives, all the rest are baubles, besides old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old friends to converse with and old books to read". (22)

Temple's essay is elegant, dogmatic and shallow; his reasoning is illogical and his credulity amazing; he overpraises the ancients as grossly as he underrates the moderns; he neither argues nor proves, but merely asserts. He begins fairly enough but soon became increasingly an uncompromising supporter of the ancients until he cannot mention them without praising them, and the best treatment accorded to the moderns is to be damned with faint praise. The essay is one of the reasons why literary men admired his statesmanship and statesmen admired his literary productions (23).

Two years later, in 1694, Temple's essay was answered by William Wotton, chaplain to the Earl of Nottingham (a), in his "Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning".

One reason for his writing this book, he states in the preface (24), was to "furnish my mind with new occasions of admiring the boundless wisdom and bounty of that almighty and beneficent essence, in and by whom alone this whole universe and all its parts live and move and have their being." Bentley's "Discourses against Atheism", he notes, have shown how a search into Nature has led us "directly up to its author". This is the usual plea of the scientists (25) and, of course, never appears in Temple's pages.

Wotton had already spoken of the necessity of stating impartially the boundaries of ancient and modern learning and in the last two paragraphs of the preface he amplifies his position. "The ablest men of the two opposite parties are Sir William Temple and M. Perrault. They are too great men and their writings are too well known and too much valued to be overlooked. They clothe their thoughts in so engaging a dress that a man is tempted to receive all they say without examination; and therefore I was afraid that I might have been accused of betraying my cause if, whilst I endeavoured to act the part of a mediator and to give every side its just due, I had omitted what these two elegant advocates had severally alleged for their respective hypotheses".

(a) "Dismal", Swift's 'bête noire', see below pp 114, 139, 146.

He hopes "that those who shall not agree to what I say will grant that I have represented the opinions of other men with impartiality and candour, and that I have not discovered any bigotry and inclination to any one particular side". (26)

Wotton's first chapter is one of "General Reflections" in which he sketches briefly the history of the quarrel. After the Restoration, he says, the relative merits of the old and new philosophy were debated, but the disputes of Stubbes and Glanvill (a) were personal and relating to the Royal Society rather than general and relating to knowledge at large. The French took over the controversy on wider issues and argued the point, not only in philosophy and mathematics, but also in oratory and poetry. Fontenelle's "Pluralité des Mondes" gave the moderns superiority in all those four spheres but it was opposed by Temple. Fontenelle, continues Wotton, "asserts all and proves little", but, "his reasonings are, generally speaking, very just". Temple's proposition is "that the learning of the present age is only a faint imperfect copy from the knowledge of former times" and it immediately necessitates three enquiries - 1.-into things which the ancients brought to perfection, if they did, merely because they were born first; 2 - whether any arts or sciences were more perfectly practised by the ancients "though all imaginable care hath been since used to equal them"; 3 - whether in any arts or sciences the ancients have been exceeded by the moderns although both sides did their utmost. These considerations had never suggested

(a) See R.F.Jones "Ancients and Moderns" pp 247-73.

themselves to Temple's unsubtle mind and Wotton goes on to object to his reducing the question to "Who were the greatest men, the ancients or the moderns?" which, he says, he confuses with the real question "Who have carried their enquiries further?" (a) If it is a question of men, the earliest born have a natural advantage. Wotton concludes this chapter with another triple division - it will be "For the glory of the age" if it can be proved 1 - that as "great strictness of reasoning" and "force and extent of thought" are required to comprehend what has already been invented, much more is necessary to make improvements and thus the world does not decay; 2 - that the ancients neglected parts of knowledge which they had the opportunity to pursue; and 3 - that discoveries have been made "wholly unknown to former ages." (27)

In the chapters that follow the ancients are given unquestioned superiority in oratory and poetry (cs.3 & 4), and the moderns in painting and statuary (c.6), geometry and arithmetic (c.14), chemistry (c.16), astronomy (c.23), medicine (cc.18 & 25), and philology (c.27). In chapters dealing with moral and political knowledge (c.2), logic and metaphysics (c.13), anatomy (c.17), theology (c.28) and natural philosophy (c.26) the moderns are given the superiority but nevertheless respect is paid to the ancients and they are never referred to disparagingly.

Very definite deficiencies are noticed in the ancients' grammar (c.5), knowledge of minerals (c.20), of plants (c.21), and of animals (c.23), in the history and natural philosophy of the

(a) "Miscellanea" II.- 55, 58-62.

Egyptians (cc. 9 & 10) and the general learning of the Chaldeans, the Arabs, the Indians and the Chinese (cc. 11 & 12). The ancients' lack of instruments is held against them too (c.15).

Wotton from time to time replies to Temple and always with deference and courtesy. For example, the latter had asserted that none ever disputed grammar with the ancients, but Wotton reminds him of Jonson, Lily, Wallis, Vangelas, Bouhours, Richelet, and Furetière, and citing Wilkins's "Essay towards a real character and philosophical language", adds "philosophical grammar" was little known to the ancients (28). When Temple, to show that books are not necessary for the preservation of knowledge, instances Per^un, he only proves, says Wotton, not that books are unnecessary, but that without them "knowledge can be imperfectly conveyed to posterity", which is not disputed (29). Temple doubted both the circulation of the blood and its discovery by Harvey (a), but Wotton shows that Hippocrates merely suspected it and that Servetus, Columbus of Cremona and Caesalpinus, all in the sixteenth century, merely hinted at it, and that the actual proof and discovery of it was Harvey's in 1628. (30).

In his last chapter (c.29) Wotton examines and rejects Temple's reasons for the decay of modern learning. Religious disputes have advanced learning rather than retarded it, he maintains, and instances Scaliger and Isaac Casaubon. He rejects the second reason - politics and war - without any proof, but he

(a) See above p. 3 f.

rightly denies Temple's assertion that the favour of monarchs for learning has decayed. He refers to Christina of Sweden who sent for Descartes, Salmasius, and Vossius to visit her court, to Louis XIV and to Charles II. as founder of the Royal Society, "whose studies" he continues, quoting Temple, "writings and productions, tho' they have not outshined or eclipsed the Lyceum of Plato, the Academy of Aristotle, the Stoa of Zeno or the Garden of Epicurus, because they were neither written at the same time, nor for the most part upon the same subjects", will always honour its founder who made possible their "joint labours which singly would have been impossible". Richelieu, Mazarin, Fouquet and Colbert were not princes "yet had purses greater than many of them" and were all "eminently favourers of learned men." Temple's final reason for decay, pedantry, was only applicable, Wotton maintains, fifty or sixty years ago. (31)

In his short conclusion Wotton expresses the same fears as Sprat had expressed (a), that "the sly insinuations of the men of wit" would succeed where the "rude attacks" of Stubbe had failed; and Temple similarly feared the modern "vein of ridiculing" (b). The wits, says Wotton, will insist "That every man whom they call a Virtuoso must needs be a Sir Nicholas Gimerack", yet "one must spend a good deal of time and pains, of industry and attention, before he will be able thoroughly to relish" the new science. Wotton finishes his "Reflections" with the hope that the future

(a) See p 9 above

(b) See p 9f. above.

"may raise real knowledge, upon the foundations laid in this our age to the utmost possible perfection to which it can be brought by mortal men in this imperfect state". This "must be by joining ancient and modern learning together and by studying each as originals, in those things wherein they severally do most excel; by that means few mistakes will be committed, the world will soon see what remains unfinished and men will furnish themselves with fitting methods to complete it; and by doing justice to every side they will have reason to expect that those that come after them will do the same justice to them whenever they shall think fit to submit their productions to public censure"(32)

Wotton himself has certainly done "justice to every side". He knows, for example, that what Descartes and Locke have added to the ancients' store of logic and metaphysics can be praised "without undervaluing what the ancients wrote upon these noble subjects"; and that "as far as anatomy is peculiarly useful to a chirurgeon to inform him how the bones, muscles, bloodvessels, cartilages, tendons, ligaments and membranes lie in the limbs and more conspicuous parts of the body, so far the ancients went, and here there is very little that the moderns have any right to pretend to as their own discoveries"; and, greatest magnanimity of all, in the chapter on natural philosophy, - "Had experimental philosophy been anciently brought upon the stage, had geometry been solemnly and generally applied to the mechanism of nature and not solely made use of to instruct men in the art of reasoning .. the moderns would not have had so great reason to boast as now

they have". (33)

Throughout the "Reflections" Temple is treated politely, for Wotton is concerned not with the man but his ideas. These latter whenever they are specifically taken up are carefully examined and, usually, rejected with reasons clearly and courteously stated. The whole of the chapter on the Chinese (c.12) is a refutation of Temple's fantastic hyperboles about them in his essay on "Heroic Virtue" (34), while the mass of superstition which Temple elsewhere indicates as the great learning of Chaldea, India, Arabia, and Egypt is similarly disposed of. (35) There is nothing in Wotton's tone to offend Temple. But to witness the overthrow of his idols, to be told, coolly and unemotionally, that the ancients' knowledge of "the stomach, the liver, the pancreas.. the spleen, the veins, the intestines, the glands of the mesentry and the instruments of generation of both sexes ... were exceedingly defective", that their knowledge of the air was "obvious", of plants "confused", of animals "negligent" (36) was galling to the elegant dilettante. His folly had set in motion a mass of learning against which he was powerless to stand.

Neither can Wotton justly be accused of bigotry. His "Reflections" are overwhelming proof of the all-round superiority of the moderns over the ancients, but that superiority emerges as the result of his examination of both sides. He may have favoured the moderns before he began his survey - the enumeration of three things to be proved for "the glory of the age" (p.9) seems to indicate that he did - but he does not give them superiority without

a careful weighing of the evidence and of most of the intellectual activities of the ancients his opinion is that they were good as far as they went (a). He realises too that the future of knowledge depends not on the triumph of either ancient or modern learning but on the reconciliation and fusion of the two.(b)

Temple's tribute to Phalaris had revived interest in the tyrant. Dr. Aldrich, the Dean of Christ Church, was in the habit of giving his students classical texts to edit and he chose the Hon. Charles Boyle, aged 17, to edit Phalaris. In 1695 Boyle's edition was published. In the preface Boyle summarised the arguments of those who upheld the genuineness of the epistles and also of those who asserted that they were spurious. Among the former, of course, is Temple, whose praise of Phalaris Boyle freely translates into Latin. But Boyle was aware of the weighty arguments against their genuineness - it is difficult to believe such letters "in suo genere absolutae ultra mille annos ignotae penitus latere"; Sicilians usually preferred the Dorian dialect;(c) Tauromenium "ad oculos cives hic author scribit" was built much later than Phalaris's time. If learned men have anything to say, continues Boyle, "libens audio". (37)

Thus before Bentley took up the points of dialect and

(a) e.g. in logic and metaphysics (c.13), anatomy (c.17) and music (c.24)

(b) See p 16 above.

(c) The dialect of the epistles is Attic.

place-names, Boyle himself doubted the authenticity of the Epistles. He could say "I never professed myself a patron of Phalaris." (38) It was Temple who had insisted peevishly that the letters were genuine.

Boyle concludes his short preface with an account of his editorial work, - of the collations made for his edition - and speaking of the MS. in the Kings Library at St. James's gives as the reason for the incomplete collation of that MS. the discourtesy of the librarian, Bentley; the MS. was denied him "*pro singulari sua humanitate*", he asserts, and those four words precipitated the controversy of disproportionate verbal length that is described below.

In 1697 a second edition of Wotton's "Reflections" appeared with additions which increased the length of the work by nearly twenty per cent. There is a postscript in which Wotton remonstrates against charges of partiality towards the moderns. "I had conceded so much to them before that it was generally thought I was biassed on their behalf; it was not enough to tell the world I was of no side, the contrary was taken for granted since in so many particulars I actually gave them the pre-eminence when Sir William Temple had given it them almost in nothing. I must own I was glad it could be proved that the world has not actually lost its vigour, but that a gradual improvement is plainly visible" (39) - and in that last sentence lies the extent of

Wotton's partiality.

In the edition of 1697 appears a new chapter called "Of Ancient and Modern Agriculture and Gardening" and Wotton's verdict is, as on other subjects, that "there is no doubt but great things were done in these arts by the ancients" but that they were ignorant of much which the moderns know (40). To the original chapter on physic is added a paper on surgery contributed by Charles Bernard (a), and his view is, "If we enquire into the improvements which have been made by the moderns in surgery, we shall be forced to confess that we have so little reason to value ourselves beyond the ancients or to be tempted to condemn them as the fashion is among those who know little and have read nothing, that we cannot give stronger or more convincing proofs of our own ignorance, as well as our pride. I do not pretend that the moderns have not at all contributed towards the improvement of surgery, that were both absurd and injurious ... but that which I am contesting for is, that it consists rather in refining and dressing up the inventions of the ancients and setting them in a better light, than in adding important ones of our own".- (41) as just and as gracious a tribute to the ancients as Wotton's own when he discusses natural philosophy. (b)

There is one more significant addition. In the chapter on grammar (c.5), Wotton notes that Temple says "no man ever disputed

(a) Similarly Halley had contributed on astronomy (1694.c.23-1697.c.24)

(b) See above p 16 f.

grammar with the ancients" and before going on to name Lily, Jonson, etc. (a) for refutation, he says that Temple "of all men, ought not to have av⁵igned the modern ignorance in grammar, who puts Delphos for Delphi everywhere in his essays, tho' he knows that proper names borrowed Latin and Greek are always put in the nominature case in our language. For those who find fault with others ought to be critically exact in those things at least themselves. But without making personal digressions in the first place, it ought to be considered" . etc.etc. (42) Here, for once, Wotton becomes almost personal but he immediately checks his asperity.

To this second edition was appended "A Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris, Themistocles, Socrates, Euripides and Others; and the Fables of Aesop" which Bentley had promised to write for Wotton, as an appendix, as early as 1694 (43). Prefixed to it was Temple's panegyric upon Phalaris and Aesop - a hint that Bentley was taking up the challenge that the man "must have little skill in painting that cannot find out this to be an original" (b)

In a short prefatory letter to Wotton (c), Bentley asserts "that with all deference to so great an authority [Temple] and under a just awe of so sharp a censure, I believed it might

a) See above p 14.

b) See above p 7.

c) Not reprinted in the "Enlarged Dissertation".

be even demonstrated that the Epistles of Phalaris are spurious and that we have nothing now extant of Aesop's own composing". Wotton's renewed request for a paper on the subject was made, he assumes, because "if it once be made out that those writings your adversary so extols are suppositions and of no very long standing, you have then his and his parties own confession that some of the later pens have out-done the old ones in their kinds".(44) Bentley's ascription of the Aesopian Fables to Maximus Planudes, a Byzantine monk of the fourteenth century (45) would further damage Temple's case by transferring his praise from the ancients to the moderns of an age which, he considered, (46) saw learning at a low ebb. Temple, of course, could not recant and withdraw his praise of the excellence of the two works.

Bentley continues his letter to Wotton by saying, "I write without any view or regard to your controversy, which I do not make my own, nor presume to interpose in it. 'Tis a subject so nice and delicate and of such a mixed and diffuse nature that I am content to make the best use of both ancients and moderns, without venturing with you upon the hazard of a wrong comparison, or the envy of a true one" (47). Thus Bentley regards Wotton as engaged in a controversy, although the latter would strenuously deny this by quoting his own printed assertions(48). Bentley refuses to join in the controversy himself, and, like Wotton (49), believes ancient and modern must be reconciled and fused, not pitted one against the other. Bentley's attitude to

Temple's person is polite and deferential and to his controversy disinterested. But his iconoclasm in the cause of accurate scholarship was bound to be dangerous.

The style, he says, is sufficient for him "to detect the spuriousness of Phalaris's Epistles" but for those not similarly convinced he will adduce different proof:- 1. Epistle CXLIII tells of borrowing money from Phintia, but that city was not founded until 300 years later than Phalaris's day. 2. Alaesa, mentioned in Ep.XCII was not founded until 120 years later. 3. Ep.LXX speaks of Thericlean cups, but Thericles lived 120 years later than Phalaris. 4. Ep. LXXXV speaks of Zancle and Messina as two different towns, but they were one. 5. The simile of a cut down pine (Ep.XCII) was first used by Herodotus a century later. 6. The Tauromenites were called Naxians in Phalaris's day. (a) Ep. LXXXV. 7. Ep. XXXV contains a "sentence" from Democritus 100 years later. 8. Ep.LI contains a "sentence" from Euripides's "Philoctetes" written 120 years later. 9. Ep.XII shows borrowings from Pindar and Callimachus. (b) 10. Eps. XXIII and LVI call Pythagoras a "philosopher" but Pythagoras (c) himself was the first to use the term. 11. Tragedy is mentioned in Eps. LXIII and XCVII

- (a) Boyle himself recognised this as an obstacle in the way of the Epistles' genuineness; preface to his edition a 41.
- (b) Pindar c522-442 BC; Callimachus d.c240 BC.(W.Smith op cit iii.367i571) Bentley takes 550 BC as the latest possible date for the Epistles, if genuine ("First Dissertations" 14f.)
- (c) Pythagoras b.c 570 BC. Bentley himself says 603 BC. (Olymp.XLIII 4) ("Enlarged Dissertation" 50 f).

but the word was not used until Phalaris had been dead twelve years. 12. Phalaris writes in Attic whereas the language of Sicily was Doric (a) 13. If he did write in a language unnatural to him it would be in an earlier form than that of the letters. 14. Some epistles (LXXXV, CXVIII, CXXXVII, CIV, CXLIII, XCV.) speak of the Attic talents but they should be Sicilian ones. 15. Some events recounted are absurd (e.g. in Ep. LIV) or inconsistent (cf. Eps. LI & LIX) 16. Finally, how could the epistles, if genuine, remain not only hidden but also unknown, for a thousand years? (50)

Thus, from history and chronology and language Bentley proves that the so called Epistles of Phalaris are spurious. His arguments are sufficient to convince any openminded readers and the refusal of the men of Christ Church to accept them reveals their recklessness and their folly. The inescapable arguments of classical scholarship did not affect their partisanship.

In his fifteenth point Bentley had turned from the question of the Epistles' genuineness to the question of their excellence. After pointing out several absurdities and inconsistencies he sums up "It would be endless to prosecute this part and show all the silliness and impertinency in the matter of the epistles. For, take them in the whole bulk, if a great person would give me leave, I should say they are a fardel of commonplaces without any life or spirit from action and circumstance". Cicero's letters have lively characters, descriptions and events but "When you return to these again, you feel by the

(a) Boyle realised this difficulty himself (a 3 ii) See above p 18.

emptiness and deadness of them that you converse with some dreaming pedant with his elbow on his desk, not with an active, ambitious tyrant with his hand on his sword, commanding a million subjects. All that takes you or affects you is a stiffness and starchiness and operoseness of style, but as that is improper and unbecoming in all epistles, so especially it is quite alien from the character of Phalaris, a man of business and despatch". (51)

Thus Temple has been answered for his uncompromising emphasis on the letters' genuineness and excellence. Bentley may not have been at all interested in the controversy which the baronet had joined; but such a detailed and direct contradiction was certain to involve him in any continuation of it - even though he was indisputably right about the spuriousness and the dullness of the epistles.

Bayle in his "Historical Dictionary" had ascribed "the present .. Fables to Maximus Planudes, and so had Vavasor in his "De Ludicra Dictione" and this, says Bentley, made him regard Temple's praise of Aesop "to be an unhappy paradox". In his opinion the present Aesopean Fables are the latest and worst that have ever been so called and he intends to set down a few points not usually noted, and not to write a "set discourse".

1. There exist references (e.g. in Aristophanes) to fables not extant.
2. Socrates refers to a lost fable.
3. The first fables "committed to writing" were after Socrates's time.
4. Later a collection of the fables was made in elegiac verse.
5. "One Babrius ... gave a new turn of the fables into choliambics.

6. Among "the Latin writers of the Aesopean Fables [were] Phaedrus, Julius Titianus and Avienus;" fable CLXXXI cannot be Aesop's for it mentions Demades who lived 200 years later. 7. The present fables show traces of Babrius's choliambics turned into prose. 8. Thus half the fables now extant are a thousand years later than Aesop; the collection was probably made by Maximus Planudes and there is no MS. of the present collection older than 300 years. 9. The "idiot of a monk", (i.e. Maximus) in his "Life of Aesop", "cannot be matched in any language for ignorance and nonsense", for he has joined legend to invention. 10. The most unforgiveable "of all this monk's injuries to Aesop" was to make him so ugly. (52).

Bentley is less convincing on Aesop than on Phalaris but the points he makes are enough to cast serious doubt on the fables' authenticity; examination of chronology is again the greater part of the attack. Bentley himself was so satisfied with the work that in his "Enlarged Dissertation" in 1699 he neither altered nor added, nor removed, a single word.

By pointing out inconsistencies and absurdities in chronology and matter Bentley also proved, in his "First Dissertation" of 1697, the spuriousness of what usually pass as the Epistles of Themistocles, Socrates, and Euripides. Furthermore he asserted that he "could easily go on and discover .. many more impostures of this kind, the Epistles of Anarcharsis, Heraclitus, Democritus, Diogenes, Crates and others". (53). The prevalence of such forgery he had ascribed earlier to pride

or a desire for profit . (54)

Most of the pages that intervene between the proofs of the spuriousness of the Epistles of Phalaris and Themistocles are devoted to an examination of Boyle's text of Phalaris. (55) Nine lines of the first epistle have required four pages (69-73) of corrections, he points out; this, he says, is like "scouring" the stables of Augeas. But it is also breaking a butterfly upon a wheel for Boyle was very young and his edition very immature.

Throughout his Dissertation, Bentley has treated Temple with deference. He has not hesitated to emphasise his differences of opinion but this seems his only crime. To Boyle he has been a little less polite but the puerilities and errors of translation in this edition have annoyed the scholar in Bentley and he is occasionally harsh and outspoken. In his reply (pp 66-68) to Boyle's charge of discourtesy he speaks harshly but the defence of himself is direct and no doubt as brief as Bentley thought the trifling misunderstanding required. But Bentley was wrong, for many pages were to be written about his "singular humanity" and it is time to examine them.

There is a further reason for enquiring into Boyle's charges of discourtesy for at this juncture of the quarrel Swift wrote "The Battle of the Books". He came out in support of his patron, Sir William Temple, and naturally he attacked

Wotton, who for all his remonstrances, was regarded, as he himself complained (56), as an uncompromising modern. Bentley, the man who had overthrown Temple's most revered idols, was attacked too. Swift's attitude to Bentley and Wotton, both as men and as critics, takes up a great deal of "The Battle of the Books" and "A Tale of a Tub" and this is the second reason for now examining Boyle's charge of discourtesy against Bentley.

CHAPTER II."PRO SINGULARI SUA HUMANITATE"

The facts of the controversy not in dispute are very few. The collation of the MS. in Bentley's care was completed only to Epistle 40. Boyle recorded this in the preface to his edition of Phalaris in these words, "Epistolas ipsas cum duobus MSS. Bodleianis e Cantuariensi et Seldeni musaeo contuli, collatas enim curavi usque ad epist. 40 cum MS^o in Bibliotheca Regia, cujus mihi copiam ulteriorem Bibliothecarius pro singulari sua humanitate negavit". (1) Bentley wrote a letter of protest to Boyle in which, as the latter admitted, he wrote "with great civility", (2) but Boyle replied rejecting the explanation and adding that it was too late to alter the edition. (3) Two years later Bentley gave his own account of these events in the paper on the "Epistles of Phalaris" etc. which he contributed as an appendix to the second edition of Wotton's "Reflections". The following year, 1698, Boyle inserted a lengthy explanation in the work usually known as "Boyle against Bentley" and in 1699 Bentley replied again at greater length in the preface to his "Enlarged Dissertation".

Bentley's explanation of 1697, the first which was given to the public, maintained that he loaned the MS. to the

bookseller whom Boyle employed, "as soon as I had the power
 (a)
 of it"; that the MS. was returned with no indication that the
 collation had not been completed for there had been ample time
 for the work to be done; that afterwards, during a fortnight
 he spent at Oxford, often "in the very college where the editors
 resided", no mention was made of the MS; that the announcement
 in Boyle's preface that the MS. "was not perused" was a complete
 surprise to him for it could easily have been consulted again
 upon his return to London; that the truth should have been
 investigated before anything was printed; and that to vindicate
 his "courtesy and humanity" he could call several distinguished
 foreigners as witnesses. (4)

At this juncture, after the publication of Bentley's
"Dissertation" in 1697 and before the publication of Boyle's
 retort to Bentley in 1698, Swift wrote the "Battle of the Books".
 About the same time he must have written those parts of "A Tale
 of a Tub" which most directly attacked Bentley - "The Digression
 concerning Critics" (section 3) and the "Digression in the
 Modern Kind" (section 5) - although gibes at his pedantry, his
 index-learning, his "humanity" appear throughout the work (b).
 Swift's attitude to Bentley's "humanity" then was determined by
 Boyle's statement (later proved inaccurate) Bentley's brief reply
 (c)

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- (a) When the request was first made Bentley had not "the custody of
 the library" (Enlarged Dissertation xiv f) see also below p 41.
 (b) See below p 98.
 (c) Only three pages, "First Dissertation" pp.66-8.

and by whatever inside knowledge he happened to have from the very partial Christ Church supporters of his patron. In Swift's eyes, Bentley's longer vindication in 1699 so little redressed the balance that when the Battle and the Tale were printed in 1704 the attacks on Bentley and Wotton remained in the text.

Boyle's short preface in the volume "Boyle against Bentley" (1698) is on the whole firm, but it is also conciliatory and restrained (a). Boyle says that he had heard that the MS. in question "was of no age or worth" but it could not be neglected and so he sent to his bookseller, Thomas Bennett, "to get the MS." "After an expectation of many months Mr. Bennett sent me at last a collation of part of the MS." and wrote that he had had great difficulty in obtaining it and that Bentley had reclaimed the MS. after "a very few days" and refused "to let him have the use of it any longer, tho' he told him the collation was not perfected". In those circumstances, continues Boyle, the passage in the preface to his "Phalaris" (a.3 i & ii) "was as soft a thing as I could well allow myself to say". Immediately after publication of the "Phalaris", Bentley wrote to him "with great civility" ;

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- a) J.H. Monk, "Life of Richard Bentley" (1833), notes a suggestion (1 89) that Boyle himself "seems to have had but a small share in the actual operations" but is sceptical of accepting it. Certainly the book was a composite effort from the pens of Atterbury, Smabridge, John and Robert Freind and Alsop, all students of Christ Church. (see Monk 1 88f)

" he represented the matter of fact quite otherwise than I had heard it" and so Boyle "returned him immediately^(a) as civil ~~(a)~~ an answer", saying that Bennett's account was quite different and gave him reason to feel "affronted", and adding that if Bennett "had dealt so ill with me as to mislead me in his accounts" he would "be ready to take some opportunity of begging his [Bentley's] pardon". Bentley made no reply and Boyle had thought the matter closed until two years later when the "First Dissertation" appeared in 1697. Bentley's assertion in his "First Dissertation" (b) that he gave Bennett the MS. as soon as he could and that he had no intimation that the collation had not been completed had "startled" Boyle, and he "examined Mr. Bennett again very strictly and particularly", and the bookseller insisted on the truth of his earlier account and the falseness of Bentley's version. He added that the collator, Mr. Gibson, and "a gentleman of known credit in the world, Dr. King of the Commons" would confirm his statements. (5)

Boyle then quotes "certificates" of Bennett, Gibson and Dr. King. Bennett gives his version as follows:- he received the MS. after nine months solicitation; within a few days Bentley visited him and demanded its return as he was leaving town; learning that it was not yet collated Bennett begged Bentley to let him keep it until Sunday morning (it was Saturday noon when the call

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- (a) Bentley ("Enlarged Dissertation" vi) says "After a delay of two posts ... that the book might be vended ... in the meantime". Two posts, as Monk points out (i 69) would be two days.
- (b) P 66f.

was made) promising to make the collator sit up all night if necessary, but Bentley insisted that it should be returned that day to Westminster "which was done accordingly, and not giving me any the least hopes that if I applied to him upon his return out of the country I should have leave to get the collation perfected". Gibson's declaration merely says that he could not collate all the epistles because "the gentleman that owned them .. could not spare them any longer". Dr. King says that he heard Bennett and Bentley discussing the MS. and "the doctor said that 'if the MS. were collated it would be worth nothing for the future'" and that he remembers that "the whole discourse was managed with such insolence". (6)

After quoting these three "certificates" Boyle emphasises the "probity and worth" and the disinterestedness of Bennett (a) and Gibson and the unimpeachable character of King. Bentley, he continues, "was really obliged to me for using him with so much tenderness", but two years later he had produced a "mighty work .. to make his point good", in which he had spoken of the edition "ascribed" to Boyle and of the latter as "that young gentleman of great hopes whose name is set to the edition". "Dr. Bentley", continues Boyle, "was not satisfied with giving me ill usage unless he did it in ill words too; and therefore has called out the very worst he could find to bestow on me .. He charges me with 'calumny', 'weak detraction', 'injustice', 'forgery and slander'; with the 'basest tricks' and a 'vile aspersion' He likens me .. to a 'bungling tinker mending

(a) "but see p 45 below"

old kettles .. and by the help of a Greek proverb calls me downright ass ... The correcting the faults of my version is, in his polite way of writing, 'the cleaning of Augeas's stables'. Such language, asserts Boyle, is more indecent than that of the chairman of St. James's. (7).

Boyle goes on to comment upon the strange procedure of seeking foreign witnesses to Bentley's humanity and courtesy. He cites the complaint of Sir Edward Sherburn that Bentley robbed him of the credit for publication of Rubenius's book, "De Vita Mallii", "put out by Graevius in Holland and dedicated to Dr. Bentley". Against this "paltry insinuation" Bentley easily defended himself in his "Enlarged Dissertation". (8)

Boyle then returns to Bentley's explanation in his "First Dissertation". Bentley had stated that in the preface to his edition of Phalaris, Boyle had claimed that he "had collated the King's MS. as far as the fortieth epistle", whereas, insists Boyle, "I told the world, not that 'I had collated that MS.' but that 'I had taken care to get it collated'. My words are 'Collatas etiam [viz Epistolas] curavi cum MS^o in Bibliotheca Regia, etc.'" The intention of this misinterpretation was, insists Boyle, to place all blame for faulty collation on himself. But Boyle himself misinterprets for he had misquoted Bentley as saying that "I (i.e. Boyle) had collated the King's MS." whereas Bentley's words were 'they collated the King's MS.' Elsewhere, too, Bentley shows that he was aware that the MS. had not been collated by Boyle himself. (9). At all events an editor is responsible for the

accuracy of collations made for him as well as by him; Boyle was editorially responsible for the accuracy of Gibson's collation.

Boyle complains further of Bentley's references to "editors" and compares the nine months Bentley took to produce the MS. with the nine days he allowed the collator to use it. All possible explanations are cavalierly brushed aside but Bentley was able to show in his "Enlarged Dissertation" that the collator "had more days to compare it than he needed hours".(10)

Bentley had asserted that when he took the MS. to Bennett he bade him "tell the collator not to lose any time, for I was shortly to go out of town for two months". Boyle, however, says that he has "reason to think" that this is "pure fiction" for Bennett remembers nothing of it, "but he very well remembers that when the Doctor came to demand the MS. of him again he then told him he was to go into the country and gave that for his reason why he could allow him no further time to collate it in". (11)

Passing to Bentley's assertion that the bearer who returned the MS. to him gave no indication that the collation had not been finished, Boyle appeals to the reader to compare it with Bennett's and Gibson's certificates. But from Gibson's statement nothing at all can be deduced against Bentley, and from Bennett's nothing definite; he affirms that he was not given "the least hopes that if I applied to him upon his return out of the country I should have leave to get the collation perfected", and these words, although they might mean that

Bentley had answered a request for a further loan with a definite "no", might also mean that no such request had been ventured. Bentley's question "Could not they have asked for it again then, after my return?", and Boyle's retort, "Yes, I could, sir, and have been denied again, which I was not very willing to venture", both suggest that the request was not made. Boyle finishes what he calls "this tedious descent on Dr. Bentley's relation of matter and fact" with the unreasonable statement that if Bentley's remark "that the epistles were spurious and unworthy of a new edition" (a) was made "at Oxford, where the book was then printing, he said a very uncivil thing". (12)

In some ways Boyle could justly complain of Bentley's attitude to him. It was inexcusable for Bentley to doubt that the edition of Phalaris was the work of Boyle alone. The Augean stable metaphor was certainly unnecessarily coarse but the errors of translation and grammar in Boyle's text which Bentley pointed out and corrected with references to, and quotations from, further authorities did require a great deal of editorial scouring. Boyle might well be angered too when Bentley compares him to a 'bungling tinker' - "there was but one hole in the text before they meddled with it, but they leave it with two" - but again Bentley was justified for Boyle was comparatively a poor editorial

(a) Bentley actually wrote "were a spurious piece" (First Dissertation 68) but Boyle, who had taken exception to Bentley's English a little earlier (Boyle against Bentley 20) alters his words but this time without acknowledging it.

tinker. There is no question of Bentley ever calling Boyle an ass; the proverb is that "Leucon carries one thing and his ass quite another", and Bentley refers it to one of his mis-translations. In their context the charges of 'calumny', 'weak detraction', 'slander', 'injustice', and 'forgery', are all qualified and the last two hardly appear; the charge of a 'vile aspersion' is also negligible in its context, and when Bentley spoke of 'basest tricks' he was translating Phalaris, not attacking Boyle. The "certificates" which Boyle quotes are really of little help to his case. Bennett's does not prove that Bentley was told when the MS. was returned to him that the collations had not been completed and Gibson seems to have been ignorant of the nature of the epistle he collated for he speaks of "the gentleman that owned them". King says not that Bentley was insolent but that the discourse between the bookseller and librarian was managed with insolence. That the MS. would be of little value, collated or not, Boyle already knew and admitted (13). On the whole Boyle's case, so dependent upon Bennett, who had good reason to dislike Bentley,^(a) is very suspect. Bentley himself was to show up its weaknesses.

Bentley's reply formed the greater part of the 112 page preface to his "Enlarged Dissertation" of 1699. It opens with a reprint of his explanation of 1697 with one significant alteration. One sentence which might justify a charge of incivility has been

(a) See below p 45.

omitted - "As for the King's MS. they had no want nor desire of it, for, as I shall show by and by, they had neither industry nor skill to use either that or their own". (14)

Dealing first with Boyle's edition of Phalaris, Bentley says that as soon as he saw a copy he wrote to Oxford giving "a true information of the whole matter". The copy he saw "was in the hands of a person of honour to whom it had been presented". As "the rest of the impression was not yet published" he expected that Boyle "would put a stop to the publication of his book, till he had altered that passage and printed the page anew, which he might have done in one day and at the charge of five shillings". Bentley "did not expressly desire him to take out that passage .. that I thought was too low a submission". Bentley had kept no copy of this letter nor of Boyle's reply (a) for he had "no apprehension .. that the business could have been blown to this height" but the "civil expressions" which Boyle admits he used and which characterise the few lines he published (b) were, says Bentley, typical of the whole. Nothing which Boyle says about this letter gives any indication to the contrary. Boyle replied, says Bentley, to this effect "That what I had said in my own behalf might be true; but that Mr. Bennett had represented the thing quite otherwise. If he had had my account before he should have considered of it; and now that the book was made public, he

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- a) Neither letter is published in Bentley's "Correspondence" , ed. Chris. Wordsworth. 2 vols. (1842)
 - b) In "Boyle against Bentley" 19.

he would not interpose; but that I might do myself right in what method I pleased". There was no indication, Bentley points out, that he would stop the publication to permit the matter to be further examined. Bennett's explanation of the incomplete collation has been accepted by Boyle because of its priority and he stubbornly refuses to accept, almost to hear, Bentley's. Had Bennett never been employed as an intermediary, continues Bentley, had Boyle made a direct application to him instead of committing the whole affair "to the care, or rather the negligence of his bookseller", - "I would not only have lent the book but have collated it myself for him". "When he printed that Preface", Bentley goes on, he had heard nothing but on one side. And was that like a man of his character, to put a public affront upon me, upon the bare complaint of a bookseller who was the party suspected of the fault? What? never to enquire at all whether he had not misinformed him when there was such reason to suppose that he might lay the blame upon me to excuse his own negligence; when he had such opportunities of asking me, either directly (a) or by some common friends? Turn it over on every side and the whole conduct of it is so very extraordinary". (15) In making this plea Bentley is completely justified, for Bennett was certainly Boyle's chief witness and almost certainly the least reliable.

(a) i.e. When Bentley was at Oxford on his return from Worcester.

But although Boyle had failed to make proper enquiries or, if he made them, to publish the results, Bentley had kept silent "out of a natural aversion to all quarrels and broils and out of regard to the editor himself." However, several years previously Bentley had told Wotton that he thought "Phalaris's Epistles suppositions and the present Aesopean Fables not to be Aesop's own" and promised to give him a paper with his reasons. Thus, as Bentley points out, the publication of proof of the spurious nature of the Epistles and the Fables was contemplated before Boyle's edition appeared in 1695 and he inserts a corroborating statement made by Wotton himself; obviously Bentley was originally urged to publish proof of their spuriousness and by Temple's reckless dithyramb which appeared in 1692. (a) Wotton's statement adds that, when he renewed his request for a paper to be appended to the second edition of his "Reflections" (b), Bentley asked to be excused, since now he could not write it "without giving a censure of the late edition at Oxford" for, as Bentley himself says, "my silence would have been interpreted as good as a confession". But Wotton did not consider that "sufficient reason why I should lose that treatise to the world" and finally prevailed upon Bentley to write his paper; once any reluctance he may have had to controversy had been overcome, he probably welcomed the opportunity of securing justice or even revenge, although he

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- (a) See Bentley's letter to Joshua Barnes Feb. 22nd. 1692-3 ("Correspondence" 64) The dialect he writes "might have convinced [Temple] that they could not be genuine".
- (b) Bentley had been sent out of town when the first edition was being prepared ("Enlarged Dissertation" xii)

denies "harbouring such vengeance in my heart". (16)

Bentley then takes up the point of "nine months' solicitation". He shows that the Royal Patent which constituted him "Keeper of His Majesty's Library" was dated Apl.12. 1694, and proves by quoting "the worthy masters of St. Paul's and St. James's Schools, who gave me this account under their own hands - 'that from Oct. 1693 to Apl. 8. 1694 the key to the Library was "constantly in [their] keeping while they catalogued the books"'. Obviously during those six months no loans could be made from the library and no "nine months' solicitation" to anyone could have secured a loan; neither Bennett nor Boyle state when the request was originally made but it "seems to have been in the beginning of 1694", (a) thus placing it in the period when St. James's Library was quite inaccessible. Bentley says he delivered the MS. to Bennett as soon as several preliminaries connected with his taking over the library were completed and points out that Bennett never denied "that the book was delivered to him in May". Bennett and Boyle neither assert nor deny that the date is correct. It must have been between Apl. 12th, when the patent making Bentley Librarian of St. James was issued, and June 1st, when Bentley, according to the Rolls of the Chantor of Worcester, which he quotes, was present at prayers in the cathedral.

(b)

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- a) This assumption is made by Monk (166) without reference to any authority.
 - b) May 1694 is accepted by Monk (167) again without any authority, as the date of delivery.

Bentley asserts that he was in Worcester earlier than June 1st. because "the Residence Roll for the month of May, though diligently sought for, could not be found". and he is inclined to believe that he left London upon Monday, May 21st. and that the MS. was returned to me the Saturday night before". (17) To vindicate himself Bentley is certainly going into details and doing so with exemplary restraint and politeness.

Bentley recalls that in his "First Dissertation" he had (a) said that "a bookseller came to me" etc, but the word "came" was too favourable to Bennett. "For, to the best of my memory, he never asked for the MS. but at his own shop(b), or as I casually met him". "Neither can I call to mind that either he or his apprentice came once to my lodgings or to the Library for it, till the time that he sent for it by my appointment and received it". (18)

Turning to the actual loan of the MS. Bentley asks "Is it likely or probable that I should put the MS. into his hands, to be kept as long as he pleased?"^(c) The journey which he later made to Worcester "had been fixed six months before", says Bentley, and adds that "'tis very unlikely that I should omit to give him notice of it". Later he makes the obvious point that as Librarian he could not let a book go out of his custody for the four months. It is his word against Bennett's, says Bentley, and what is the

(a) p.66.

(b) Bentley ("Enlarged Dissertation" xxxii) places the encounter overheard by King ("Boyle against Bentley" 8) in Bennett's shop.

(c) As Bennett asserts ("Boyle against Bentley" 6)

latter's worth, "after his manifest falsehood in his story of the nine months?" He asks "What interest, what passion, could I serve by hindering them?" On the contrary, Boyle's "relation to a person of glorious memory" urged him to help; he would have been within his rights as custodian of the King's Library to refuse the loan, for the Royal Warrant is necessary for an issue. "Had I kept myself firm to the rules of my office, without straining a point of courtesy beyond the bounds of my duty, all their calumnies had been avoided". Clearly, as Bentley says, he would have lacked no reason if he wished to deny access to the MS(19).

At the bookseller's on the Saturday morning, Bentley learned that the collator had not finished but as the "engagement" (a) did not stipulate the MS. 's return until the evening, he thought that by 9 p.m. the task would be finished, "for if he had not done one page of the book at noon; yet he had time more than enough to have finished it by the evening". The MS. is legibly written and lacks 21 epistles of the 148 usually printed. As an experiment Bentley collated the first 40 epistles and "finished them in an hour and eighteen minutes; though I made no very great haste. And yet I remarked and set down above fifty lections, though the editor has taken notice of one only". The 127 letters therefore, could have been collated, as Bentley calculates, in four hours, and between noon and 9.p.m. the collator could have done his work "twice over". The MS. was in the collator's hands

a) This engagement is, of course, denied by Bennett in his "certificate" ("Boyle against Bentley". p.6).

"five or six days", continues Bentley, noting that the book-seller had said "a few days" and Boyle "not nine" and that in any case Boyle was not very much obliged to the man to whom Bennett had assigned the work. The request that the MS. should have been allowed out until the Sunday morning was unnecessary, says Bentley, emphasising the shortness of the task by reference to his own experiment, and also impracticable for he was due to leave for Worcester at 5 a.m. on Monday and having to be elsewhere on the Sunday would have no opportunity of visiting the Library; besides the key of the "outward door was then in the custody of another, who perhaps might not be met with upon Sunday". (20)

Bentley's reply to Bennett's assertion that he gave him not "the least hopes " of a further loan, is that he had no suspicion that the collation was not finished. Bennett's "certificate" certainly does not show that Bentley was so informed. Turning to Dr. King's "certificate" Bentley remarks upon the strangeness of his remembering only one item of the conversation - Bentley's point that "if the MS. were collated it would be worth nothing for the future". King asserted that he "took the more notice" of that remark because he "thought a MS. good for nothing unless it were collated". Bentley replies to this by pointing out that an uncollated MS. is "worth nothing to the rest of the world but to the owner it is the better for it, if a price were to be set upon it". The conversation overheard by King - whose presence Bentley cannot recall - took place, says Bentley, before

he was in a position, to procure the MS. for Boyle. Would he then have "used [him] so scurvily" as King asserts, when Boyle acknowledges the "civil expressions" of a letter of a much later date? Bentley says that he is "almost persuaded that Mr. Boyle's name was not once mentioned in that conversation". (21)

At this point Bentley begs "leave to tell [the reader] a short story". A copy of every book printed in England had, by Act of Parliament, to be presented to the Royal Library. Lately, says Bentley, this had not been done but from the Master of the Stationers' Company he had demanded, and obtained, "near a thousand volumes". Bentley "acquainted" Bennett with this, "not questioning but he would be very ready to comply, as far as his share went; which was then but very little". Bennett, however, replied "very pertly", questioning the right of Parliament "to give away any man's property", and threatening joint legal action by the booksellers. Bentley pointed out that the collation of the MS. Bennett desired to borrow (i.e. the Phalaris) would make it "little worth for the future", and that he should therefore present to the Library some book of competent value to make amends for the damage it would sustain by his using the MS." But this remark, asserts Bentley, "was but in jest" and intended "but to mortify him a little for his pertness about going to law". This conversation with Bennett, adds Bentley, must be the one overheard by Dr. King (22)

Bentley reports another conversation with the bookseller in the course of which Bennett asked whether "the new edition of Phalaris, then in the press, would be a vendible book, for he

had a concern in the impression". Bentley assured him that it would sell well enough, recommended as it was by several "great names", but that "under the rose, the book was a spurious piece". Nevertheless, continues Bentley, "I was informed from a very good hand" that Bennett had betrayed "this discourse to some concerned in the edition". (2³₂)

Bentley then turns to Boyle's observation "That Mr. Bennett is so little interested in this dispute that he may entirely be depended on". He comments "So very little that the best part of his interest and his trade lay at stake". Boyle asked Bennett to have the collation of the MS. done; Bennett neglected to do so and fearing to lose Boyle's "favour and custom" blamed Bentley; from this resulted "an affront in print". This is Bentley's reading of the matter although he is fair enough to Bennett to consider "that he did not think Boyle" would have carried his resentment so high ... But the business was afterwards past recalling and he must go on of necessity", for "his trade and business seemed to depend upon Mr. B. and his friends. The temptation indeed was strong, and I pray God forgive him" (24)

Bentley is fair to Bennett but the facts are against the bookseller. Bentley's suspicions are well founded and he might have added that Bennett would probably have few scruples about blaming for the delayed loan of the MS., the man whose demand for books to be presented to the Library he so "pertly" resented.

Bentley's defence of the phrase "the editors of Phalaris"

is unconvincing but shows a desire to make reparation. Yet later he persists in the insinuation when he says that Boyle's reference to his director of studies seemed to him to indicate at least two editors. Several pages are devoted to a detailed refutation of Sir Edward Sherburn's complaint (a) and to an account of a foreigner's (b) unreasonable request to take away the Alexandrian MS. for collation. Bentley had of course refused the request, (such a task would occupy six months), and Boyle had cited this as a further sample of his humanity and blamed him for the untidiness of the Library, which he said Bentley had put forward as an excuse. (25)

Bentley makes another specious attempt to placate Boyle. He had spoken in his "First Dissertation" of the "young gentleman ... whose name is set to the edition" and Boyle had naturally resented the insinuation. Bentley now writes that "this edition is ascribed to me and my name is set to the edition and yet I assure him 'tis my own". He concedes that the tutor had "no hand" in the edition of Phalaris but on the assumption that he would have "more wit, more learning and more judgment". He regrets the necessity of ill language - "calumny", "injustice", "forgery", etc. (c) - but insists that if Boyle "will do an ill

(a) See above p 34.

(b) This foreigner, according to "A Short Review of the Controversy between Mr. Boyle & Dr. Bentley" 1701. (attributed to both Francis Atterbury and Francis Gastrell - see S. Halkett and J. Laing "Dictionary of anonymous & pseudonymous English literature" Edinburgh 1926-34.v260) was a Dane named Fosse. From C.F.Bricka's "Dansk Biografisk Lexikon" (Copenhagen 1887-1905) v 265, 268, it would seem to be either Niels Foss, a bookcollector, 1670-1751, or Laurids Foss, a student of theology, 1637-1703, who visited England, France and Holland.

(c) See above p 33f.

thing, he must excuse me if I give it its true, and consequently an ill name". "I am more sorry", he says "that I had occasion to say them than Mr. B. can be to hear them". He shows how Boyle has misapplied the phrase "basest tricks" and the proverb of Leucon and his ass, and how to say that Boyle is like a "bungling tinker", is not to say that he is a "bungling tinker", (a) (26)

"I do not love the unmanly work of making long complaints of injuries", continues Bentley, and he passes by Boyle's sneers at his learning obtained from "indexes and vocabularies" with the contempt that they and Swift's similar sneers through "A Tale of a Tub" (b) and "The Battle of the Books" (c) deserve.

But the charges of pedantry seem to have annoyed Bentley for he devotes twelve pages to refuting the seven marks of a pedant which Boyle had claimed to detect in him. The "long banter" proving that Bentley did not write the "Dissertation" he considers "insipid" and rather "written in a tavern than in a study", although this "jeu d'esprit" of Sm^lbridge's (d) is the wittiest part of the volume, for nearly half of it is made up of quotations from the "First Dissertation" slightly altered to refer, not to

(a) *ibid*; but Boyle had not said Bentley called him a "bungling tinker"; he realises he is only likened to one ("Boyle against Bentley" 11)

(b) See below p 98.

(c) See below p 61.

(d) Monk (1105) makes this attribution on "the authority of Dr. Salter who had conversed with Bentley on the subject".

Phalaris, but to Bentley.(27)

Bentley concludes by noting that Boyle threatens him with a reply, and, while not prescribing to him any method of answering, he makes "bold to tell him what I shall look upon to be no answer". Bentley enumerates six ways of answering of which the first and fifth are significant for one tells against his scrupulousness and the other against his manners. "If he pretends that he did not maintain that his Phalaris is genuine" writes Bentley under the first heading, "I shall look upon this as a shuffle". There is no shuffle at all, however, for Boyle's preface to his editors sets out the pros and cons of the question and in the preface to "Boyle against Bentley" he repeats his "caution and reserve in this matter". Under the fifth heading Bentley for once departs from the good manners he has almost invariably maintained throughout all pages when he indirectly refers to Boyle's work as "merest trash" adding that "he may commit more mistakes in five weeks time and in five sheets of paper than can be thoroughly confuted in fifty sheets and a whole year". (28) Although this is hyperbole it is not without justification; a scholar's exasperation for editorial tinkers is understandable.

It is regrettable that a few words in a preface should have caused the writing of so many pages irrelevant to the main issue and produced bad blood between two scholars and gentlemen. The comparison of Boyle's attack on Bentley's "humanity" and

the latter's defence shows that the man of greater scholarship had also the advantage in manners. The details eagerly set down as reflections on Bentley in the volume of 1698 show a disgraceful pettiness and recklessness of accusation on the part of Boyle and his helpers, and barely deserve the documented refutations which Bentley gives them. Although Bentley's way of controversy is usually well mannered, he occasionally forgets himself and uses harsh language. - "Augeas's stables" and "merest trash". Equally inexcusable are his bland insistence on the plurality of editors of Phalaris and his specious attempts to justify it. But his only wilfulness was to reject Boyle's truthful assertions that he never insisted upon the genuineness of Phalaris. Throughout, Bentley manages his case well and his replies to Boyle's accusations must be allowed to clear him of the charges against his "humanity". But the difficulty of extracting truth from accusation and flat denial is increased by vagueness of statement and ambiguity of expression. The general impression after reading Boyle's two accusations and Bentley's two defences is that the latter is in the right and that the evidence of Bennett, the bookseller, is very suspect. Boyle's original fault was to trust Bennett's word too much and too exclusively, while Bentley's greatest fault was to ignore the fact that Boyle's preface to Phalaris left the question of spuriousness open.

In the face of two conflicting explanations of nearly every incident in the matter of the loan, it is impossible to be

certain of what actually did happen. Nevertheless a reconstruction can be made.

Boyle began his study of Phalaris "about the middle of 1693" assisted by John Freind, a junior Student (a) as his director of studies. For the edition the collation of all accessible MS. copies was necessary and one of these, of no great age or value (29), belonged to the Library of St. James's Palace. Accordingly Boyle wrote to Bennett, his bookseller, simply directing him "to get the MS." from Bentley. (30) From his inexperience he did not realise that such commissions are not usually entrusted to a bookseller. (31) Bennett for a time did nothing but eventually sent a collator, George Gibson, with a printed Phalaris to Sion College (32), presumably imagining that it and the King's Library were the same. He also sought the help of Bentley, when the latter casually visited his shop, (33), by asking him to procure the MS. on loan. Bennett's first request was made early in 1694 and Bentley promised willingly "to help a young man related to a person of glorious memory" [i.e. Robert Boyle.] (34) At that time, however, Bentley had not the "MS. in his power",⁽³⁵⁾ although it was later suggested that he might have obtained the MS. by applying to the two scholars who were then cataloguing the library and whom he occasionally assisted. (36) The real cause of the offence, however, arose from Bennett's confidential question 'What was

(a) A Student of Christ Church corresponds to a Fellow or Scholar of other colleges. (New English Dictionary)

Bentley's opinion of the work on which Boyle was employed?". Bentley assured him that the volume would sell but added that the Epistles were spurious (37) (a). Further applications from Oxford forced Bennett, to excuse himself, to blame the new Librarian, whom, he asserted, he had long solicited in vain and who had spoken slightingly of both book and editor.(b) Boyle and his friends believed this account entirely. Later Bennett met Bentley in the street and renewed his request for the MS. He was promised that "he should have it as soon as he sent for it to his (Bentley's) lodgings" (38). Accordingly it was delivered to Bennett's messenger that day with a request to lose no time over the collation as Bentley was shortly leaving town and must replace the MS. before going. (39) The favour, therefore, was granted the first time it was requested after Bentley became librarian and so nothing but misrepresentation of the facts could have led to a charge of discourtesy. On the Saturday before the Monday morning he was due to leave, Bentley applied for the return of the MS. (40) It is uncertain for how long the MS. was in Bennett's hands - Boyle says "nine days" (41) , Bentley "five or six", Bennett "a few days", but clearly there was ample time for the collation. Not, however, until the last minute did Bennett apparently send the MS. to Gibson (c) and very little collating had been done when the

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- (a) See above P. 45 f.
 - (b) See above p. 46.
 - (c) See below p 54 f.

request for its return was carried to the collator. (42) Gibson's solicitation for more time only ^{secured} seemed an extension till evening for Bentley refused to risk the safety of the MS. during his absence and it was returned to him without any intimation that only forty epistles had been collated (43). Bennett's account of the matter, the best way of concealing his own negligence, convinced Boyle that he had been personally affronted. Furthermore it was in Bennett's interests to represent himself as blameless. "To Bentley, had the transaction been fairly stated, not a shadow of blame could be attached and Boyle was censurable only for giving implicit credit to the representations of his agent". (44)

This reconstruction is the one accepted by J.H. Monk, Bentley's biographer, but he gives no analysis of the declarations of Boyle and Bentley themselves. He refers to material in the Bodleian Library (45) in a manner which seems to suggest that there be found evidence to corroborate his statements. For example, in a note to his description of Bennett's request to Bentley when they met casually in the street and of the delivery of the MS. with Bentley's injunction to lose no time because he must replace the book before leaving town, Monk records Bennett's denial of the injunction but adds that a letter among the ^a Ballard MSS. proves Bentley's assertion of it was right (46). Monk writes that this letter contains an account "by Gibson, the collator, copied in a letter from the Rev. Edmund Gibson, afterwards Bishop of London, his relation, to Dr. Charlett". (a) (47) But this account only leads to further confusion. In it, George Gibson, the collator,

It is not a copy that is preserved but the letter itself from the collator dated and postmarked April 2nd. 1695.

writes of his visit to Sion College with a printed (a) Phalaris. Finding his visit fruitless "I delivered Mr. Bennett his Phalaris again, but some time after he sends it back with a MS. that was borrowed of the Library Keeper (I think) of St. James's, desiring me, withal, to collate it with all the speed I could. I forthwith went about it and (if I be not very much mistaken) laid all other business aside; but by that time I had compared twenty or thirty pages, or thereabouts, Mr. Bennett's man comes post haste for the foresaid MS. for Mr. (or Dr.) Bentley who stayed at their shop for it. I told the messenger how little I had done (not in respect of the time I had it) and desired him to tell the Library Keeper that I would make all the haste I could and carefully return him his MS. as soon as I had done with it. I cannot be positive whether or no I forced the messenger to come twice for it; but this I am sure of, that I could have no rest until I had sent back not only the MS. but the printed book and also the variations I had got down in convenient slips of paper ... I also sent this message along with them 'That they would easily see how far I had gone; I would make what haste I could with the rest' (b) and bid the messenger be sure to bring me my corrections again, all of which he promised to do. But I never saw any of them since and had forgotten the book, had I not one day been told of the compliment the publisher of the foresaid epistles had given the Library-keeper for his civility. This is all I know of the matter but one may easily suppose the Library-keeper was sufficiently acquainted how far I

(a) See above p 51

(b) George Gibson's underlinings.

had gone, seeing the MS. and printed book, with the corrections on a sheet of paper folded in 16 mo. lengthways, put in where I left off were carried altogether to Mr. B's shop. But of this Mr. Bennett to be sure is able to satisfy you fully". (48)

This letter does not prove, as Monk asserts it does, (49) that Bentley told Bennett that the MS. must be replaced before he left town. Rather it supports Bennett's statements and is a fuller account of Gibson's part than the "certificate" published by Boyle and dated July 15th. 1697. According to the letter, Gibson began collating the MS. "with all the speed he could" as soon as it was brought to him. Consequently it was in his hands only long enough for him to have "compared twenty or thirty pages". At that point he returned it to Bennett, as requested, hoping to have it brought back for the collation to be completed. Bentley, says Gibson, knew that the collation was not completed.

But George Gibson seems to be an uncertain witness. He confesses he is unsure of the number of times the messenger called upon him for the MS. and three times he qualifies statements with "I think" or "if I be not very much mistaken". If he wrote the truth and he had the MS. in his possession only long enough to collate twenty or thirty pages then the responsibility for that must be Bennett's who himself admits that he had the MS. for "a few days". (50) Gibson's account clearly implies that the MS. was in his possession merely for a few hours. One of the two men must be lying and there seems to be little reason to doubt the good faith of a private letter. Gibson thought that

by sending his collations to Bennett he could thereby show Bentley how incomplete the task was, but he was wrong to assume that Bentley necessarily saw his collations. Bennett probably made sure that he did not. Gibson's letter, in fact, throws more doubt on to Bennett's integrity and reveals the book-seller as further censurable for delaying to give to his collator the MS. he had already delayed to borrow. The inconclusiveness of the "certificate" which Gibson made two years after this letter would be due to a desire to support Boyle and Bennett without distorting the truth. He was careful enough to tell no lies, but tactful enough to say nothing to incriminate his employer. Bennett could hardly expect more.

Bennett, as Bentley realised (51) was an unreliable witness. He was too much an interested party and Boyle should not have trusted his word before Bentley's. He made Bentley the scapegoat for his own negligence but Bentley has been completely vindicated.

CHAPTER III."THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS".

In "The Battle of the Books" (a) there are only three direct references to Bentley's "humanity". The first reference to the scholar is as "The Guardian of the Regal Library .. chiefly renowned for his humanity". (1) A footnote, added in 1710, most probably by Swift himself, (b) misquotes Boyle's words in the preface to his edition of Phalaris as "pro solita humanitate sua". Had this note been in the first edition of 1704 it might be adduced to prove that Swift was not at any pains to get himself well-informed. This librarian, continues Swift, "had been a fierce champion for the moderns" and although this was the assumption which a student of the controversy would naturally make, it was one against which Bentley himself had guarded in his "First Dissertation" - "I write without any view or regard to your controversy". Bentley never took part in the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns. Nevertheless Swift drags him into it, the better to attack him.

This librarian, says Swift, had "vowed... to knock down two of the ancients' chiefs" but he "failed in his design". (2) Swift, then, does not consider, or will not admit, that Bentley's "First Dissertation" was conclusive and this attitude was typical

(a) For its chronological relation to other pieces produced by the quarrel, see above pp 27f, 30f.

(b) see below p107f

of many, particularly after Boyle's retort in 1698. Apparently Swift was no more convinced by the "Enlarged Dissertation" and this too was the general reaction. In 1749 Thomas Francklin, (professor of Greek at Cambridge 1750-9), published an English translation of Phalaris. He observed that Bentley put forward "several very specious arguments" to disprove the genuineness of the Epistles, but he maintained the book to "be authentic in the main and an original still" and allowed Bentley's "strongest" arguments to affect only "particular epistles". (3) Many years passed before Tyrwhitt could describe the opponents of Bentley as "laid low", as by a thunderbolt", or Porson pronounce it an "immortal dissertation" (a) (4). It is a mistake to think that Bentley's victory was so complete by 1699 that the genuineness of Phalaris was never reasserted. (b)

The Librarian's failure to "knock down" the two ancients, continues Swift, led him to hide all ancient books in obscure corners of the library and at that time there was a "strange confusion of place among all the books in the library". (5) The first mention in the controversy between Bentley and his opponents of the library's untidiness was made by Boyle. He says that a scholar who applied to Bentley "to have a sight of the Alexandrian

(a) "immortalis illa de Phalaridis Epistolis Dissertatio" J.S. Watson "Life of Richard Porson" (1861) 28.

(b) R.C. Jebb "Bentley" (1882), who gives these instances, adds Richard Cumberland, Bentley's grandson, as referring apologetically to the part played in the controversy by his grandfather, but he merely asks pardon if "my judgment went with him to whom my inclination leant". "Memoirs" (1807) i 114. quoted by Jebb. 82. Cumberland defends Bentley against charges of being "overbearing" and ill-mannered. i. 8 - 16.

MS. (a) was told "that the library was not fit to be seen"., (6) - Bentley admitted the state of the library, which he had often lamented, but denied that it was his fault and said that on account of the confusion he kept the MS. at his lodgings so that "persons might see it without seeing the library". (7) A French traveller in England in the last years of the century, François Maximilien Misson, commented on the condition of the library and added, "J'apprens que le Docteur Bentley... fait tout ce qu'il peut pour le retablir". The complaint seems to have been too general and continuous for it to be said with certainty that Swift took it over from Boyle and that therefore this part of the "Battle of the Books" was written after 1690. - Misson, for example, writes "Il y a des livres en gage chez les relieurs depuis je ne sais combien d'années. Charles II. s'en moquait". (8)

The second reference to Bentley's "humanity" occurs when Aesop is spoken of as being "most barbarously treated by a strange effect of the Regent's humanity who had tore off his title-page, sorely defaced one half of his leaves, and chained him fast among a shelf of moderns". (9) This seems to be a tacit admission of the effect of Bentley's writing against Aesop and is therefore at variance with the earlier statement that he "failed in his design". The plan of "The Battle of the Books" demanded neither a rejection nor an acceptance of Bentley's proof. Perhaps Swift is inclined at times to accept the proof or perhaps he is merely inconsistent. Whatever his private opinion it was obviously

(a) See above p47 for this unreasonable request.

most pleasing to Temple if Swift maintained that Bentley had "failed in his design".

Wotton is mentioned for the first time nearly two-thirds of the way through "The Battle of the Books" as "W--tt--n" son of the Goddess Criticism" whose other children are "Noise and Impudence, Dullness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry and Ill-Manners". Immediately afterwards Bentley is first referred to openly as "B--ntl--y". As the contestants await the opening of the battle, the Goddess "took the ugliest of her monsters, full glutted from her spleen and flung it invisibly into his [Wotton's] mouth, which, flying straight up into his head, squeezed out his eyeballs, gave him a distorted look and half overturned his brain". This accusation of mental unbalance is repeated in "A Tale of a Tub" where "distortion of mind and countenance" (a) are again joined together (10).

Criticism, continues Swift, "ordered two of her beloved children, Dullness and Ill-manners "to attend Wotton in his encounters. Wotton in his "Reflections" had expressed

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- (a) The references to distorted countenance probably indicate that Swift is thinking of Wotton as a Puritan (for satiric descriptions of the Puritans' countenance see C.M. Webster "Publications of the Modern Language Association of America" XLVII. p 175. note 20) Wotton, however, was chaplain to the High Church Tory, the Earl of Nottingham ("Dismal"), and the opponent of the free thinkers, Toland and Tindal (x). His(y) father had lived with, and been trained by, Meric Casaubon, on whose "Treatise concerning Enthusiasm" (1655) Swift drew for his attacks on the Puritans in "A Tale of a Tub" (see pp.91-4) In his attacks on Bentley and Wotton Swift was not scrupulous in accusation. (x){y} "Dictionary of National Biography".

the fear that he may "be thought as tedious as an Irish tale-teller" but such fear was unnecessary for his work, with its "clear statements of fact", is "the best summary of discoveries in nature and physical science up to its date". (11) - as such of course, it would be dull to Swift. Swift's charges of ill-manners are more inexcusable as has been shown; Wotton's rudeness consisted merely in opposing Temple.

The last fifth of "The Battle of the Books" is devoted to the episode of Wotton and Bentley. It opens with the most direct and most unfair attack on Bentley which Swift ever wrote, although for all that it is amusing. Bentley is introduced as "the most deformed of all the moderns, tall but without shape and comeliness, large but without strength or proportion", with a "crooked leg and hump shoulder" (a). His armour is "patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces - a gibe at his ability to quote and his reputed index learning (b). He is given a flail; a footnote added in 1710, most probably by Swift himself (c), explains that Bentley is famous for letting fly at every body without distinction and using mean and foul scurrilities". His "talent of railing" is emphasised and he is represented as telling the

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- (a) This recalls the description of Aesop by Maximus Planudes to which Bentley had taken strong exception (First Dissertation 148-52) see above p 2b.
- (b) See below p 98 Also in his preface to his edition of Aesop (1698) made a similar attack, speaking of "Quendam Bentleium virum in volvendis Lexicis satis diligentum".
- (c) Below p 108.

"modern generals" that "they were all a pack of rogues and fools and sons of whores and damned cowards and confounded loggerheads and illiterate whelps and nonsensical scoundrels". This is a satire on the "scurrilous language" and the "low and clownish expressions" which, according to Boyle, made up Bentley's style. (12) Bentley's style lacks the elegance of Temple's ^{on} the "inevitable rightness" of Swift's; it is direct, serviceable and workaday; it is not "low and clownish" but, usually, undistinguished; it has vigour and liveliness and in a few isolated places it becomes strong - scouring the Augean stables, the "idiot of a monk", "the fardel of commonplaces" which he considers the Epistles of Phalaris to be, and the "putrid and senseless formality" of a few of them. (13) This is what Swift is satirising in this passage but it is a vigorous, not a low, style, and it contains very little impoliteness.

The third reference to Bentley's "humanity" occurs in Scaliger's retort to Bentley when he accuses him of being also "rude and intractable" and cowardly. Bentley, "half-choked with spleen and rage" withdraws. He seeks Wotton and together they make a sortie. The burlesque of an epic simile, in which Swift compares them to "two mongrel curs whom native greediness and domestic want provoke and join in partnership, though fearful, nightly to invade the folds of some rich grazier", is one of the best indications of its nature and form (14) To use an epic simile to describe two moderns (for Swift naturally continues to consider them as such) is a clever way of attacking them but it is possible that Swift has his tongue in his cheek and is hitting

at the length and irrelevancy of a form natural to the party he purports to defend. A footnote added in 1710 to another epic simile bears this out. (a)

Bentley finds Phalaris and Aesop asleep and is about to attack the former, aiming "his flail at Phalaris's breast", when the Goddess Affright interposes and drags Bentley away. Aesop is dreaming of "a wild ass [which] broke loose [and] ran about trampling and kicking and dunging in their faces". All references to asses in "The Battle of the Books" and "A Tale of a Tub" (15) apply to critics in general and Bentley in particular because he had used the proverb "That Leucon carries one thing and his ass quite another". (16) Bentley leaves the two heroes asleep but removes their armour.

Wotton, meanwhile, is shown "with quaking knees and trembling hands" watching Temple refresh himself. He says to himself, "Oh that I could kill this destroyer of our army" - which is a reversal of the rôles, making the defenders the attackers. "But to issue out against him man for man ... what modern of us dare?" he asks, exaggerating the polite deference, paid by both himself and Bentley, into submissive awe. He prays that he may "hit Temple with this lance, that the stroke may send him to Hell" and that he may "return in safety and triumph, laden with his spoils". The first part of his prayer was granted through the intercession of Criticism and Momus but the wind scattered

(a) See below p 66.

the second part. Wotton throws his spear (i.e. publishes his "Reflections") but it does not harm Temple; this is doubly misleading for Wotton did not attack Temple directly and spoils were gained - though not by Wotton but by Bentley later and without immediate recognition (a). Apollo, enraged at Wotton's action, commands Boyle "to take immediate revenge" and he, "clad in a suit of armour" ... given him by all the gods" (b), pursues the "trembling" Wotton. This must mean that Boyle attacked Wotton in "Boyle against Bentley" but it is wrong for Boyle compares Wotton favourably with Bentley - "Mr. W.... is modest and decent, speaks generally with respect of those he differs from ... Mr. W's book has a vein of learning running through it"; (c) furthermore, he thinks that Bentley's "First Dissertation" was appended to the "Reflections" without Wotton "giving himself the trouble of reading it". Boyle, continues Swift, leaves his pursuit of Wotton when he sees Bentley with the armour of Phalaris and Aesop "both which he had lately with his own hands new polished and gilded". (d) Boyle pursues Bentley who hurls "a spear with all his force", but Pallas prevented it

- (a) See Above p 57f. for the delayed effect of the Dissertations
- (b) Atterbury and others assisted in the writing of his book. See note p³¹ above.
- (c) Boyle is quoting "a gentleman of my acquaintance" but he subscribes to his words.
- (d) Anthony Alsop, another Christ Church man, edited Aesop in 1698 Swift ascribes his edition to the editor of Phalaris purely for brevity and effect.

from harming Boyle. Then the latter, with "a lance of wondrous length and sharpness", impales both Bentley and Wotton together and with the two friends trussed like woodcocks on a single skewer and Swift's assertion that "Charon would mistake them both for one and waft them over Styx for half his fare". the "Battle of the Books" ends with asterisks and "Desunt Caetera". Bentley's spear in his "First Dissertation" and Boyle's in his retort in 1698; that the former had little effect and was well answered was the contemporary view which Swift had accepted earlier in "The Battle of the Books". (a) Temple, of course, accepted it too. Writing of Boyle's performance he praises "the compass and application of so much learning, the strength and pertinence of his arguments, the candour of his relations, in return to such foul-mouthed raillery, the pleasant turns of wit and the easiness of style [which] are in my opinion as extraordinary as the contrary of these all appear to be in what the Doctor and his friend have written". He himself, he continues, did not answer because he "had no mind to enter the lists with such a mean, dull unmannerly pedant". Self deception could hardly go further. In the outcry against Bentley which ensued, John Keill, John Milner, Dr. Garth and Dean Aldrich took part. (17)

Thus, however monstrous Swift's action in giving Boyle the victory over Bentley may appear to-day he was only accepting and expressing the contemporary verdict. The episode of Bentley and Wotton must have been written after the publication

(a) "Battle of the Books" (ed. Guthkelch & Smith) 225.

See above p 57f.

of "Boyle against Bentley".

But in this closing section Swift makes a concession to the moderns for to his simile of "a woman in a little house that gets a painful livelihood by spinning" etc. he inserts a footnote in 1710 which says that the figure is "after the manner of Homer; the woman's getting a painful livelihood has nothing to do with the similitude, nor would be excusable without such an authority". It therefore seems very likely that in the four epic similes which he uses in the episode of Bentley and Wotton - the "mongrel curs", the "young lion in the Libyan desert", the "woman in a little house" and the "skilful cook" trussing "a brace of woodcocks" (18) - Swift is laughing at the ancients and hence at his own side.

Swift's satiric account of the encounters of Wotton and Bentley with Temple and Boyle is completely inaccurate but would have been accepted as truthful by his original readers. He is hardly to be blamed for being no less blind and biassed than they but at least he might have taken greater care before subscribing to the baseless attacks on Bentley's humanity. His attacks on Wotton's manners are even more inexcusable for Boyle himself paid tribute to them.

Swift is quite capable of laughing at the similes of the ancients but he also turns on his own side in other ways and shows himself indifferent to, or contemptuous of, the quarrel.

Thus he recognises the virulence of both parties and for him the "new species of controversial books" on both sides are "instinct with a most malignant spirit" (19). The episode of Bentley and Wotton and of the spider and the bee would seem to put Swift uncompromisingly behind the ancients; but the first episode is baseless if witty and effective, and the second, whether Swift intended it or not, really supports the moderns.

The spider's castle was guarded by "turnpikes and palissadoes, all after the modern way of fortification", and the bee, in extricating himself, causes "chasms and ruins and dilapidations". This is Swift's attack on the modern mathematics of defence (a). The spider addresses the bee and asks "What art thou but a vagabond without house or home, without stock and inheritance? born to no possession of your own, but a pair of wings and a drone pipe. Your livelihood is an universal plunder upon Nature, a freebooter over fields and gardens; and for the sake of stealing will rob a nettle as readily as a violet. Whereas I am a domestic animal, furnished with a native stock within myself. This large castle (to show my improvements in the mathematics) is all built with my own hands, and the material extracted altogether out of my own person." The bee

(a) Swift is following Temple who asserted the superiority of the ancients' fortifications (Miscellanea 1145 f. 111 226-30) Perrault upheld the moderns' claims to superiority (Paralleles... dialogue 5)

answers "I am glad to hear you grant at least that I am come honestly by my wings and my voice, for then it seems I am obliged to Heaven alone for my flights and my music; and providence would never have bestowed on me two such gifts without designing them for the noblest ends. I visit, indeed, all the flowers and blossoms of the field and the garden, but whatever I collect from thence enriches myself without the least injury to their beauty, their smell or their taste". (a) After asserting that the materials used by the spider in his fortifications "are nought", the bee continues, "You boast, indeed, of being obliged to no other creature, but of drawing and spinning out all from yourself, that is to say, if we may judge of the liquor in the vessel by what issues out, you possess a good plentiful store of dirt and poison in your breast.. Your inherent portion of dirt does not fail of acquisitions by sweepings exhaled from below; and one insect furnishes you with a share of poison to destroy another. So that in short, the question all comes to this; Whether is the nobler being of the two, that which by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride, which feeding and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, producing nothing at all but flybane and a cobweb: or that, which, by an universal range, with long search, much study, true judgment, and distinction of things, brings home honey and wax". (20)

(a) Temple, in his essay "On Poetry" has a similar passage on the "genius of poetry" (Miscellanea ii. 323.)

To make Aesop apply this conversation to the quarrel of ancients and moderns is a witty retort to Bentley's proof that his fables, in their present state, were a product of the fourteenth century. The fabulist is made to ask the ancients "was ever anything so modern as the spider in his air, his turns and his paradoxes? He argues in the behalf of you his brethren and himself with many boastings of his native stock and great genius; that he spins and spits wholly from himself, and scorns to own any obligation or assistance from without ... To all this the bee, as an advocate, retained by us, the ancients, thinks fit to answer; That if one may judge of the great genius or inventions of the moderns by what they have produced, you will hardly have countenance to bear you out in boasting of either. Erect your schemes with as much method and skill as you please; yet, if the materials be nothing but dirt, spun out of your own entrails, (the guts of modern brains) the edifice will conclude at last in a cobweb, the duration of which, like that of other spiders' webs, may be imputed to their being forgotten, or neglected, or hid in a corner. For anything else of genuine that the moderns may pretend to, I cannot recollect, unless it be a large vein of wrangling and satire, much of a nature and substance with the spider's poison, which, however, to pretend to spit wholly out of themselves is improved by the same arts, by feeding upon the insects and vermin of the age". (21) This "large vein of wrangling and satire" - the latter of which Swift has in abundance - had been

similarly deplored by Temple on the one side and by Wotton and Sprat on the other (22). Aesop concludes his application of the fable by shewing how the bee represents the ancients, "As for us, the ancients, we are content with the bee, to pretend to nothing of our own, beyond our wings and our voice, that is to say, our flights and our language; for the rest, whatever we have got has been by infinite labour and search and ranging through every corner of nature: the difference is, that instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chose to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light". (23)

According to this fable, the spider, producing everything out of himself, is the modern, and the bee, ranging everywhere throughout nature, is the ancient. The spider produces dirt, the bee sweetness and light.

But the method of the spider, spinning out of his own entrails, making no use of the world around him, is the deductive method of Aristotle and the ancients; the bee searching every corner of Nature follows the inductive method of Bacon, the observer and experimenter.

Moreover, Bacon uses a figure like that of the bee ranging everywhere. In the fifth book of "De Augmentis Scientiarum" he writes "For he that shall attentively observe how the mind gathers this excellent dew of knowledge like to that the poet speaks of" - *aerei mellis coelestia dona* (a)—(for the sciences

(a) Virgil "Georgics" iv. 1.

themselves are extracted out of particular instances, partly natural, partly artificial, as the flowers of the field and the garden)" etc. Bacon saw the danger of basing knowledge on reason or logic as the non-experimenting ancients based theirs, for he argued that reason "or logic" has been so long divorced from facts that it has fixed errors rather than discovered truth, and, therefore, the important step is to return to a purely sensuous knowledge of natural things, and from that foundation to work slowly upward, constantly guiding and controlling the mind by observations and experiments. "These observations must be "collected from the widest sources" and the vast amount of "ranging" to be done necessitated a large body of men. Robert Boyle, Wotton, and Sprat also saw the need for this co-operation which was a constantly emphasised theme of the century. The experiments which Sprat lists are eloquent witnesses to the moderns' "ranging through every corner of nature" and include experiments of fire, air, and water, of metals and stones, of vegetables, of sensible and other qualities, of light and sound and motion, and experiments medicinal, anatomical, chemical and mathematical. (24)

Thus Aesop is wrong to equate the bee with the ancients and the spider with the moderns. The spider producing everything from himself represented the personal and dogmatic method against which Bacon had continually warned the new science. (25) Bacon substituted an inductive method for the

deductive method of the ancients, but the attack on Aristotelianism which followed was directed less at the ancients' methods than at the stultifying^t effect such methods had on succeeding ages. (26)

Swift's fable is thus completely misapplied and must be reversed to become at all appropriate to the quarrel of ancients and moderns. Swift is either forcing the issue or laughing at his own side as he does with his four epic similes. He is capable of doing either, but the attribution to the ancients of universal ranging over Nature and the denial of it to the moderns is so grossly wrong that it seems the more likely that he is laughing at his allies. But certainty is impossible. Temple had claimed extensive travels for Pythagoras in his search for knowledge (a) and Swift may be echoing him. At all events the application of the fable will not bear examination and with it disappears the implied superiority of the ancients. Just as the false accusations in the episode of Bentley and Wotton invalidate the truth, but not the efficacy, of that episode, the inappropriateness of the fable of the spider and the bee has a similar effect; the fable is clever, but misapplied. Intellectually Swift is in a hopeless position but he makes it seem tenable by wit and satire. There was no other effective method of replying to Bentley.

It seems significant that "The Battle of the Books" breaks off with the episode of Bentley and Wotton and with the

(a) See above p2f and note (a) p3.

battle undecided. The results of combats between individuals however, are given. Aristotle, shooting an arrow at Bacon, misses him and hits Descartes who is whirled round "till Death like a star of superior influence drew him into his own vortex" (a)—the fact that he and not Bacon is wounded can be explained by Temple's reference to Bacon as one of the greatest of the moderns.(27) Homer overthrows Davenant, Denham, Wesley, Perrault and Fontenelle. Virgil encounters Dryden, who wears a helmet "nine times too large for [his] head", and emphasises their relationship and proposes an exchange of armour, to which Virgil, blinded by a mist "cast... before his eyes" by the goddess Diffidence, agrees. Lucan attacks Blackmore, but Aesculapius turns aside his lance.(b) Pindar slays Oldham and Aphra Behn and then Cowley, despite all his pleas.⁽²⁸⁾ Then follows the encounter of Boyle with Wotton and Bentley. In all these single combats victory falls to the ancients or, as in the last instance, to their supporters. It is just that Homer, Virgil and Pindar should resist all challenges and Swift avoids the folly of giving Aristotle supremacy over Bacon, but he sets him above Descartes. The triumph of Boyle over Wotton and Bentley has been shown to be unwarranted. But victory as a whole is assigned neither to ancients nor to moderns -

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- (a) Another disparaging reference to Descartes' theory of vortices occurs in "A Tale of a Tub"(ed. Guthkelch & Smith) p.167)
- (b) "His skill as a physician atoned for his dullness as a poet" (Hawkesworth's note.i.213 in his 12 mo edition in 27 vols. 1766-79)

Jupiter consults "the book of fate" but "having silently read the decree would communicate the import to none". (29) and an assumed hiatus in the MS. enables Swift to conclude without indicating the victors. Either he tired of the work or could not accept the logical conclusion to Aesop's application of the spider and the bee, the individual combats and the episode of Bentley and Wotton - that is a victory for the ancients. The true implication of the fable seems to suggest the latter explanation. His patron, rather than his inclination, put Swift on the side of the ancients.

The quarrel of ancients and moderns in France had provoked Temple's essay but Swift's contribution to the controversy shows that it had little influence on "The Battle of the Books" itself for Fontenelle, Perrault and Boileau are each mentioned only once. The first two are instanced merely as killed by Homer, but Boileau is mentioned with Cowley, (who is mercilessly slain by Pindar) as joint-commanders of the moderns' light-horse. In his "Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning" Temple asks indignantly whether Harvey has outshone Hippocrates, Wilkins, Archimedes, Slayden; Caesar, and Boileau, Virgil, but in the "Review of the Essay", which Swift published in 1701, Temple states that Boileau and Racine ridiculed the modern pretenders. Temple has apparently reconsidered his attitude to Boileau but Swift in 1697-9 accepts Temple's earlier attitude and finds no reason to change it

when he publishes the "Battle" in 1704. Boileau's inclusion among the moderns has been explained as "without satirical purpose", he being there as a representative modern poet, like Milton. (30) But it can be shown that Temple's original attitude to Boileau, regarding him as a modern, was not unjustified and that Swift in following him was not revealing his ignorance of the continental aspect of the quarrel. (a) Of Boileau's critical doctrines it has been said "nous avons à tenir compte de ce que Boileau fut en effet cartésien, comme son "Arrêt Burlesque" suffit à le montrer, et son cartésienisme, manifestement, n'a pas été étranger à la forme définitive qu'il a donnée à la doctrine classique" (31). It has also been pointed out that Boileau was no more an ancient than Wotton, who thought little of Perrault's claims for modern literature, or than Joseph Glanvill who gave the ancients the ascendancy in "architecture, pictures or the arts of ingenious luxury". (32)

The "Arrêt Burlesque" was printed at Paris in 1671 and was occasioned by a dispute between the professors and regents of the Sorbonne. Some of the former, Blondel, Coutois, and Denyau, were so troubled by the increasing interest in Cartesianism which they felt threatened their "monopoly of wisdom" as interpreters of Aristotle, that they demanded that a formal request should be

(a) As R.F. Jones asserts he was "Background of 'The Battle of the Books'" Washington University studies (1920) 159.

sent to the "parlement" for the enforcement of an edict of 1624 which said "Faites défense à peine de la vie, tenir ni enseigner aucunes maximes contre les auteurs anciens et approuvés". To prevent so retrogressive a step Boileau and François Bernier (a), an ardent Gassendist, wrote their burlesque "Requête des Maîtres-es-Arts, Professeurs et Regens de l'Université de Paris présentée à la Cour Souveraine de Parnasse: ensemble l'Arrest intervenu sur ladite Requête. Contre tous ce qui prétendent faire enseigner ou croire de nouvelles découvertes qui ne soient pas dans Aristote". Boileau wrote the "Arrest" and Bernier the "Requête" and "Avis au Lecteur".

The "Avis au Lecteur" relates how the professors brought in their request but were told "s'il y avaient des nouvelles découvertes qui fussent contraires aux opinions d'Aristote, ils devaient plutôt les enseigner dans leurs écoles". To console them, continues Bernier, Boileau wrote an "arrêt". (33)

In Boileau's burlesque the Sorbonne, as plaintiff, complains that an unknown called Reason has entered the University. "Elle aurait changé et innové plusieurs choses en et dedans la nature, ayant ôté au coeur la prerogative d'être le principe des nerfs; [elle aurait fait] voiturier le sang par tout le corps avec plein pouvoir ... d'y vœguer, errer et circuler impunément par les veines et artères, n'ayant autre droit ni titre ... que la seule expérience dont le témoignage n'a jamais été reçu dans lesdites écoles. [Plus] elle aurait réellement et de fait

a) Author of "Voyage de François Bernier contenant la description des états du Grand Mogul" which Swift read in 1697 and which he cites in one of the original (1704) notes to "The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit" ("A Tale of a Tub" ed.cit 1 iiif. 273, see also 65 note 1 & 263 n.7)

guéri quantités de fièvres, avec vin pur [et des autres choses] inconnues audit Aristote". This Reason had never been consulted by doctors and in addition it had banished the philosophy of Scotus. The court replying, maintained Aristotle's right." Enjoint au coeur de continuer d'être le principe des nerfs, et à toutes personnes ... de le croire tel, nonobstant toute expérience à ce contraire .. fait défense au sang d'être plus vagabond, errer ni circuler dans le corps, sous peine d'être entièrement livré et abandonné à la faculté de médecine. Défend à la Raison ... de guérir les fièvres ... par mauvais moyens". Furthermore the philosophy of Scotus is recalled from banishment and Reason banished instead" - a peine d'être déclaré janseniste et amie de nouveautés". MM. Blondel, Coutois and Denyau are complimented for "leur opposition de bon sens" (34).

There is no evidence that Swift read the "Arrêt" but it seems "fairly clear that he did not mention Boileau merely because Temple alluded to him". Boileau is placed beside Cowley who, it has been suggested, is mentioned "for reasons other than poetical, [for] he was closely associated with the Royal Society and his ode prefixed to Sprat's "History" openly identified him with the movement". Swift, "far from being, as Professor Jones writes, 'out of touch with the continental quarrel', had given it close attention." (35) (a).

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- (a) F. Morrison (Philological Quarterly. xiii 1.19 f) sees some significance in Swift speaking of Despréaux whereas Temple prefers Boileau. He assumes unjustifiably that Wotton's use of both names - Boileau and Despréaux - shows that he did not

(cont'd over)

Further evidence that Boileau was in sympathy with the new science is furnished by a passage from the "Art Poétique" which Johnson later translated as follows - "a mean or common thought expressed in pompous diction generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low and vulgar language because the number is greater of those whom custom has enabled to judge of words than whom study has qualified to examine things". The antithesis between "words" and "things" was continually made throughout the seventeenth century for the ancient philosophy was designated one of 'words' while the modern 'natural' philosophy prided itself on its attention to 'things'. Sprat complained that the Greeks preferred to say a thing elegantly, rather than usefully, and pointed out that modern education emphasised the handling of things. William Gilbert noted "the injurious effect upon the advancement of learning of indulging in language which

(a) contd.

know that the Despréaux whom he praised for his "Critical Reflections upon Longinus" (which pointed out Perrault's mistakes in his pretensions for modern literature) was Boileau. This latter reference (which he assigns vaguely to Wotton's "Reflections" c.4. without noting that it appears only in the second edition p.56) would suggest to Swift, says Morrison, a prose writer defending the ancients. But it suggests nothing but an answer to Perrault and that would not necessarily be a defence of the ancients but might be a list of errors due to Perrault's want of Latin and Greek. Morrison, maintaining that Swift never introduces a name without "specific significance" quotes speciously from one of Swift's religious works to prove it; his reference to PW^(x) iv 110 is unfortunately inaccurate. Morrison's conclusion that Swift was well-informed on the subject of the continental quarrel is warranted by the evidence he adduces but his immediate steps of reasoning are fallacious and mostly unnecessary.

(x) P.W. "Prose Works" ed T. Scott (1897-1908)

has no counterpart in the material world". John Durie attacked purely linguistic education, complaining that "children are taught words before they know things". Hobbes consistently attacked "empty words", affirming that a man "fancieth the words without speaking them". The progress of the new science was accompanied by a movement towards "a close naked natural way of speaking".⁽³⁶⁾

In his enumeration of the leaders of the moderns Swift does not always attach any "specific significance" to a name. Tasso and Milton had not been mentioned by Temple; Dryden is belittled by being placed with Withers; Cowley and Despréaux are named together for scientific as well as poetical reasons; (a) Descartes, Gassendi and Hobbes (b) are mentioned disparagingly - the arrows which they shoot and which never descend seem to refer to their airy speculations; Paracelsus is also mentioned slightly and Harvey non-committally, though Temple had vigorously doubted his discovery of the circulation of the blood (c). Of the historians mentioned by Swift, Temple had spoken of Davila and Buchanan but not of Polydore Virgil, Guiccardine, Mariana and Camden; of the mathematicians he had mentioned Wilkins but not Muller. Other moderns listed by Swift - Scotus, Aquinas, Bellarmine and Lestrangle - are not referred to by his patron. As often as not, then, a

(a) See above p 77.

(b) Wotton also mentions them together "Reflections" (1694) 244.

(c) See above p 3f.

modern seems introduced only as a representative, with no "specific significance". (a) The list of the ancient commanders - Homer, Pindar, Euclid, Plato, Aristotle, Livy, Herodotus and Hippocrates - is also general. Neither have the other combatants any particular significance - Aristotle, Bacon, Davenant, Denham, Virgil, Blackmore, Lucan, Creech, Ogleby, Oldham and Aphra Behn. Fontenelle and Perrault are introduced as militant moderns and immediately killed. Dryden is compared unfavourably with Virgil (b) and the contemptuous reference to Wesley shows that Swift has outgrown the days when he honoured the Athenian Society with a verse panegyric (c). But for the most part both ancients and moderns are puppets, mere undistinguished representatives. Nothing more was required. (37)

In several minor points the influence of Temple on "The Battle of the Books" is also to be seen. The Goddess Criticism soliloquising, 'Tis I who give wisdom to infants and idiots, by me children grow wiser than their parents", echoes the "Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning". "A boy of fifteen is wiser than

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- (a) As F. Morrison (P.Q. xiii l. 19) tries to show, Swift gives all his characters. See note p 77f above.
 - (b) Four other disparaging references to Dryden appeared in the first edition of "A Tale of a Tub" (ed.cit. pp 36,69,71f,131) two more were added in the fifth edition (1710) (ed.cit.pp 7 & 70note)
 - (c) "Poems" ed. H. Williams (1937) 1 13-25. John Duntan, originator of the Society is satirised by Swift "Prose Works" ed.T.Scott. (1897-1908) iii 146 v 315-8.

his father at forty". Swift's reference to "these degenerate days" is consistent with Temple's acknowledgement of the superiority of the ancients and with the current theory of the decay of nature. Gibes at Gresham College and the virtuosos echo Temple and reappear in "A Tale of a Tub" and throughout Swift's work until such attacks reach a crescendo in the "Voyage to Laputa". (38)

The allegory of "The Battle of the Books" will everywhere admit only the most general application. The episodes of Bentley and Wotton and of the spider and the bee do not fairly represent the facts; (a) the ancients and moderns named usually have no "specific significance" (b). Meaning cannot be found for details - for example, the moderns' inability to select a leader is an unnecessary insult and the spider's "destruction of infinite numbers of flies" seems to be natural history rather than allegorical representation. But the interpretation of the moderns' request to be allowed to level the ancients' hill with shovels and mattocks is probably a reference to the manual labour involved in the new science and despised by the upholders of the ancient science. (39)

(a) See above pp 61-5, 67-72

(b) See above p 79 f.

1697 is the usually accepted date for the composition of "The Battle of the Books" but the work as it is now cannot have been completed before the end of 1698 (a). Unless Swift knew of Bentley's resolve to "knock down" Aesop and Phalaris from some other source than the "Enlarged Dissertation" - and that would not have been by any means impossible - parts of it must have been written after the publication of that work in 1699 (40). Between 1699 and 1704 revision may have taken place. The delay in publishing might suggest that Swift realised that for all Boyle's apparent triumph his side was the weaker. Temple, in the letter which praises Boyle and speaks of Bentley's "foul-mouthed raillery" (b), refers vaguely to something written by a friend on his behalf "without my knowledge, which I afterwards diverted". If this was "The Battle of the Books" Temple's death in 1699 (c) removed the obstacle to publication but in 1701 Swift preferred to publish Temple's own essay "Thoughts upon reviewing the Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning". This essay evades the point for a hiatus follows Temple's announcement that he is about to examine "those sciences wherein they affirm the moderns to excel the ancients" (d). For some reason Swift printed this inadequate answer, which only increased the difficulties of the supporters

"Boyle against Bentley" was advertised as "in the press" in Feb. 1698 and the second edition was advertised four months later (Term Catalogues" 111. 60. 83)

See above p 65

He died on Jan. 27th. the month before the publication of Bentley's "Enlarged Dissertation"

see below p 100 f.

of the ancients, by repeating all the mistakes of the original essay. (a) But for three more years he held back his best card, Perhaps this only shows his indifference to the quarrel.

But in 1704 he saw reasons for publishing "A Tale of A Tub" (b) With it appeared "The Battle of the Books". The details of the quarrel - the petty charges of incivility, the minutiae of grammar and syntax - had most probably been forgotten and this was in Swift's favour. Intellectually his position in "The Battle of the Books" is untenable. Bentley, if the Christ Church men had recognised his impregnable position, was the victor. To oppose him on intellectual grounds, as they did in the volume of 1698, was to court eventual disaster, even if at first they appeared to triumph. Swift was incapable of standing up to Bentley with the scholar's own weapons but he dragged the issue onto a plane where learning was useless and where wit and misprision could triumph. Bentley was helpless against Swift's satire, whether it was justified or not. The episode of Bentley and Wotton might be unfair, the fable of the spider and the bee might not damage the moderns, but without critical examination, which the "Battle of the Books" cannot withstand and which it is perhaps unfair to apply, the piece is effective and unanswerable. It is unlike anything else produced by the controversy between Boyle and Bentley - except perhaps for Smalridge's proof that Bentley did not write the "Dissertation". And as such it has at least the virtue of being refreshing.

(a) See below p 100 f.

(b) See below p 100

A note on page 59 above.

Francois-Maximilien Misson seems to be the generally accepted author of "Mémoires et observations faites par un voyageur en Angleterre" but the volume itself gives no such indication. The dedication is signed (A 3 11) " HM de V" and A.A.Barbier ("Dictionnaire des Ouvrages Anonymes", Paris 1872-9, iii 222) takes these as the initials of Henry Misson de Valbourg to whom he ascribes the work. To "Maximilien Misson, Frère de l'auteur". Barbier attributes the publication.

CHAPTER IV."A TALE OF A TUB" AND "THE MECHANICAL OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT"

"The author is informed that the bookseller has prevailed on several gentlemen to write some explanatory notes for the goodness of which he is not to answer, never having seen any of them, nor intends it, until they appear in print, when it is not unlikely he may have the pleasure to find twenty meanings which never entered his imagination".

("Author's Apology") (1).

"A Tale of a Tub", written mostly in 1696, (2) and printed with "The Battle of the Books" in 1704, was but one of many satires on the Puritans produced in the seventeenth century. Consequently many of the attacks made by Swift had been made by earlier satirists. But his predecessors had attacked the Puritans for activities about which Swift was silent, while he in his turn launched new attacks. These three divisions - attacks common to Swift and his predecessors, attacks made only by Swift, and attacks made only by them - have been analysed and examined by G.M. Webster in order to assess Swift's precise attitude to

[As I have nothing new to add to the general discussion of "A Tale of a Tub" I have therefore in this chapter done no more than touched upon several barely connected aspects of the work.]

the Puritans .(3) Unfortunately some of the 'themes', enumerated are so general that the grouping under them of Swift's very detailed and particular attacks becomes almost without significance. For example, the first 'theme of attack' given as common to both Swift and his predecessors is called "lack of rationality of the Puritan preacher and his audience". (4) The reference to "A Tale of a Tub" is to the greater part of Section XI. which includes attacks on the Puritans for their use of scriptural phrases in daily conversation, their use of interpolations in the scriptures, their 'inward light', their belief in predestination, their eloquence, their use of religion as a cloak for villanies, their nasal intonation, their aversion to music and all decorations in their churches, their baptism by immersion, their artificially inspired groanings, and several others which are given separate headings in the list - their hyper-sexuality, their reference to the Bible for guidance in trivial affairs, their seditious tendencies, their allegorical interpretations and their excessive zeal in reform. (5) Not all of these characteristics are irrational, neither are they all stupid, the epithet which is added in a footnote. (6)

Hypersexuality is a charge which Swift constantly brings up against the Puritans and usually by means of the ear symbolism. This is made very clear when "a protuberancy of parts in the superior region of the body", i.e. the ears, is said to indicate "a parity also in the inferior". (7) Other references to ears seem to have the same phallic symbolism

The "inclusion of this ridicule of the Puritans" was "almost universal" in seventeenth century satires. (9)

Charges of sedition against the Puritans were common throughout the century (a) (10), but the two instances given by Webster ⁽¹¹⁾ are very vague and he misses the note, added by Swift himself in 1710, which indicates the plainest example. Swift had written of "Priests ... with their mouths gaping wide against a storm" and his note reads "This is meant of those seditious preachers who blow up the seeds of rebellion etc". (12). That the only direct reference to the Dissenters' seditious inclinations should be in a footnote added to the fifth edition shows that Swift was not very much concerned with Puritan sedition before his High Churchmanship was joined to High Toryism.

Hair-splitting and forced interpretations of the scriptures by the Puritans were universally attacked (13) and their excessive zeal in reform only less so. (14) Swift saw the danger of the latter (15) as did Thomas Edwardes who made similar attacks in "Gangraena" (1645) (16). Several 'themes of attack' not noted by Webster could be placed under this last heading - simplicity of pulpits (17), the abolition of grace at meals (18) (b), aversion to church music and decorations (19)

(a) e.g. Peter Heylyn's "Aerius Redivivus, or History of the Presbyterians" gives repeated instances of Presbyterians' " manifold seditions, conspirings and insurrections" in Switzerland, France, Germany, Scotland and England from 1536 to 1647.

(b) "The slovenly way of receiving the sacrament among the fanatics" (note added in 1710, see p. 107f below)

"Ridicule of the Puritans' use of the Bible as a guide in the most trivial affairs of life" was an "almost universal" theme (20) and Swift makes good use of it in several instances. (21)

Other 'themes of attack' on the Puritans common to Swift and his predecessors come under the headings of "Satire of the 'Church Militant'", (a very common theme, but barely touched by Swift) (22), "Satire of ^{is}fake theological concepts"⁽²³⁾ etc. (extremely common, e.g. "Gangraena" (24), "Religio Laici" (25), "The Hind and the Panther" (26) but confined in the "Tale of a Tub" to ridicule of baptism by immersion, belief in predestination and the preaching of the horrors of hell) (27), "Ridicule of the martyr complex of the Puritans", (28) "Mockery of the Holy Dialect, the artificial and very pious language the Puritans were supposed to use" (29) (satirised in "A Tale of a Tub" chiefly in Jack's speech) (30), "Ridicule of the physical characteristics of the Puritans" (31) and finally "Flatulency or Aeolist theme" (to which the whole of Section VIII of the "Tale" is devoted) (32).

In the "Mechanical Operation of the Spirit" a fragment printed with the "Tale" and closely connected with it, though not taken into account in Webster's list, several of these themes reappear - e.g. hypersexuality (33) and "^{is}fake theological concepts" (predestination) (34). The "inner light" is again ridiculed⁽³⁵⁾ but, like the hypnosis and humming, (36) the see-saw movement, (37), the nasal intonation and snuffling (38), it seems to fit accurately into none of Webster's classifications.

The 'themes of satire', prevalent in the seventeenth

century but not occurring in "A Tale of a Tub", are the Puritans' dishonest dealings (39), their homely sermons (40), their gluttony and drunkenness (41), their humble occupations (42). The last two themes are taken up several times in Edwardes's "Gangraena" (43) (a). The themes found only in "A Tale of a Tub" are the similarities of Papists and Puritans (Peter and Jack try to avoid each other yet are mistaken for each other) (44), the forsaking of the early Christian faith by all three Churches (the ornaments added to their coats by the three brothers) (45) and the attack not only on the Puritan but on "all men who aspire foolishly". (46). All three raise issues far beyond the immediate ones to be discussed here.

This comparison of 'themes of satire' is illuminating but considerable caution and a more detailed analysis are required before the value of the method is apparent. The vicissitudes of the established church throughout the seventeenth century makes rigid dogmatism impossible. It must be remembered, for example, that whereas Swift wrote as a Church of England man who supported the bloodless revolution of 1688, Thomas Edwardes was a presbyterian and parliamentarian fulminating against all other Puritans.

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- (a) A further theme - Papists and Dissenters plotting together to overthrow the Church and State is listed by Webster as not being used by Swift but he writes of a "reconcilement" between Jack and Peter in order "to trepan Brother Martin into a sprunging house and there strip him to the skin" A note added in 1710 refers this to an alliance between Presbyterians and Papists, encouraged by James II against the Church of England. (A Tale of a Tub. ed. Guthkelch & Smith p.204)

In a further article on the same subject C. M. Webster has drawn up a bibliography of satires on Puritans from 1621 to 1700, containing 148 items. The chief charges levelled at the Puritans are hypocrisy, stupidity or irrationality, and immorality. Webster's citations at least explain Swift's coarseness and indecency if it does not excuse them. (47)

Throughout the seventeenth century there was a strong reaction against "enthusiasm", especially of the religious kind. A religious enthusiast, a man who claimed direct divine inspiration was looked upon with suspicion by most of his fellows and harshly ridiculed by many of them.

Robert Burton in part three of the "Anatomy of Religious Melancholy" (1621), began the real study of religious enthusiasm. Ignorance and stupidity or the desire for popular esteem and notoriety were to him the causes of enthusiasm. There was nothing new in this but Burton's contribution was the assertion of physiological causes and of the relation of sex to enthusiasm. (48) This gave scientifically minded satirists a new basis for ridicule and Daniel Featly in "The Dippers Dipt" (1645) admit sex stimulation as a cause of religious fervour (49). But Thomas Browne in his "Pseudodoxia Epidemica" (a) (1646) emphasises ignorance as the cause. (50)

(a) This work had considerable effect on "A Tale of a Tub" and in their notes Guthkelch & Smith refer to it on nine occasions. There is also a reference to it in their notes to "The Battle of the Books" and two references in their notes to the "Mechanical Operation of the Spirit"

Two works which appeared within a year of each other added a theme of which Swift was later to take advantage. In 1655 Meric Casaubon published "A Treatise concerning Enthusiasm as it is an effect of Nature, but is mistaken by many for either Divine Inspiration or Diabolical Possession", and a year later Henry More's "Enthusiasmus Triumphatus" appeared. Both believed the real cause of enthusiasm to be "that heat, that fervent heat, that fire ... hath infatuated many speakers into that opinion of divine inspiration". (51) As More's work was the later of the two^(a) and as his most significant passages are concerned with the relations of sex and enthusiasm Casaubon's treatise, which deals generally with enthusiasm, will better repay examination.

Casaubon begins with a chapter "Of enthusiasm in general" in which he announces his intention "to show how men have been very prone upon some grounds of nature ... really, not hypocritically, but yet falsely and erroneously, to deem themselves divinely inspired". (52) Enthusiasm is either natural or supernatural. "By supernatural I understand a true and real possession of some extrinsical and superior power, whether divine or diabolical ... By natural enthusiasm I understand an extraordinary, transcendent but natural fervency, a pregnancy of the soul, spirits or brain, producing strange effects, apt to be mistaken for supernatural" (53). This natural enthusiasm Casaubon divides into eight species (54),

(a) Not implying, of course, that a book could necessarily have any influence on one published a year later.

to five of which he devotes one chapter each. Poetical, Precatory and Divinatory enthusiasm are given short chapters. The first is considered the "purest" of natural enthusiasms (55) and tribute is paid to the "true, religious supernatural enthusiasm"⁽⁵⁶⁾ but ~~(56)~~ divinatory enthusiasm is totally rejected (57). A third of the book deals with "Contemplative and Philosophical Enthusiasm" and a quarter with "Rhetorical Enthusiasm".

In the chapter dealing with the former, Casaubon gives six instances of false contemplative enthusiasm, one from his own experience.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Many of these claimants to divine inspiration were epileptic, not ecstatic, and their fits were induced by natural means (59). Casaubon leaves open the question whether the soul can leave the body and return to it and gives a list of people who have spoken for or against the belief that men by "philosophical contemplation may attain to an angelical transformation". (60). Such a "way of theology" as this enthusiasm is "derogatory to the Scriptures" and in any case there is no need "to seek the image of God in man elsewhere than in perfect reason" (61) Casaubon proceeds to show how the Alumbrados, a Spanish sect flourishing from 1623 onwards have many points in common with the quakers (a). The chapter concludes with some remarks about Mahomet. Casaubon writes that the prophet suffered from epilepsy and considers it "a disputable matter" whether he might not be deceived at first before he used the other arts and impostures the better to countenance his frenzies"; we must be wary of believing in

(a) An addition to the first edition.

such delusions (62).

The chapter which follows, "Of Rhetorical Enthusiasm", is directed in part against the excessive use of metaphors, for philosophers "seek not the pleasures of the senses, but the naked truth of things" (63). This brings it into line with the scientists' reaction against ornate style which began with Bacon and culminated with Sprat. (64).

Casaubon's treatise assumes the importance of something more than a representative of the background to Swift's attitude to the Dissenters when it is read in conjunction with the "Mechanical Operation of the Spirit". Swift, like Casaubon, (a) states that the soul may be transported beyond matter by the act of God ("prophecy or inspiration"), by the act of the devil ("possession"), or by natural causes such as spleen, imagination etc. But to these he adds a fourth method, "sparingly handled or not at all by any writer"; this is a mixture of the artificial and the natural and it can be either "an effect grown from art into Nature" or one "which has only a natural foundation but where the superstructure is entirely artificial. (65) Swift does not mention Mahomet in this connection but Casaubon is obviously one of those writers by whom this aspect of enthusiasm had been "sparingly handled", for he had written briefly of the prophet "using other arts and impostures the better to countenance his

(a) see above p 91 f.

frenzies". The importance given by Swift to this conception of the blend of natural and artificial is Swift's contribution to the discussion of enthusiasm. (a)

The Puritans were not the only religious sect attacked in "A Tale of a Tub", for the catholics were lashed with some of Swift's most satiric strokes. The whole of Section II is an attack upon the Catholic Church's interpretation of the scriptures. Justification for shoulder-knots is discovered by Peter in totidem literis, for gold lace in a nuncupatory will, for flame coloured satin in a codicil, for silver fringe by allegorical interpretations, for embroidery and images by a complete reversal of the will and for points as being 'jure paterno' and canonical (66). Swift thus condemns every method of forced interpretation from the simplest to the subtlest.

In Section four Peter turns 'projector' and Swift satirises purgatory, penance and absolution, auricular confession, indulgences, holy processions, Holy Water, bulls and general pardons as 'projects' of the Roman Church (67). To make Peter a 'projector' would be to Swift to make him very contemptible. At the close of the section the Catholic Church is attacked further for its proud pretensions, for its celibacy, which nevertheless does not prevent concubinage, for its doctrine of transubstantiation, for its miracles (68).

These two sections directed against Catholicism are the wittiest but not the profoundest of the work.

(a) Webster ("Notes & Queries" CLX P405) suggests that Temple induced Swift to read Casaubon. He quotes Temple's lament that Casaubon "lived not to complete that work" and that no "clear account of enthusiasm" had been written. ("Of Poetry" "Miscellanea" ii 308f)

It was perhaps inevitable that hitting at two extremes Swift should also strike the church which was their mean. Peter was the brother who twisted the will to justify whatever it was necessary to justify and if Martin and Jack gave him no help they made no attempt to dissuade him from his perversions. Once Peter discovered a way out of their difficulties they supported him whole heartedly (69), and the decision to lock up the will was taken "unanimously". (70) If it is objected that it is unfair to apply the allegory too rigidly it can be answered that Swift makes no attempt to exonerate the younger brothers, not even Martin. No distinction is made later when "the contriving as well as the propagating of new religions" among other things is twice attributed to madness (71).

But Swift is careful at least once to show the moderation of the Church of England by emphasising Martin's cautious treatment of the ornaments on his clothes. Jack, the Puritan, "rent the main body of his coat from top to bottom" and eventually flung a large piece of it away. Martin remonstrated with him, pointing out "that it was not their business to form their actions by any reflection upon Peter, but by observing the rules prescribed in their father's will" and that they should avoid "taking measures for good and evil, from no other rule than of opposition to him". (72) [Peter] Jack, however, was beyond calm counsel. Martin, on the other hand, had treated his coat with care. He "stript away ten dozen yards of fringe" but then "demurred a while" and resolved "to proceed more moderately". Therefore,

when he continued "he picked up the stitches with much caution" and did not hurry. The embroidery he left in, lest in trying to remove it, he might damage "the substance of the stuff" (73)

But even these pages were insufficient to prevent Swift from being charged with wilful attacks on the Church of England. The charges may have been exaggerated but they were not without justification. (a)

Swift had attacked the Roman Catholic Church by making Peter turn projector. The projectors of the Royal Society themselves were also attacked from time to time throughout "A Tale of a Tub" and "The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit". The idea of an academy with numerous schools (74) and the experiments of the scientists and physicians⁽⁷⁵⁾ are ridiculed, but most of the attacks are incidental, conveyed by a mere word or phrase (76). The onslaught, however, was reserved until the third book of "Gulliver's Travels" and one solitary passage in "A Tale of a Tub" anticipates it - a "student" in Bedlam is to be seen "raking⁽⁷⁷⁾ in his own dung and dabbling in his urine" just as a Laputan projector was experimenting "to reduce human excrement to its original food". (78)

Bentley and Wotton had been attacked mercilessly in "The Battle of the Books". In the contemporaneous "Tale of a Tub" that attack was continued with equal ruthlessness.

The first digression is devoted entirely to critics in

(a) See below p 102 f.

general and Bentley in particular. He is mentioned by name only once but there can be no doubt that Swift has him in mind throughout the whole section. Swift gives the genealogy of the "true critic" as "descending ... from a celestial stem, by Momus and Hybris, who begat Zoilus, who begat Tigellius, who begat Etcaetera the Elder, who begat B - tly and Rym - ^r and W-tton and Perrault and Dennis, who begat Etcaetera the younger". (79) It is easy, continues Swift, to deduce "from this heavenly descent of criticism", "the proper employment of a true ancient genuine critic", which is to collect errors and "multiply them like Hydra's heads and rake them together like Augeas's dung". Such critics "entirely possessed and replete with the defects of other pens" consequently write with "the very quintessence of what is bad" distilled into their own pens (80). Critics, continues Swift, were known to the ancients and he quotes Pausanias on nibbling asses, Herodotus on horned and braying asses, Diodorus on a plant, the smell of which is poisonous and Ctesias on a serpent that cannot bite but poisons with its vomit. All these writers, says Swift, here present the activities of critics under allegories. (81) A "true critic" he concludes, must lose "all the good qualities of his mind", his best work is "the very first result" of his thoughts, he is known by his "talent of swarming about the noblest writers" and like a dog at a feast who snaps up "what the guests fling away", he will "snarl most when there are the fewest bones" . (82)

(a) of Bentley's indirect application of this simile to Boyle's editing, see above pp^{34,37}.

(b) Critics are also compared with dogs on pp. 184 & 189 (ed. cit)

Throughout "A Tale of a Tub" the gibes of "The Battle of the Books" are once more hurled at Bentley. There are only two sneers at his 'humanity', (83) but the "art of being deep-learned and shallow-read", (i.e. by means of indexes and commonplace books) (34), and pedantry⁽²⁵⁾ are continually ridiculed, sometimes with direct reference to Bentley, sometimes without. In addition there are a number of casual disparaging references to him (85⁶).

Neither does Wotton receive any gentler treatment from Swift. He is frequently considered along with Bentley and attacked for his pedantry and his ill-manners or as a typical modern. (87) His "Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning" are sneered at several times as an "incomparable treatise" with its "sublime discoveries upon the subject of flies and spittle". (88). Wotton himself is given a place of honour in the "digression on madness". In that section Swift maintains that "there is a peculiar string in the harmony of human understanding which in several individuals is exactly the same tuning". If that string is struck among those individuals a man will be acclaimed; but "if you chance to jar the string among those who are either above or below your own height.. they will tie you fast, call you mad and feed you with bread and water." It is therefore necessary to "distinguish and adapt this noble talent" but "my most ingenious friend, Mr. Wotton" did not do this. Surely no man ever [had] fitter qualifications of body and mind for the propagation of a new religion. Oh, had those happy talents misapplied to vain philosophy been turned into their proper channels of dreams and

and visions, where distortion of mind and countenance are of such sovereign use; the base detracting world not then have dared to report... that his brain hath undergone an unlucky shake". (89) As a note added to the fifth edition of 1710 says "Mr. W-tt-n (to whom our author never gives any quarter).." It is cruel but brilliant.

The quarrel of ancients and moderns, to which the attacks on Bentley and Wotton are ancillary, reappears from time to time in "A Tale of a Tub". Swift sneers at "our illustrious moderns [who] have eclipsed the weak, glimmering lights of the ancients" (90), claims that "as the freshest modern" he has "despotic power over all authors before me", (91), criticises Homer for not having read Vaughan or for not giving "a complete account of the spleen". (92) There are other more casual hits at the moderns and their presumptions. (93)

But as in "The Battle of the Books" (a) there are indications that Swift is laughing at the party he purports to defend. Aristotle's "Dialectica" is spoken of as having "the faculty of teaching its readers to find out a meaning in every thing but itself". (94). Epicurus, Diogenes, Apollonius of Tyana, Lucretius, no less than Paracelsus and Descartes are spoken of as "grand innovators...usually mistaken by their adversaries and indeed by all except their own followers to have been persons crazed or out of their wits" (95). Swift's attack is against pretensions and madness of all time and elsewhere he ridicules the "virtuosoes of former ages" and shows how Aeolists prevailed at "ancient oracles". (96) (97)

(a) See above pp 62 f. 66-72

To Swift the ancients were not as infallible as they appeared to Temple. Swift may have preferred the ancients to the moderns but he was not blind to their faults.

In 1709 Swift wrote (a) that most of "A Tale of a Tub" had been written in 1696, but like "The Battle of the Books", written about the same time, it was not published until 1704. Whatever the reasons for that delay of eight years it seems likely that the High Church revival which took place upon Anne's accession in 1702, encouraged Swift to arrange for publication when, in November 1703, he came to England on his second visit of the new reign. "A Tale of a Tub", "The Battle of the Books" and "The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit" were published in that order in a volume which appeared in May 1704. (98) In June of the following year Wotton published a "Defence of the Reflections upon Ancient and Modern learning" to which were added "Observations upon the Tale of a Tub". (99)

In 1701 Swift had seen the third part of Temple's "Miscellanea" through the press and one of the essays had been "Some thoughts upon reviewing the Essay of Ancient and Modern Learning". In that essay Temple stubbornly defended the position which Bentley and Wotton had clearly made untenable, Once more he attacked the "men of Gresham" (100), upheld the ancients' claim to have gunpowder, (101) drew up lists of eminent ancients and their achievements, (102) Once more he revealed the same un-reasoning bias, lauding ancient poetry and eloquence (103),

(a) In the "Apology" added to the fifth edition 1710. (Tale of a Tub ed. cit 4)

belittling modern chemistry, philosophy and divinity (104). But the most important part of his essay was never written. He announces his intention of examining the "sciences wherein they [i.e. modern advocates] affirm the moderns to excel the ancients; whereof they make the chief to be the invention of instruments; chemistry; anatomy; natural history of minerals, plants and animals; astronomy and optics; music; physio; natural philosophy; philology and theology; of which I shall take a short survey". But here a hiatus occurs in the text and Swift, as editor, writes that "whether the author designed to have gone through such a work himself or intended these papers only for hints to somebody else that desired them, is not known". (105)

Wotton's "Defence of the Reflections" opened with an expression of surprise that "a vindication of the designs and performances of the age one lives in" should arouse so much opposition. (106) He reasserts that he did not set out to be the final judge and calls attention to the courtesy he had endeavoured to show towards Temple. (107) After dealing with some minor differences between the rival parties (108), Wotton proceeds to answer in detail Temple's "Thoughts upon Reviewing."⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Then, coming to the hiatus in the text, he comments, "This method of answering of books and of publishing such answers is very dissatisfactory. Just where the pinch of the question lay, there the copy fails .. This way of printing bits of books .. is what I have seen few instances of, none more remarkable than this and one more which may be supposed to imitate this "A Tale of a Tub"." (a). (110)

In "A Tale of a Tub", continues Wotton, "Dr. Bentley and myself are scarsely treated" but that "is much the innocentest part of the book". (111) "But the rest of the book .. is of so irreligious a nature, is so crude a banter upon all that is esteemed as sacred among all sects and religions among men, that .. I thought it might be useful to many people, who pretend they see no harm in it, to lay open the mischief of the ludicrous allegory ... God^{and} religion, truth and moral honesty, learning and industry, are made a May-game". (112) Then follow the notes explaining the allegory of "A Tale of a Tub".

Wotton admits that the author gives Martin "extreme good quarter" but adds, "I abhor making sport with any way of worshipping God" and wisely points out that the man who mocks Dissent and Catholicism "may lose his own religion ere he is aware of it". (113) Wotton does not defend the Roman church - he speaks of the Pope's "arrogant way of requiring men to kiss his slipper", (114) of "ridiculous miracles" (115), of "absurd" glosses and interpretations (116) and of the "ridiculous inventions of popery". (117) These latter, it might be objected, were intended to "gull silly, superstitious people" and consequently the Church of Rome "ought to be exposed and he deserves well of mankind that does expose it". (118)(b)

(a) .The title page of the third volume of Temple's "Miscellanea" announced that it was "Published by Jonathan Swift". Wotton (p.47) writes that "a brother of Dr. Swift's is publicly reported to have been the editor at least, if not the author".

(b) Swift quotes this note in the fifth edition, 1710, but gives no indication that it is an objection addressed to Wotton, nor does he add the qualification with which Wotton answers it. See below

"All this", answers Wotton, "I own to be true, but then I would not so shoot at an enemy as to hurt myself at the same time. The foundation of the doctrines of the Church of England is right and came from God. Upon this the Popes and Councils ... have built, as St. Paul speaks, Hay and stubble, perishable and slight material which, when they are once consumed that the foundations may appear, then we shall see what is faulty and what is not. But our tale-teller strikes at the very root". (119) Wotton is not a Catholic but he can see the folly and danger of striking at Catholicism and thereby damaging all religion. Most of his references to the Roman Church in his notes are non-committal. (120) References to Dissent are equally guarded (121) but he calls Swift's representation of predestination (122) "a direct prophanation of the majesty of God". (123) There is little occasion for Wotton to say anything about the Church of England.

Before he ends the "Defence", Wotton expresses his belief that "Mr. Swift" (a) did not write "A Tale of a Tub" and that the author is dead. (124) His own copy of the work, a first edition "contains several notes and jottings, some of which are undoubtedly in Wotton's hand" which shows that he suspected Sir William Temple of being the author. (125) He notes that "vein and race" (126) and "decline" (127) are words used by Temple and on "boñtade" (128) comments "Anybody but Sir W. Temple would have said "sally" (129). Wotton's last shot is to notice that the author's "wit is not his own in many places" - that Peter, Martin and Jack are "borrowed from a letter by the late witty Duke of Buckingham", that Peter's

(a) i.e. that "brother of Dr. Swift's" see above p 102. note (a)

banter upon transubstantiation is taken from the same Duke of Buckingham's "Conference with an Irish priest" and that the Battle in St. James's library is mutatis mutandis taken out of a French book entitled "Combat des Livres". (130)

A fourth edition of "A Tale of a Tub" had appeared May 1705 (131) a month before Wotton's "Defence". A fifth edition was not printed until 1710 and in it Swift replied to Wotton in an "Apology" placed before the "Dedication to Somers".

When "A Tale of a Tub" was written in 1696, Swift says he "was then young, his invention at the height". By thought and conversation "he had endeavoured to strip himself of as many real prejudices as he could [and] thus prepared he thought the numerous and gross corruptions in religion and learning might furnish matter for a satire ... The abuses in religion he proposed to set forth in the allegory of the coats .. Those in learning he chose to introduce by way of digressions. He was then a young gentleman much in the world, and wrote to the taste of those who were like himself, therefore in order to allure them he gave a liberty to his pen which might not suit with maturer years or graver characters and which he could have easily corrected with a very few blots had he been master of his papers for a year or two before their publication .. (a) He acknowledges there are several youthful sallies which from the grave and the wise may deserve a rebuke. But he desires ... that his faults may not be multiplied .. After which he will forfeit his life if any one

(a) See below p 106.

opinion can be fairly deduced from that book, which is contrary to religion or morality. Why should any clergyman of our church be angry to see the follies of fanaticism and superstition exposed though in the most ridiculous manner?..it raillies nothing but what they preach against ... It celebrates the Church of England as the most perfect of all others in discipline and doctrine, it advances no opinion they reject nor condemns any they receive". (132)

This defence of himself is written with dignity but not without some defiance and speciousness. The plea of the unthinking sincerity of youth might sound better if Swift had not been in his thirtieth year when he wrote "A Tale of a Tub" and in his thirty seventh year when he saw fit to publish it. But he is obviously eager to explain his motives and to insist that he is attacking only the abuses in religion. Wotton's "Defence" made him see the necessity of defining his attitude. He cannot clear himself of some charges but in extenuation he pleads youth. These pages of the "Apology" at least prove that Swift was not indifferent to the verdicts on his satire.

Turning to Wotton's (a) "Defence", Swift characterises it as "made up of half invective and half annotation" but adds that he cannot "be altogether blamed for offering at the invective part, because it is agreed on all hands that the author had given him sufficient provocation". (133) (Swift flattered himself if he thought he had roused Wotton to invective. The "Defence" is less elegant than the "Reflections" but it is never abusive.) Swift goes on to recall how Wotton "had in a way not to be pardoned

(a) Wotton is not mentioned by name.

drawn his pen against a certain great man then alive (a) [i.e. Sir William Temple]^(a) and universally revered for every good quality". (134) As for his notes, continues Swift, "the reflector is entirely mistaken and forces interpretations which never once entered into the writer's head". He confesses again that one or two remarks were "delivered unwarily" and again pleads his youth and "his papers being out of his power at the time they were published" to which he adds the new plea of "frankness of speech". He repeats again that the "Tale" was directed only against "the abuses and corruptions in learning and religion" (135)

Swift then proceeds to an elaborate reply to Wotton's charges that the "author's wit is not his own" (136) - a defence much more elaborate than such a "trifle" requires, but in the "Apology" Swift is treading very carefully; - for once he is not in a mocking mood. The account of how he "came to be without his papers" (137) is equally elaborate but it is very specious. Without further evidence there is no reason to suppose that "A Tale of a Tub" was not printed as Swift wanted it to be. After keeping the MS. for eight years he would probably be very careful to ensure that it should be published exactly as he desired it.

Swift sums up the "Apology" "with those allowances above required this book should be read, after which the author conceives few things will remain which may not be excused in a young writer". The "Apology" is dated June 3rd. 1709. (138)

But Swift disposes of Wotton more characteristically

(a) For Wotton's treatment of Temple see above pp 11, 12, 14.

and effectively when, to explain the allegory, he quotes footnotes which he has taken from the "Defence". Wotton is thus made to appear a sympathetic commentator for the notes selected either approve of the satire or are non-committal. (a) Wotton's condemnation of the bitterest satire is, of course, withheld. He had taken exception to the assertion that "fumes issuing from a jakes will furnish as comely and useful a vapour as incense from an altar" and to the pun upon Moses "Ecce cornuta erat ejus facies" (Cornutus, as a note added in 1710 explains, is "Either horned or shining") (139) but Swift naturally does not quote these remarks. Neither is Wotton quoted when his notes include charges of "lewdness and irreligion" of "a direct prophanation of the majesty of God" and of blasphemy (140). An objection put forward by Wotton for the sake of argument is printed by Swift as if it were Wotton's own comment and no indication is given of the guarded manner in which he had accepted and qualified it. (b) (141). Nevertheless for all its unfairness Swift's method is clever and effective.

The first four editions of "A Tale of a Tub" contained about three dozen brief notes printed in the margin; most of them referred quotations to their sources. In 1710 over eleven dozen were added as footnotes, less than two dozen of which were taken from Wotton; many of them were of several lines. The greater part of them was in Sections II, IV, and XI which recount the history of the brothers; digressions in Sections III, V, VII and IX have only ~~then~~ footnotes. Swift stated in the "Apology" that he was "informed that the Bookseller has prevailed on several gentlemen

(a) See above p 102. (b) See above p 102f.

to write some explanatory notes [which the author has] never seen.. nor intends it till they appear in print". (142).

However, two letters between him and Benjamin Tooke, the publisher, dated June 29th. and July 10th. 1710 (143) prove that he had seen them. It seems probable indeed that Swift wrote them himself. The "roguish frankness" with which the annotation^{or} admits that he cannot understand the text seems particularly in Swift's manner. (144).

P A R T T W O .

Politics 1701-17

CHAPTER V."SWIFT IN POLITICS. 1701 - DEC. 1711"(a)

Sir William Temple died in January 1699. Six months later Swift was appointed chaplain to Lord Berkeley, recently made a lord justice of Ireland, and accompanied him to Dublin. When Berkeley returned to England in less than two years, Swift came with him (1).

In the month of Swift's return the House of Commons, strongly Tory after the February elections, resolved upon the impeachment of the Earl of Portland and the Lords Somers, Orford, and Halifax, for their parts in the recent Partition Treaty (2). At this moment Swift made his first venture into political controversy and published "A Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons in Athens and Rome".

Most of the first chapter is taken up with a general discussion on forms of government. The "best legislators of all ages" have been invariably faced with the task of finding the best hands into which to deliver that "absolute unlimited power, which naturally and originally seems to be placed in the whole body". (3) The administrative or executive part of this power falls into the hands of "the one, the few, or the many" - the three natural divisions (4). Between these three the balance must be kept, for tyranny may be exercised not only by a single man but also by a handful of men or a great number of men. Of

(a) In the following footnotes P.W. is used as an abbreviation. for Prose Works (ed. T. Scott 1897-1908) in 12 vols.

this Swift gives historical examples (5) This balance, he continues, must be maintained when changes are being made in a government. Yet innovation must come slowly, with time for assimilation into the constitution, for "neglect of this rule" has bred considerable convulsions inside a state. (6)

The second chapter tells of dissensions in Athens between the few and the many. The four impeached Whigs appear under names of Greeks who were similarly repaid by the ingratitude of their country - Orford as Miltiades and Themistocles, Halifax as Pericles and Alcibiades, Somers as Aristides and Portland as Phocion (7). Chapter three deals with the dissensions between patricians and plebians in Rome; (8) in it Swift asserts as "an universal truth, that the people are much more dexterous at pulling down and setting up than at preserving what is fixed". (9)

Chapter four is directed against the "popular encroachments" which upset the balance of power. "No multitude, either represented or collective" has easily been able to distinguish between licentiousness and liberty" (10) No popular assembly was ever content with the first share of power which it won or ever knew "what share of power was their due". (11) Therefore, "those, to whom the rest of the balance is entrusted" must not give way .. to popular clamours "lest" a million of abuses and encroachments" should force their way in. (12) A popular assembly has all the "folly, infirmity or vice" of a single man and consequently results in "the same spirit of cruelty and revenge,

of malice and pride, the same blindness and obstinacy and unsteadiness, the same ungovernable rage and anger, the same injustice, sophistry and fraud, that ever lodged in the breast of any individual". (13)^(a) The chapter closes with the statement that a "usurping populace" is merely "the purchaser in trust for some single tyrant". (14)

Chapter five adds "some particular remarks upon the present posture of affairs". A form of government cannot be made immortal, but diligent attention can ensure long life. When the people are "stupidly negligent .. the period of a state approacheth". "Common sense and plain reason .. disengaged from acquired opinions "will have a good influence in popular assemblies, which are good when they act by universal concert for public ends. (15) Once leaders arise parties will be formed and Swift demands "a tolerable reason that because Claudius and Curio happen to agree with me in a few singular notions, I must therefore blindly follow them in all". A man outside Parliament "follows his own reason and his own way" yet once "listed in a party" all his opinions are "conveyed to him by his leader as wind is through an organ. The nourishment he receives has not only been chewed but digested before it comes into his mouth". (16).

The last two paragraphs return to the immediate question

(a) Compare this enumeration with that of the King of Brobdingnag^{naq} in "Gullivers Travels" part 2 ch.6. (P^{naq} viii 135f)

of the impeachments. During the present recess Parliament may consider its handiwork. It has lost the favour of the people it represents, and its victims are "openly caressed". "This, aversion of the people" might enable the balance of power to be more evenly distributed than the late measures [of the Commons] seem to promise". If, however, this "popular assembly" seeks more power England will experience the contests and dissensions of Greece and Rome. (17)

The "Discourse" is directed more against a "popular assembly" than against the Tory domination of the Commons. The pamphlet frequently rises above party differences and with many of the views expressed the Tories would be in full agreement. But these views are of greater importance when the question of Swift's 'conversion' to the Tory party arises (a).

Swift returned to Ireland in October 1701 after six months in England. He came back in the following April to learn that his first political piece had impressed the Whigs. Confessing to its authorship he was gratified to receive "great marks of esteem and professions of kindness" from Somers (b) and Halifax (both of whom had been acquitted) and Bishop Burnet. All of them promised him "the greatest preferments .. if it ever came in their power". (18)

But although Swift found himself "much inclined to

(a) see below pp 124-30

(b) Later Swift dedicated "A Tale of a Tub" to Somers. ed cit 22-7.

what they call a Whig in politics" he had to confess himself a high churchman (19) - and the Whigs were low churchmen, the supporters of Dissent.

Anne's accession in March 1702 had brought about a High Church revival. In June 1702, Dr. Sacheverell, attacking heresy and schism, had thundered particularly against 'occasional conformity' - the practise whereby Dissenters, to qualify for municipal and national offices according to the needs of the Corporation or Test Acts, received Communion in an Anglican church only to return to Nonconformist chapels and conventicles afterwards. Early in the first session of the Queen's first Parliament the Tories introduced a bill to prevent occasional conformity but after lengthy deliberations and amendments the measure was finally rejected in February 1703; Godolphin and Marlborough, like many moderate Tories, disapproved of the bill, fearing that it would divide the nation at the most dangerous crisis of a critical war; they voted for it only after assuring themselves of its failure. In this manoeuvre they were encouraged by Mr. Speaker Harley, the Tory patron of Dissent. (20)

Of Swift's attitude to the bill there is no indication. He was back in Ireland when it was finally defeated, but when a second bill was introduced in November 1703 he had returned to England (21). In their fight against the bill the Whigs "mightily urged" Swift to "publish [his] opinion" (22). But now he was less sure of his position than he had been when he wrote

the "Discourse". "I cannot but think .. that several who were against the bill do love the church and do hate and despise Presbytery. I put it close to my Lord Peterborough just as the bill was going up, who assured me in the most solemn manner that if he had the least suspicion the rejecting of this bill would hurt the Church, or do kindness to the Dissenters, he would lose his right hand rather than speak against it. The like profession I had from the Bishop of Salisbury, my Lord Somers, and some others; so that I know not what to think and therefore shall think no more". (23) Nevertheless, he did write against the bill "but I came too late by a day, so I would not print it". (24) Probably he was relieved to have his dilemma resolved for him. "Pox on the Dissenters and Independents!" he wrote in a letter, "I would as soon trouble my head to write against a louse or a flea". (25) After a third attempt in 1704 had failed a bill against Occasional Conformity was eventually passed in 1711 chiefly as a result of Nottingham's bargain with the Whigs (26) (a). At that time Swift showed more disapproval of Nottingham's action than approval of the passage of the bill (27) though in the "Examiner" for April 5th. -12th. of that year he had advised the Dissenters to use occasional conformity "as tenderly as they can" (28) His attitude during the winter of 1703-4 is important when his political 'conversion' is considered. (b)

(a) see below pp 138-40

(b) see below pp 124-30

Swift returned to Ireland in June 1704 and did not revisit England for three and a half years. During those years he wrote very little and a bare half dozen of his letters of that period have survived. In one of these, to Archbishop King, dated December 31st. 1704, he writes "I would also beg of your Grace to use some of your credit toward bringing to a good issue the promise the Queen made .. to remit the first fruits and tenths of the clergy; [also] the crown rents should be added, which is a great load upon many poor livings .. I am confident, with some reason, that it would be easily granted, being, I hear, under a thousand pounds a year" (29). But King, a month later, answered "I am not as yet to meddle in that affair. I suppose it must be done in Parliament". He goes on to agree that crown rents are the heavier burden; he has spoken to the Duke of Ormonde about them, and "if what I said be ~~reco~~^{re}corded I hope we may see some effects of it, though I am a little afraid to ask too much" (30).

Archbishop King was seconded from an unexpected quarter and by a man who was not "afraid to ask too much". Swift came to England in November 1707, and the Irish Bishops, with some hesitation which King attributed to jealousy, authorised him to make official representations to the ministry about the first-fruits. (31) Eventually Swift had an interview with the Lord Treasurer, Godolphin. The minister, after pointing out that the Irish first-fruits were an "inconsiderable thing" said that they would be remitted if the gift "should be well received with due acknowledgments" from

the Irish clergy. What these "due acknowledgments" were to be Godolphin refused to specify, and when Swift sent a report of the conversation to King, he made no speculations on the subject (32) But it must have been clear to him that the acknowledgment was expected to be the consent of the clergy to the repeal of the Test Act in Ireland. With the growth of Whig ministerial power (seven Tory ministers were replaced by Whigs in 1708) (33) Swift had suspected that an attempt would be made to help the Irish Dissenters and in his letters he had fulminated against Alan Brodrick, Speaker of the Irish Commons, when he advocated the repeal of the Test Act. (34) The ministry of course was testing Irish reactions before taking similar steps in England (35).

Swift had doubted the Whigs' solicitude for the Church of England at the time of the second bill against Occasional Conformity. Now Godolphin, for all his vagueness, had left him in no doubt about the Whig plan to repeal the Test Act in England. The consequence of this, as Swift saw it, and as he expressed it in three pamphlets later in the year (a) would be the ruin of church and state. His interview with Godolphin had severely shaken Swift's allegiance to the Whigs. He continued to solicit for the remission of the first-fruits but the ensuing months brought only delays, false hopes and the distrust of the Irish clergy. (36) He left London on May 5th. 1709 and after spending some weeks in Leicestershire and Worcestershire reached Dublin on August 1st. (37)

(a) "The Sentiments of the Church of England man". "A Letter concerning the Sacramental Test". "Remarks upon... The Rights of the Christian Church".

If Swift could not serve the Church in deeds he could at least serve it with his pen and before he left London he had written six pamphlets (a) once of which dealt solely with the Sacramental Test. It was in the form of a letter purporting to be written from an Irish MP. to an English MP. The Irish people, says the writer, "believe the Church of Ireland to be the National Church, and the only one established by law and are, willing by the same law to give a toleration to dissenters". The repeal of the Sacramental Test will abolish that established church or rather substitute as many establishments as there are sects of Dissenters.⁽³⁸⁾ Turning to the inevitable question Why a man's opinions should debar him from serving the state, Swift answers by repeating that the repeal of the Test Act would soon result in "an entire alteration of religion" with Dissenters in all the principle offices and members of the Established Church not only without "a share in employments",^{but also—} and this he repeats at the end of the letter (39)-but also without "a bare toleration by law". (40). One concession, he continues, repeating the argument he had used for political purposes seven years earlier, (b) will be "used as a step to demand another" (41). To the argument that

- (a) One, "A Letter to a MP. in Ireland upon the choosing of a new speaker there", is ascribed by R. Quintana ("Mind and Art of J. Swift" p 126) to some time subsequent to December 1709 PW. vii 1f, & DNB. give 1708. H. Teerink (see below p 234) characteristically omits it in his "Bibliography of ..Swift"
- (b) "Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions" P.W.260 f.
See above p 110

it is offensive to make Holy Communion "subservient to such mercenary purposes as the getting of an employment" Swift replies by saying that the law, assuming that all men were "members of that Church where they receive the Sacrament" wished that the attendance at Communion of servants of the public should be a proof that they were members of the Established Church. (42) Swift does not see that things have altered since that law was made and that it takes no account of Dissenters. Really Swift's defence is as evasive as the one he made a few pages earlier (a). He concludes the letter by doubting the Dissenters' "loyalty" upon the present foot of government", but concedes that that question does not "affect the body of dissenters". (43)

This "Letter concerning the Sacramental Test" referred particularly to Ireland and the Irish church. "The Sentiments of a Church of England man with respect to Religion and Government" is the fullest statement of Swift's general attitude to the question.

The pamphlet opens with a warning against the excesses of party. Both parties go to extremes against head and heart; their political faith is founded not on "enquiries after truth, but upon opposition to each other;" the Tories accuse the Whigs of intending to introduce Presbytery, and the Whigs reply by accusing the Tories of preparing to bringⁱⁿ Roman Catholicism and neither will believe the denials of the other.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Faced with two such parties a man has to choose one, for neutrality confers

(a) PW 1v 12; see above P 117.

safety only on a few; he may best serve his country "by unbiassing his mind as much as possible and then endeavouring to moderate between the rival powers". (45) Coming to religion Swift writes that a Church of England man believes that Episcopacy is the fittest of all forms of religion for preserving order and purity, and under its present regulations best calculated for our civil state"; therefore "he would defend it by arms against all the powers on earth, except our own legislature, in which case he would submit as to a general calamity, or dearth, or a pestilence". (46) A Church of England man tolerates other forms of worship but will not allow "those who are tolerated to advance their own models upon the ruin of what is already established"; "to prevent these inconveniences he thinks it highly just that all rewards of trust, profit or dignity .. should be given only to those whose principles direct them to preserve the constitution in all its parts". (47) - again Swift's defence of the Test Act is a negative one, based upon what might happen if it were repealed (a). A Church of England man thinks schism neither "damnable" nor welcome but once it has spread throughout a nation /there grows at length a dispute which are the schismatics" though legally they are the people who oppose the religion of the state. A new form of worship, even though "more pure and perfect" may endanger the state, because its adherents will always have as reason for following "discontented heads" the plausible pretext of advancing true religion and opposing error". Therefore Plato said that 'men ought to worship the gods according to the laws of the country'. "So that... 'tis fit [that sects] should

(a) as PW iv 12,19. see p 117f.

enjoy a full liberty of conscience" and to retain their loyalty "a government cannot give them too much ease, nor trust them with too little power" (48).

Swift opens Section II, "The Sentiments of a Church of England man with respect to government", by asserting that a Church of England man "thinks every species of government lawful" yet not "equally expedient; or for every country indifferently" (49), "that the administration cannot be placed in too few hands, nor the legislature in too many" (50), and that hereditary monarchy best fits our constitution. (51) Then Swift goes on to defend the revolution of 1688 - "a man may observe every article of the English Church without being in much pain about it". (52) The tract concludes with words which recall the "Discourse concerning the Contests and Dissensions". A Church of England man believes that a nation's freedom "consists in an absolute unlimited power, wherein the whole body of the people are fairly represented, and in an executive duly limited". (a). As for party he may "with prudence and a good conscience" prefer the party whose principles "best promote the good of Church and State" but he will never blindly "advance on opinion merely because it is that of the party he most approves" (b) nor let his understanding be enslaved by a leader who acts from purely personal and selfish motives (c) Finally, "in order to preserve the constitution entire in Church

(a) "Discourse" PW.i.231f.

(b) "Discourse" PW.i.267-9. see above p 111

(c) PW.i.267 see above p 111

and State, whoever has a true value for both would be sure to avoid the extremes of Whig for the sake of the former and the extremes of Tory on account of the latter". (53).

The "Sentiments" are written by a churchman, not by a party man. They made Swift's allegiance to the Whigs difficult to maintain, but the tract repudiates extreme Toryism no less emphatically than extreme Whiggism. Nevertheless agreement with the Tory policy towards the Dissenters facilitated his gravitation to Toryism. But in 1708 the Tories were not yet in a position to put their policy into action.

The attitude of the "Sentiments" reappears in the unfinished remarks, never published by Swift, on Tindal's deistical work "The Rights of the Christian Church". Tindal had brought up the old argument that 'Christ never designed the holy sacrament should be prostituted to serve a party' (54) and Swift, by way of answer, explained once more ^(b) "that those who are employed are of the national church, and the way to know it is by receiving the sacrament, which all men ought to do in their own church, and if not are hardly fit for office". (55) He argues again (b) that the Dissenters once tolerated will attempt to make themselves the national church and that thereby the state will be endangered. (56). By now Swift is repeating a well-learned lesson ; to himself his answer is final and indisputable although to others it might seem very inconclusive and inadequate; he continues to argue from

(a) As in 'A Letter concerning the Sacramental Test'. PW iv 19. see above

(b) ^{as in} PWj. 260f iv 12f. 18, 19, 21: see above pp 110, 117f. p 117f.

premises invalidated by the rise of sects and will not make allowance for the fact that the national church is now merely a majority and not the entire population. The remarks occasioned by Tindal's book are less concerned with the greater issues of church and state than are the "Sentiments" but they give an equally emphatic reason for Swift's support of the Test Act.

The three other religious works which Swift wrote before he left for Ireland in 1709 are "A Letter to a MP. in Ireland upon the choosing of a new speaker there" (a) in which he again emphasises the nonconformist danger (57), "A Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners", written with great earnestness and containing several practical suggestions (58) and "An Argument against Abolishing Christianity", in which Swift's irony is at its best (59). The Apology which was prefixed to the fifth edition of a "Tale of a Tub" was written in this year, being dated June 3rd. 1709.

Swift remained in Ireland for little over a year. In England the trial of Sacheverell "prosecuted into importance" (60) hastened the end of the Whig ministry (61). On August 8th. Lord Treasurer Godolphin was dismissed and the following day, Mr. Robert

(a) see note on p 117 above.

Harley (a) was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Irish bishops were thereby encouraged to make a second attempt to secure the remission of the first-fruits and Swift was again chosen as negotiator. (62) He reached London on September 6th.- in what frame of mind can be judged from an entry in the first journal to Stella, "I never went to England with so little desire in my life" (63) Three days later he visited Godolphin and was given "a reception very unexpected ... altogether short, dry and morose" (64). Perhaps the fallen minister suspected him of the authorship of the "Letter concerning the Sacramental Test" (65). Swift departed "almost vowing revenge" (66) and the next day "talked treason heartily against the Whigs"⁽⁶⁷⁾ with Lord Radnor, a "discontented Whig" (68) His lampoon on Godolphin "The virtues of Sid Hamet, the magician's wand" was already taking shape in his mind. (69)

Harley, as Godolphin's successor was the man to whom the case of the Irish clergy would have to be put, and Swift presented a memorial to him asking for the remission of first-fruits, twentieth parts and also, what Archbishop King had been loth to demand (b), the crown rents (70) On October 4th. Swift "went to wait upon Mr. Harley" who received him "with the greatest

(a) Harley (b 1661) had entered parliament in 1689; was Speaker 1701-5 Secretary of State for Northern department 1704; resigned 1708. (Swift PW. v 370f. says he was dismissed by the Queen through pressure from Marlborough). Henry St. John (see below p 124) was 17 years Harley's junior; entered parliament 1701; Secretary at War 1704-8; he did not sit in the following session

(b) Correspondence (ed. F.E. Ball) 1 52) above p 115.

marks of kindness and esteem .. and promised with great readiness to do all he could to grant the requests. He complimented Swift on his literary ability and invited him to dine with him for the newly appointed Secretary St. John desired to make his acquaintance. (71) Swift departed to take the irrevocable step of sending the lampoon on Godolphin to the printer's. (72)

Six days later Harley assured Swift that the first-fruits would be granted (73). Once more he showed his appreciation of Swift's writings and added that the ministry needed "some good pen" (a) Within three weeks Swift wrote his first paper for the "Examiner" At last his support of the Tories was acknowledged and unequivocal. If at the time he had any doubts about his action they must have been dispelled by the subsequent ingratitude of the Irish bishops. (74) The ascendancy of his new friends was confirmed by an overwhelming Tory victory in the October elections. (75)

Harley had played his cards well but he had been helped by Whig blunders and Swift's own sentiments. The Whigs had treated Swift as a dependent and in nine years had failed to give him any preferment despite their opportunities of doing so. (76). They had been "ravished" to see him on his recent return to London but the "great deal of coldness" in Godolphin's welcome had "enraged" him (77). Harley on the other hand treated Swift as an equal and was soon calling him Jonathan;

(a) Swift's own account four years later PW.v 383; see p 129 below

he flattered him, respected his opinions, praised his writings (78). But these were only the outward manifestations of the last phase. Inwardly the 'conversion' had been going on for years.

Tory tendencies had been detected in the verse which Swift wrote while in the service of the Whig, Sir William Temple (79) but they seem too vague and general to be taken seriously into account. Swift's first political pamphlet, the "Discourse on the Contests and Dissensions" is directed against popular assemblies (a). "Accidentally it happened to be directed at a Tory Commons but Swift would have made the same application to a Whig commons". (80). In the "Discourse" he concerns himself with the balance of power between crown, people and parliament, party politics do not enter into the question (b).

The "Discourse" shows no sign of Whig allegiance but, the welcome and approbation which Swift as the author received from the Whig leaders a year later (81) (c) drew him more closely to the Whig party. But he was a High Churchman (d) and found himself in considerable difficulty when asked to write against the Bill for preventing Occasional Conformity. The assurances of the Whig leaders that the established church would not be weakened nor the Dissenters' interests furthered by the rejection

(a) See above p 112

(b) Dryden, the Tory, had written against the "public lunacy" of crowds and parliaments. (see "Absalom and Achitophel" 1 786-9) Swift maintaining in the "Discourse" that the people destroy better than they preserve (PW.255) is thus in agreement with him.

(c) See above p 112

(d) ~~See~~ see above p 112f.

of the bill seem hardly to have convinced Swift and he was in no hurry to produce his pamphlet (a) (82). Already his Whig friendships were feeling the strain imposed by his attitude to the church.

In the same year Swift saw fit (b) to publish a "Tale of a Tub". Politically it has little value but attacks on Dissenters would not come from a rigid Whig for Whiggism relied to a great extent on the Nonconformist vote at the polls (83) — and a "Tale of a Tub" had been written in 1697....

Further doubts arose in Swift's mind when he was negotiating for the remission of the first-fruits, November 1707 to June 1709. Godolphin had made an impossible condition — the repeal of the Test Act in Ireland (84) The Whigs must by now have seemed to Swift the enemies of the established church. (c)

The pamphlets which Swift wrote before returning to Ireland (d) were directly inspired by this Whig condition. "The Sentiments of a Church of England man" contains much that is above party (85) (e) but with respect to religion these sentiments are whole heartedly Tory. (Dissenters may have personal liberty but must be debarred from all offices else they will endanger both church and state) (86). The "Letter concerning the Sacramental Test", the "Remarks upon .. 'The Rights of the Christian Church'" (f), reiterate those dangers to the state and church (87).

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- (a) See above p 113f.
 (b) " " p 100
 (c) " " p 115f
 (d) " " pp 116 (note) & 122
 (e) " " pp 118-21
 (f) " " pp 117f, 121

When he returned to Ireland in August 1709 Swift was assuredly the enemy of the Whig's policy towards the church. But he was not therefore a Tory. He knew that their party excesses were no less reprehensible than the Whigs' (88). In such circumstances it was difficult to choose a party, but he knew that neutrality offered little safety (89). One had to avoid the extremes of both parties (90) and follow the party which would "best promote the good of church and state". (91)

Harley's promises to him when he returned to England in September 1710 convinced Swift that it was the Tory party which would do this. Henceforth, his course was clear, he would support the Tories. "Opinion, principle, inclination and resentment at personal neglect all combined to bring him over to that camp where his sympathies had long lain." (92) It is only just to include the personal element for Swift resented the unfulfilled promises of Somers and Halifax and other Whig leaders, and the infuriating coldness of Godolphin when they met in September. (93) Hence the lampoon on the latter and the "Character of .. T[homas] E[arl] of W[harton]" both published before the end of the year. The "Journal to Stella" for October breathes dissatisfaction with the Whigs and gleeful anticipation of the future. Early the following month he writes "Rot 'em, the Whigs, for ungrateful dogs, I will make them repent their usage before I leave this place". (94)

But Harley was not the sort of man to make such a concession, at however little cost to himself, without obtaining

something in exchange. He wanted something more than Swift's allegiance; he wanted his pen to assist his ministry in the imminent battle for peace. The Whigs would strongly oppose a peace and there was no man who would write against them better than he whom their ingratitude and blunders had alienated. Swift came to support the Tories because he approved of their policy towards the church, i.e. for intellectual reasons; he came to write for them and thereby be more firmly yoked to their destiny for personal reasons. As time went on he became more identified with them for personal reasons of a different kind - his friendship with their leader.

Swift's own account of his 'conversion' bears out the implications in his writings from 1701 to 1710, although its being written four years after the event may impugn its reliability. The "Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions", he wrote, had brought him into contact with the Whig leaders, but he at once noticed that he was a High Churchman among Low churchmen. In his first interview with Godolphin, during the negotiations for the remission of the first-fruits, the Earl treated him with "sufficient coldness" and replied with "very poor and lame excuses". Here, as proof that he was no "favourer of the low party", Swift recalls that he "had published several tracts in opposition to the measures then taken" and instances the "Project for the Advancement of Religion", "The Sentiments of a Church of England man", "An Argument against Abolishing Christianity" and "A Letter concerning the Sacramental Test".

He then speaks of Harley's kindness in granting the remission within three weeks. Harley said he knew what he "had written against the principles of the late discarded faction", that he could not possibly continue with the Whigs despite his "personal esteem" for some of them, that the Queen would employ only "friends to the constitution of church and state" and that the new ministry required "some good pen .. to assert the principles and justify the proceedings of the new ministers". Harley then "fell into some personal civilities" and Swift promised to help in the desired manner; the minister expressed his satisfaction and added "that he had other and greater occasion for me". (95).

There is no reason why in 1710 Swift should regard the four pamphlets named above as any less directed against the Whigs than he regarded them in 1714. His account of his earliest dealings with Harley makes clear what the minister expected in return for the remission of the first-fruits.

To sum up it may be said that Swift was never a Whig party man. From 1701 to 1710 he wrote continually as a churchman desiring the maintenance of church and state. During those years his fears that the Whigs were not the party most likely to maintain church and state continued to increase. In 1709 he knew they were the enemies of the established church and within a year he had proof that the Tories were its supporters. Moreover the Tories offered him an opportunity for revenging years of ingratitude and indifference. He seized it eagerly and thereby became more deeply and violently involved in party politics than

he had ever been previously. The churchman who had once stood above party and uttered warnings against the dangers of party now plunged into four years of the bitterest party strife. (a)

The change from non-party man to party-man is more remarkable than the alleged 'conversion' from Whig to Tory. At all events Swift later insisted on the fundamental similarities between Whig and Tory (96). Perhaps he settled the whole matter in a paper to the "Examiner" early in 1711. "I am not sensible of any material difference there is between those who call themselves the Old Whigs and a great majority of the present Tories". (97)

From November 1710 to June 1711 Swift wrote for the "Examiner". His task was to show the country the necessity for the recent change of ministers by emphasising the criminal selfishness of the fallen Whig ministry's policy and the unselfish policy and achievements of the present ministry. The corollary was the necessity of the peace which the Tories were negotiating. The present ministry was to be shown as the friend of the country, its predecessor as the enemy.

In his first number Oct. 26 - Nov 2nd. Swift began logically at 1688. Those responsible for the bloodless revolution were actuated by worthy motives, he writes; they intended their

(a) Yet occasionally during that struggle he can still see the folly of party e.g. "Examiner" No.16. (PW.1x87) "Journal to Stella" (PW.11 75,97) and "Enquiry into the Behaviour, etc" (PW.475)

action to be no precedent but a necessity demanded by the interests of the country. Thus they intended to keep things in the old course but later an "under set of men" who had nothing to do with the revolution whispered to the king "that the principles of loyalty in the Church of England were wholly inconsistent with the Revolution. Hence began the early practice of caressing the Dissenters". Having thus connected the Whigs (carefully disassociated from those who effected the revolution of '88) with the Dissenters, Swift adds the third plank in his platform, the futile war. Financial interests, he asserts, have caused it to drag on so long but the Queen has now succeeded in "extricating herself.. out of the pupillage of those who found their accounts only in perpetuating the war". When the French again sue for peace they will not again be refused. (a) (98).

For the next seven and a half months Swift continued the onslaught. The Whigs are attacked for their war policy. (99) Swift protests he does not wish to belittle the army but it has won only barren victories (100) - already the leading motive of the "Conduct of the Allies" was in his mind. The blunders of the last Whig ministry are tabulated and a warning repeatedly issued against the consequences of their return to power (101).
 Wharton⁽¹⁰²⁾ and Marlborough are constantly arraigned - the latter never on the score of military incapacity but mainly for his avarice (103)

(a) In the spring of 1710 peace negotiations had been held at Gertruydenburg. The Dutch were forced by England and Austria to demand from Louis XIV more than even a losing monarch willing for peace could fairly be expected to cede. See Trevelyan "England under Queen Anne". III 31-3, 61, 187; also p 135 below

The late ministry is further attacked for its church policy (104) - for favouring dissent, which also comes under the lash. (105)

Complementary to the attacks on the late Whig ministry is the support constantly given to the new Tory ministry which is praised for its achievements in finance, economics and religious affairs and for expressing the people's will for peace (106). The ministry, actuated by nothing but public spiritedness, intends to show the people how they have been abused and how "the present course .. is the most probable means .. to extricate themselves out of all our difficulties" (107) The country needed a change of ministry and the queen is to be congratulated upon her bold action. (108).

Yet for all the violent partisanship of the "Examiner" Swift can confess that the fundamental differences between Whig and Tory are almost negligible (109) - for example, he maintains that they differ only over the identity of the enemy like two brothers defending a house separately because they cannot agree upon where danger most threatens. (110). Swift has not yet gone so far down the road of party prejudices that he cannot sometimes recall his own earlier warnings.

As early as July 1710 peace negotiations with France had begun (111). At home the Tory ministry was soon faced with difficulties of policy (112). These were made worse by divisions within the party's ranks and by differences between Harley and St. John, which the former dated from February 1711. (113). St. John

joined with the extremists, the October Club (114) (a) and Harley began playing a double game and intrigued with the Jacobites. (115) On March 8th. 1711 Harley was stabbed by Guiscard, a French noble formerly employed by Godolphin but now accused of treasonable correspondence with France (116). This action brought Harley a lot of popular sympathy but it also enabled St. John to undermine his position during his absence. (117) On his return to Parliament Harley was made Lord Treasurer and raised to the peerage as Earl of Oxford. (118) St. John looked for a similar honour and was bitterly disappointed when a year later he achieved nothing more than the title of Viscount Bolingbroke; he unfairly blamed his rival for preventing his elevation to the Lords. (119).

To ensure a peace the Tories had to secure the removal of Marlborough. The new parliament would not support him as its predecessor had done and his wife's dismissal from all her court posts in January 1711 further weakened his position. But there was no need for his immediate dismissal. He was wanted to maintain pressure on France (120). Still Swift could prepare the ground by his attacks in the "Examiner".

But as the struggle for peace became more intense Swift's pen was wanted for something greater than weekly papers. In the summer of 1711 Swift's personal relations with Oxford and St. John grew warmer and closer. He wrote his last "Examiner"

(a) see p 143 below

for the issue of June 14th. and a fortnight later St. John had invited him to Windsor—"To mind some business we have together". (121) Hereafter Swift was a constant visitor there, travelling down in the minster's coaches, dining and talking with members of the ministry and the French negotiators-, Mesnager, Dubois and Gaultier. The accounts of these visits in the "Journal to Stella" (122) show clearly Swift's pleasure in the intercourse with the great; the secrets of state which he thereby learned were "the most irresistible of all forms of flattery". (123)

On November 27th. the result of this intercourse was revealed when the "Conduct of the Allies" was published. The "Examiner" had chiefly shown the necessity for replacing a Whig ministry by a Tory one. The "Conduct of the Allies" was the natural sequel emphasising the futility of the war waged by the dispossessed ministry and the need of the peace being negotiated by its successor.

In the preface Swift outlines his purpose in the ensuing pamphlet. He lays it down as a maxim "That no reasonable man .. can be of opinion for continuing the war, upon the foot it now is, unless he be a gainer by it" or "unless he be very ignorant of the kingdom's condition and by what means we have been reduced to it". Swift says that he is not concerned with the question of interest but he thinks it "highly necessary that the public should be freely and impartially told what circumstances they are in". The greatest grievances are that we have undertaken more than was either "just or necessary" and that we have been imposed upon "for

the advancement of private wealth and power". (124)

In the pamphlet itself Swift repeats that England has become a principal where at most she should be an ally; this was imprudent and unreasonable and our action has brought us neither material advantages nor respect (125). Not only have we incurred a debt of twenty million pounds (126) but we have continually spent our money in the least profitable war by fighting on land, because neither William III nor Marlborough were admirals and because to fight on sea would be to our advantage and therefore it would offend our allies. (127) The finances of the war have been ruinous. (128) The war, he had asserted in the preface, might have been ended if the negotiators of a "mock treaty" had not taken "care to make such demands as they knew were impossible to be complied with". (129). This refers to the negotiations at Gertruydenburg, eighteen months earlier, when Louis XIV. who was very willing to make considerable concessions after Malplaquet, refused to turn against his own grandson Philip V. of Spain and drive him from his kingdom. (130) Swift pertinently notes that the English declaration of war said nothing about Philip (131) and thereby disposes of the constant cry of "No peace without Spain". (132) Without wishing "to detract from the army or its leaders" Swift then goes on to point out that all our military victories have been useless and had no other end than to enlarge the territories of the Dutch and increase the fame and wealth of our general". (133) Swift proceeds to show how all our alliances and treaties have been

to our disadvantage (134) and gives a list of the shortcomings of our allies. The Dutch have gradually decreased their army, they have not supplied their quota of ships (a) neither they nor the Spaniards have paid the subsidies, the Emperor has raised only 20,000 men instead of 40,000, through his slackness Toulon was saved, he has not raised the 4,000 men promised by treaty for Portugal; the king of Portugal too has broken his word. In return we have "actually conquered all Bavaria, Ulm, Augsburg, Landau and a great part of Alsace for the Emperor" and innumerable fortresses for the Dutch. (135).

After this enumeration Swift sums up "If we have made weak and foolish bargains with our allies, suffered them tamely to break every article^{icle} to treat us with insolence and contempt, at the very instant when we were gaining towns, provinces and kingdoms for them, at the price of our ruin and without any prospect of interest to ourselves .. it is a very obvious question to ask, by what motives, or what management we are thus become the dupes and bubbles of Europe?" (136) The only answer that Swift can find is that the "true spring or motive of [the war] was the aggrandizing a particular family" - the treasurer's staff for Godolphin, and the command of 40,000 men for Marlborough and

(a) Trevelyan (op.cit iii 193) notes that similar accusations in the shape of resolutions passed in the Commons were made in February 1712. (Cobbett. "Parliamentary History" ~~1712~~ 1090f) The reply of the States General, continues Trevelyan, gives the Dutch the best of the matter; "as a state they had crippled themselves by expenditure on the war far more than we. A much better case could have been made out against Austria".

court employments for his Duchess (a) These three were supported and encouraged by the "monied men" who by "lending upon great interest and premiums" reaped a "perpetual harvest from the war and later by the Whigs who "were at that time out of all credit and consideration". "The great traders in money were wholly devoted to the Whigs, who had first raised them" and the latter continued the war when they returned to office in order to help those "great traders" and because they themselves "were not yet firmly settled". The Dutch realised the English people were not behind the ministry and thus could withdraw men and break their word with impunity. (137)

These pages on the uselessness of the war which has been waged purely in private interests form the chief point of Swift's pamphlet. He goes on to show how "No peace without Spain" resolutions and the failure of the negotiations at Gertruydenburg are the result of the Whig desire to continue the war, (138) and after once more emphasising the ruinous financial policy involved⁽¹³⁹⁾ he returns to that central point. "We have been fighting for the ruin of the public interest and the advancement of a private .. The nation begins now to think those blessings are not worth fighting for and therefore desires peace". (140) After further recapitulations of the finances and follies of the war (141) the pamphlet closes with the assurance that the ministry will bring the war to an end with a profitable peace (142).

(a)

In 1698 Francis, Godolphin's only child had married Henrietta, Marlborough's eldest daughter. He was 19, she 16.

The repetitions, recapitulations and summings-up of the pamphlet, its statistics and documentation, its forcefulness and simplicity all combined to make its effect prodigious. On November 28th, the day after its appearance, Swift wrote to Stella that it is regarded as "something very extraordinary" and that it "begins to make a noise". (143) The next day he reports that a thousand copies have been sold in two days (144) and on November 30th. truthfully writes that "it tells abundance of most important facts which were not at all known". (145) The second edition was sold out on December 2nd. within five hours, the third half sold by December 4th., the fourth being printed on December 5th. and the fifth (a smaller one at sixpence instead of a shilling) on December 6th. (146) By the end of January the sixth edition was sold out and a seventh under consideration. Eleven thousand copies had been sold by then, "a most prodigious run". (147)

The Tories needed all the assistance that Swift's pen could afford them in their battle for the peace. As Lord Poulett wrote to Oxford in November, "the queen's enemies at present generally understand one another much better than her friends and servants". (148) The Tory malcontents, headed by St. John, clamoured for the dismissal of all Whigs in the army, magistracy and civil service (149). The Whig leaders took the opportunity of approaching Oxford with plans of alliance - they would help

him to pass a bill against Occasional Conformity if he would reconstruct his ministry and revise the peace terms. (150) They failed to win Oxford over but they persuaded the Earl of Nottingham, (151) 'Dismal', to join them and Swift immediately wrote one of his typical "scorching pasquinades" against him (152).

Despite Nottingham's desertion the ministry, according to Swift, expected a majority of ten in the Lords (153) But when on December 7th. the earl spoke against a general peace or a peace without Spain his motion was carried by eight votes. (154). Swift put the blame for this defeat entirely on to Oxford "who did not take timely care to make up all his strength"; (155) eight 'proxies' of absent Scottish peers had not been sent in time. (156) A few days later the Whigs played their part by hurrying the Occasional Conformity Bill through the Lords. The excuse which they made to their betrayed supporters was that the lesser must give way to the greater. But they had sacrificed "their principles of religious toleration to their factious desire to overthrow the ministry". (157).

The passage of the bill which had caused so much bitterness and controversy on the three previous occasions it had been brought up for debate (a) aroused little interest for the crisis precipitated by the Lords' vote against the peace claimed all attention. In Anne's day the position of the House of Lords was such that the ministry, despite its two to one majority in the Commons, would fall unless the vote could be reversed. (158) Swift was convinced

(a) see above p 113f.

that the Queen had betrayed his friends - had she not let herself be conducted to the House by the Duke of Somerset "who was louder than any .. for the clause against peace" rather than by the ministerialists Shrewsbury or Lindsay?⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ Oxford agreed with Swift whereupon the latter asked for a post abroad if, as it seemed to be arranged between the Queen and the Whigs, Parliament were dissolved and a Whig ministry set up. "I should hardly trust myself to the mercy of my enemies while their anger is fresh" he explains and adds "as far as I can judge, the game is lost .. my letters will at least be a good history to show you the steps of the change".^{(160).}

The next week was one of little action but a great deal of suspense. Swift had nothing to say about the Occasional Conformity Bill (a) (brought before the Lords on December 15th.) but he continued to be pessimistic (161). Dartmouth and Erasmus Lewis despaired also but Arbuthnot was optimistic and Oxford only said "Poh, poh, all will be well". (162) The Lord Treasurer apparently hoped "to get a majority against next Wednesday when the House of Lords is to meet" and Ormonde endeavoured "to bring over some Lords". On December 28th. Swift speaks as if that majority is assured - "If we miscarry on Wednesday. it will be by some strange sort of neglect" - and adds "They talk of making eight new lords by calling up some peers' eldest sons". (163) The next day he writes "I have broke open my letter .. to let you know that we are all safe; the Queen has made no less than twelve lords, to have a majority.. She is awaked at last and so is Lord Treasurer". (164).

The Queen's action was not against the constitution

(a) see above p 114.

although it entailed the stretching of it. (165) Swift called it "a strange unhappy necessity". (166) The Whigs were outmanoeuvred and their defeat was quickly turned into a rout. By January 12th. 1712, Walpole was in the Tower for corruption and on the last day of the old year the Queen dismissed Marlborough from all his offices. (167)

"The country, it is to be feared, had by now had from the Queen and her Treasurer the best part of their long and great service". Hereafter Oxford's caution became mere sluggishness and the Queen's ill health made her incapable of action. (168) The ministry was now even more on the defensive (169).

The change is illustrated in Swift's writings. The "Examiner" and the "Conduct of the Allies" had been part of a grand offensive against wavering rivals but of the works produced after December 1711 the longer ones were either apologies and justifications ("Four last Years", "Some Free Thoughts", "Enquiry into the Behaviour") or appeals ("October Club", "Some Reasons to prove.") or at best counter-attacks ("Importance of the Guardian considered", "Public Spirit of the Whigs") The Tories had in fact lost the initiative. The Whig ranks reformed after January 1712. Walpole returned from the Tower in July with increased reputation (170) and within a year his party won their first parliamentary victory for three years (a). From that moment it became evident that the fall of the ministry was only a matter of time.

The remaining two and a half years of the Tory supremacy were among the busiest of Swift's life. His destiny becomes increasingly intertwined with that of the ministry; every move

it makes has consequences for him; every move against it affects him. Swift's activities from 1712 to 1714 form an epitome of the history of the Harley administration in that period.

CHAPTER VI."SWIFT IN POLITICS 1712-4 AND HIS WITHDRAWAL TO IRELAND."

Although Swift had taken a leading part in the campaign against Marlborough through "The Examiner" and "The Conduct of the Allies" he did not regard the general's dismissal on the last day of the year with unqualified satisfaction. (1) Still it was a great victory for the ministry and in the first half of 1712 Swift wrote two pamphlets to establish his friends more firmly - "Some Advice humbly offered to the members of the October Club" (which appeared in January) (2), and "Some reasons to prove that no person is obliged by his principles as a Whig to oppose her Majesty or her present ministry" (which appeared early in June) (3).

The October Club consisted "of above a hundred Parliamentmen of the country" who met daily to "drive things on to extremes against the Whigs, to call the old ministry to account and get off five or six heads".(4) They were the extremists of the Tory party and sufficiently strong to secure the passage of several private member's bills which the Lords rejected, to the secret satisfaction of Harley, whose caution and moderation the Club regarded with suspicion. (5) Swift's object in his "Advice" was to assure them of the Lord Treasurer's integrity. He emphasises the menace of the Whigs (6), and the ill consequences to church and state should they gain a majority (7) but he also points out the Whigs' weakness and divisions (8), the ministry

has many difficulties and intrigues to counter at home and abroad (9) and, he hints mysteriously, many circumstances are unknown (10); the Queen and her ministry have the true interests of the kingdom at heart (11) and the October Club cannot serve their country better than by supporting the latter (12). Although, as Swift himself said, the pamphlet was "finely written" it sold slowly at first (13); its effect was similarly unobtrusive, the members of the Club were given "food for their ruminations" and the danger from them ceased. (14)

"Some Reasons to prove etc." was addressed "to a Whig Lord" and, being aimed "to make converts of the doubtful Whigs" (15), it is complementary to the preceding pamphlet. The similarity of Whig and Tory (16) (a) is emphasised although the present Whig opposition is compared unfavourably with the last Tory opposition (17); it is a question not of Whig or Tory, argues Swift, but war or peace (18) (b). The main issue, he insists, is the Queen's prerogative (19) which the Tories allow and the Whigs oppose but he wrongly equates opponents of the peace with those who deny the royal prerogative. One sentence falls very strangely from Swift's pen - "The ministers will second your (i.e. the Whigs') utmost zeal for securing the indulgence to Protestant dissenters" (20) - and gives colour to the view that this sentence and possibly more of the pamphlet was either

(a) Swift frequently emphasises this similarity in his writings. see JS 75, 97; PW. v 475, ix 87, 284-90, 305 f; Cor ii 39.

(b) this distinction is again made in the "Four Last Years" PW x 20.
20.

written at Harley's instigation or an interpolation by the minister himself (21).

Between the publication of these two political pieces appeared⁽²²⁾ the only work to which Swift ever put his name - "A Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue, in a letter to the Earl of Oxford". (23) This pamphlet advocated the establishment of a society to legislate on grammar and language, but, like the paper Swift had contributed to the "Tatler" eighteen months earlier on the corruptions of style (24), it had no effect. It was indeed answered, and Swift commented "I believe if I writ an essay upon a straw some fool would answer it". (25)

These three serious pieces of prose were followed in July and August by two satirical pieces in the same vein of apparent seriousness as the "Argument against Abolishing Christianity". The first is "A Supposed Letter from the Pretender to a Whig Lord". It is addressed to Wharton and denies correspondence with the Tories and promises "not to hinder any designs ... of altering the present established worship". Wharton is also implicated in the companion piece, "A Letter to the Bishop of St. Asaph", for it is alleged to be written by him; in it "obedience and submission to princes" are called "exploded doctrines" and the confession is made that the Whigs would have made peace

when war was no longer to their advantage (26). The Bishop of St. Asaph was again attacked for inconsistency later in July (27).

Swift published no more prose in 1712 and altogether the year was not a productive one. In addition to the poems against Marlborough he wrote "Atlas" (an epigram on Oxford) "Toland's invitation to Dismal to dine with the Calves head club"(a) (where the company, including Sunderland, Orford and Wharton, will "talk what fools call treason all the night") and "Peace and Dunkirk" (which recalls the arguments of the "Examiner" and "The Conduct of the Allies", -

"The towns we took ne'er did us good ...
We spent our money and our blood
To make the Dutchmen proud and great" (28)
(29)

But throughout 1712 Swift was writing the work which was not completed until the following year and not published until 1758, under the title of "The History of the Four Last Years of the Queen", although "The History of the Peace of Utrecht" is the better title. Politically, too, the year passed quietly; the peace negotiations went on (30); Ormonde succeeded Marlborough and obeyed Bolingbroke's Restraining Orders; (31), France and England were ready to make a deal into which the Dutch were forced to enter as a mere appendage (32); at home Oxford and Bolingbroke still quarrelled with each other and held secret communication with the Pretender; (35), the unpopularity of the union with

(a) Dismal = Nottingham; the Calves head club met on Jan.30th. in disrespect to the memory of Charles I. ("Poems" ed. H. Williams p 161)

Scotland grew. (34) But there was no crisis, the year was a lull between the crises of Dec. 1711 and spring 1714.

In the opening months of 1713 Parliament was frequently prorogued (35) and Swift took the opportunity of striking another blow for the ministry by writing "An Appendix to the 'Conduct of the Allies'" (a) in which he cited the prorogations as an example of the Queen's piety in giving her allies^a an opportunity to think... if there be such a thing as gratitude, justice and humanity in Europe". (36).

Towards the end of January Swift published "Mr. C[ollins]'s Discourse of free thinking put into plain English by way of abstract for the use of the poor". (b) Others who replied to Collins did so in all seriousness (c) but Swift refused to pay him that compliment; he took up his arguments one by one and pushed them into absurdity or summarised them in such a way that they became ridiculous; (37) mere quotation of Collin's list of free thinkers of all ages damns him (38). But Swift also assails Collins for his politics and equates free thinking with Whiggism, making the evils of the former those of the latter (39). "Some Thoughts on Freethinking" unfinished and of uncertain date (d)

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- (a) Published in the "Examiner" vol III, number 16, dated Jan. 12-16.
 (b) v Les lie Stephen "English thought in 18th. Century" (1881); cc 3 & 4 pp 201-11) & Monk's "Bentley" pp 341-353 for account of Collins and his controversies.
 (c) E.g. Whiston, Hare, Bentley, Hoadly, Clarke.
 (d) Printed by T. Scott immediately after Collins's "Discourse" and headed "Written in England"; not in Teerink. See below p234.

continues the argument against free thinking in religion with a parallel from politics; if a supporter of republicanism or absolute monarchy attempted to convert others he would be punishable by law, yet in religion proselytizing is not punished. (40)

Throughout his whole period of office Oxford continued to receive letters from the Whig leader Halifax (a) and early in 1713 the latter began to suggest an alliance to secure the Hanoverian succession (41). Oxford does not appear to have answered in writing but "he did not discourage his suggestions" (42); characteristically he was preparing for both Hanoverian and Jacobite succession. (43) On March 28th, Swift wrote to Archbishop King denying a report that Oxford intended "after the peace to declare for the Whigs" (44) though a week earlier he had written in the "Journal to Stella" that the Lord Treasurer had met "four principal Whigs" at Halifax's house (45). To King Swift writes that he agrees with him "that a free man ought not to confine his converse to any one party" (46) thereby excusing Oxford's rumoured approaches to the Whigs with arguments which the Archbishop himself had put forward two months earlier in another connection (47).

On April 3rd. Swift wrote to Stella "the peace is signed it will appear a most excellent peace for Europe, particularly for England (b), and Swift's final words on the peace are given in "The Four Last Years" which he began in Sept. 1712, and was revising

(a) HMC Portland V. prints 24 from Aug. 1711 to May 1714.

(b) For England's gains and her methods of acquiring them see Trevelyan op cit 185 f note 209 f.

in May 1713 (49). It is the longest work Swift wrote on behalf of the ministry - nearly three times the length of the "Conduct of the Allies".

The first book opens with brief characters of the leading political figures of 1710 and 1711 - Somers, who is blamed and praised, Godolphin, Sunderland, Wharton, a talented profligate, Nottingham, Somerset, Marlborough and his Duchess. The Duke is damned with faint praise and Swift is less fair to him than he was in the "Examiner" and the "Journal to Stella" early in 1712 (a). The Duchess is described as sharing her husband's avarice but as suffering in addition from pride and rage. Swift recounts the events leading up to the crisis of Christmas 1711 and the dismissal of the Duke. He maintains that Marlborough's military greatness would have persuaded the Queen and her ministry to retain his services if his leadership of discontented cabals had not threatened the country's safety. The man's fall, complains Swift, is noted and not the reason. The Queen's choice lay between the man who rescued her from her country's enemies and wanted a peace and a man dangerous to the nation's welfare. (50)

The second book opens with the Queen's message to the Commons on Jan. 17th. 1711-2. "that her plenipotentiaries are arrived at Utrecht". (51). Swift then returns to 1709 to "relate the several steps by which the intercourse between the courts of France and Britain was begun and carried on". (52). The impossible

(a) See above p143.

conditions asked at Gertruydenburg (a) roused France to fresh resistance (53) - Louis XIV really wanted peace but the Whig ministry did not and hence they made the Dutch put forward impossible demands. As soon as the Tories came into power they made overtures of peace to France (b) and the secrecy which surrounded them was not intended to deceive the Dutch "but to prevent the clamours of the abettors here at home"; France and Britain were first to come to an agreement and thus "facilitate the general peace". Meanwhile the Dutch were assured that their interests would not be sacrificed to a peace and if they demurred they were to be asked to supply their agreed quota of land and sea forces" while Her Majesty reduced hers to a reasonable and just proportion". Yet the Dutch, continues Swift, took exception to the preliminary articles; nevertheless it was essential for the Queen "to be empowered by France to offer separately to the allies what might be reasonable for each to accept". (54)

Most of the third book is concerned with the finances of the war. Walpole's "notorious corruption", Marlborough's embezzlement (c) and Godolphin's mismanagement together with "pernicious counsels of borrowing money upon public funds of interest" are all attacked. But this was remedied by Godolphin's successor (d) whose character Swift outlines - "firm and steady

(a) See Trevelyan III 31 - 3 on the Dutch as "catspaw"

(b) Trevelyan op cit iii 177 ff.

(c) Trevelyan iii 200 f shows the baselessness of this and other charges.

(d) Oxford is not mentioned here by name.

in his resolutions", uncommunicative, cautious, preferring to turn incidents to account as they come rather than pretending to foresee them, without "fear, cruelty, avarice and pride" but not without ambition, too easy and indifferent under imputation, a great procrastinator. The book ends with a tribute to St. John, followed by brief accounts of some parliamentary bills (55).

The fourth book returns to the peace negotiations. The Dutch adopted an obstructionist policy and intrigued with the Whig opposition to create trouble for the ministry at home. This conduct led the Queen to consider "herself to be under no obligation to them and Ormonde, who had succeeded Marlborough, was ordered to fight only "upon a very apparent advantage" and later "to avoid engaging in any battle or siege until he had further instructions." (a) Swift quotes the Queen's speech to Parliament June 6th. 1712, introducing the terms agreed to between Britain and France. One sentence of it reads strangely, "I have not taken upon me to determine the interests of our confederates", for the speech goes on to tell how the Spanish Low Countries, Naples, Sardinia, Milan, and Sicily have been disposed. The "desertion" of Ormonde by his foreign troops is commented on bitterly, the details of the final negotiations, the unsuccessful intrigues of Marlborough with the Dutch are recounted and with the assurance that the allies, with the exception of the emperor, will have no difficulty in concluding "their several treaties with his Catholic Majesty" the work ends. (56)

(a) See also Trevelyan III 215-222 & Cobbett VI 1135-9.

In writing his history Swift had been "given access to official correspondence and State documents" (57) and he esteemed it highly as "something very notable" (58). But Orrery was right when he summed up the work thus "The title of history is too pompous for such a performance ... but as a pamphlet it will appear the best defence of Lord Oxford's administration and the clearest account of the Treaty of Utrecht that has hitherto been written" (59). It is a very partial account - naturally enough because Swift was a firm Tory and had access only to the papers in the hands of his party, Whig, French and Dutch documents not being accessible to him. Yet even his very partisan Tory account of Dutch activities cannot disguise the fact that Holland was the wronged party. Swift is so deluded into seeing imaginary shortcomings in the Dutch that he overlooks all faults of the ministry; he is so desirous of peace as an end that he ignores the means.

The ministry was no more troubled by the partiality of the history than by the partiality of Swift's previous pamphlets but they were concerned at the dangers which might arise from its publication. On Jan. 18th. 1712-3, Swift wrote to Stella "Some think it too dangerous to publish and would have me print only what relates to the peace". (60)-that is the second and fourth books which give the partial account of negotiations, the other two books being more concerned with personalities and domestic matters.

Swift did not publish the "Four Last Years" when he

thought it would do most good (for he considered he was justifying the business of Oxford and Bolingbroke in it) (61). He made an attempt to do so nearly twenty five years later but was dissuaded by Oxford's son, the second Earl (Oxford had died in 1724) and Erasmus Lewis (62). The history was eventually published in 1758, thirteen years after Swift's death. (a). In the advertisement (b) Swift's historical method is very aptly described - "while he tells no more than the truth, he does not tell the whole truth". (63).

Following this "Advertisement" and preceding the first book is the "Author's Preface"; it is not known when it was written (c) but it was first published in 1765 (d). In it Swift emphasises the "undoubted right" of the Hanoverian Succession ensured by an act of parliament "brought into the House of Commons by Mr. Harley". In support of his claim "to write with the utmost impartiality" Swift writes "I never received one shilling from the minister" and he has "no interest or inclination to palliate the mistakes or omissions .. or unhappy misunderstandings" of the Tory leaders. (64) Swift was certainly not blind to the faults of his greatest friends but if he had to choose between

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- (a) T. Scott (PW X XViii) notes that at this date both King and Orrery were alive yet neither of them cast doubt on the piece's authenticity which was first challenged by Johnson (Works, Oxford⁽¹⁹²⁵⁾ viii 207); they if any would have known the nature of the MS. The second Earl of Oxford had died in 1741.
- (b) By Dr. Charles Lucas of Dublin.
- (c) Certainly after 1726 for the Author's Preface (PW.x 16) speaks of Swift's 12 years residence in Ireland after Anne's death.
- (d) Note by "W.S.J" quoted by T. Scott (PW x 13)

Tory and Whig or Tory and Dutchman he was sufficiently biased to choose Tory nearly every time. (a) The preface ends with the declaration that though "the following Memoirs" have often been reviewed nothing has been changed or added (65).

In April 1713 Swift was rewarded for his labours on behalf of the Tory ministry - labours which had helped towards the peace just signed - with the deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin. Since he had first consorted with the Whigs he had hoped for preferment (66) and the story of events immediately leading up to this promotion is told in all its details of hopes and fears and professed indifference in the "Journal to Stella", Apl.13-23.(67) The following month he left for Ireland to be installed. His reaction to the 'reward' granted him is summed up in a letter to Atterbury when he speaks of "the deanery they thought fit to throw me into".(68). John Sharpe, Archbishop of York, and the Duchess of Somerset had prevented a more fitting reward being given Swift and Queen Anne was particularly insistent upon making her own ecclesiastical appointments (69). It is significant that the deanery of St. Patrick's was the gift of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, not of the Crown. (70) Once Swift's preferment was assured the Archbishop of York hastened to make overtures of friendship on which Swift commented "He sues for pardon and repents too late" (71).

(a) Though frequently he realises that there is very little difference between Whig & Tory; see note (a) on p 144 above.

Before leaving for Ireland Swift was involved in a quarrel with his old friend Steele. "The Examiner" of May 4-8th. attacked Nottingham, though not by name, as a man once "pe^lted .. expos'd and ridiculed" by the very Whigs who now "burn and dote where before they loath'd and railed". His daughter Charlotte was also taken to task for "knotting" in the Queen's chapel. Furthermore Mr. Ironside of the "Guardian", i.e. Steele, was ridiculed. Although Swift had relinquished the editorship of the "Examiner" three years earlier Steele, without making any enquiries - the least he could have done, - immediately attributed the attack to him. He had at least the excuse that Swift, if he did not know the present editor personally (72), occasionally gave hints to be worked up into papers (73) (a). Accordingly in No.53. of the "Guardian", May 14th, in which he warmly defended Marlborough against "impudent" calumniators, he attacked Swift as an "estranged friend".

On May 13th. Swift wrote to Addison protesting against Steele's injustice and ingratitude for he says he "knows very well that my Lord Treasurer has kept him in his employment upon my entreaty and intercession". "Should not Mr. Steele have expostulated with me as a friend?" (74) he asks. Swift expected Addison to compose the dispute as he easily might have done but "once again that calm and regulated spirit refused to sully itself with other mens' quarrels. He simply handed the letter to Steele and

(a) e.g. for "Examiner" of Jan 16th. 1713.

left him to reply" (75) This Steele did on May 19th. saying provocatively "They laugh at you if they make you believe your interposition has kept me thus long in my office" (76) and it has been suggested (77) that Oxford's motives for keeping Steele in office were less unselfish than Swift imagined. But in his reply to Steele a few days later (78) Swift gave an account of his intercession for him three years ago (79) and of Oxford's reproaches when Steele did not keep the appointment Swift had made for him. But whether such intercession did keep Steele in his place or not, continues Swift, the "inclinations to serve" do not merit such "vilest treatment". (80) Steele's answer to this on May 26th. thanked Swift "for any kind things said in my behalf to the Treasurer" but, misapplying Swift's references to "vilest treatment", he claims that "as to the vilest of mankind, it would be a glorious world if I were". He ends this letter by asserting that he will always defend an "injured man" (81) i.e. the attacked Nottingham. Swift's reply the following day emphasises his love and friendship for Steele, although the two men differ in their attitude to persons, e.g. Marlborough (a), yet in principles "I think we agree for I have in print professed myself in politics to be what we formerly called a Whig". A Postscript reminds Steele that in the "Proposal for Correcting etc. the English Tongue" he was given warm praise. (82) (b).

(a) Whom Steele had praised in the "Guardian" 53 v p 155 above.

(b) In the "Proposal" Swift does not mention Steele by name but writes that the author of the "Spectator" "has tried the force and compass of our language with so much success.

No more letters passed between them before Swift left for Ireland and they never corresponded again but this personal skirmish was to have important results in the political battle between Whig and Tory which was to be fought early in 1714 with Steele and Swift as the chief pamphleteers.

Swift left London on June 1st. to be installed Dean and on June 6th. he was at Chester where he wrote the last journal (LXV) to Stella - a short, personal note. He reached Dublin on June 10th. and was installed Dean of St. Patrick's three days later,; on June 25th. he left for Laracor (83). But he was not allowed to forget English politics for a moment. Before leaving Chester he had received a letter from Erasmus Lewis (84) telling him of the Tory victory in the Lords - the rejection by three votes of a motion for leave to bring in a bill to dissolve the Union with Scotland (85). Later in the month the news was less pleasant for the Whigs secured their first parliamentary victory for three years when they caused the rejection of the commercial part of the Treaty with France. The country had agitated against the proposals and their doom was sealed when Sir Thomas Hanmer, an irreproachable Tory, voted against the ministry and carried over with him no less than 80 Tories. Bolingbroke, who had negotiated the treaty was "bitterly chagrined". (86).

~~Swift learned of this Whig victory on June 23rd, from~~
~~(Vanessa)~~
~~Esther Vanhomrigh.~~ -- (97)

Swift learned of this Whig victory on June 23rd. from Esther Van-
 (Vanessa) (87)
 homrigh. On July 9th. he wrote to Ford of his surprise at Hanmer's
 action (88) ^(a) The same day Lewis wrote to Swift expressing fears
 that neither the baronet nor Lord Anglesey "will continue long
 with us". "I heartily wish you were here," he continues, for "you
 might certainly be of great use to us by your endeavours to
 reconcile" (89). Three weeks later Lewis wrote again to Swift and
 concluded "My Lord Treasurer desires you will make all possible
 haste over, for we want you extremely". (90) On Aug 6th. he wrote
 more insistently "You and I have already laid it down for a maxim
 that we must serve Lord Treasurer without receiving orders or
 particular instructions"; circumstances, he argues, have altered
 and will not allow Swift to adhere to his original plan of staying
 in Ireland until October (91). But on July 16th. Swift had written
 to King expressing the hope that he would not have to return
 immediately to England for, he said, "neither my fortune not my
 health will very well bear" it. The "old disorder in [his] head"
 had returned. (92) He was discontented and "terribly melancholy"
 yet, he wrote to Vanessa "neither will I leave the Kingdom till
 I am sent for". (93) He repeats this to Ford on July 30th, ^(b)
 and adds "called I am not yet as I think, for though Mr. Lewis
 tells you the ministry desire it, it does not so absolutely appear
 to me. You may be sure I should be glad to come on many accounts" (94)

But Swift did return to England without being "sent for"

(b) From this letter it appears that Ford had joined Lewis in
 his exhortations to Swift to return.

(a) "Hanmer positively assured me that he was perfectly satisfied
 with every part of the Commerce Treaty" ("Letters of Swift to
 Ford" 13)

by anyone other than Ford or Lewis and before October came. On Aug. 29th. (95) just over three weeks after Lewis's most insistent letter Swift sailed from Dublin. He had been in Ireland eleven weeks instead of four months he had originally intended. But, ill and melancholy, he was repelled by Ireland; his friends and English politics needed him.

In England a General Election was in progress and the Tories, united for the purpose, fought it on two issues - the Peace just signed and fear for the Church in danger (96). After the usual corruption, intimidation and falsification (97) by both sides the Tories were returned to power. But they would hold office only as long as the Queen lived for the House of Hanover suspected them of a Jacobite policy and their only hope for the next reign was a vigorous policy of preparation for the Elector. Oxford "in the muddy depths of his mind saw the situation truly" but was becoming increasingly lethargic and incapable of action; Bolingbroke's idea of action was violent partisanship but a national crisis demanded other remedies (98). The struggle between the two leaders had reached an acute state when Swift was in Ireland (99). Oxford continued to receive letters and suggestions from Halifax (100) (a). Bolingbroke apparently was contemplating some desperate step from which Shrewsbury dissuaded him (101).

(a) See above p 148 & note (a)

This then was the dangerous situation to which Swift returned. Letters from Sir Constantine Phipps, Charles Davenant and Justice Nutley (102) urged him to rouse Oxford to activity, and he wrote to Archbishop King of the "vexation" of a reconciler (103). Indeed the fact that he was "heartily weary of Courts and Ministers" (104) was one reason he gave for desiring the Prolocutorship of the Irish Convocation (105) (a).

Swift's first pamphlet since his return from Ireland was directed against Burnet. "A Preface to the B[ishop] of S[a]r[u]m's Introduction to the third volume of the History of the Reformation of the Church of England". Swift's method of attack is similar to the one employed in "Mr. Collin's Discourse of Free-Thinking". The bishop's arguments are pushed to absurdity and frequently mere quotation is sufficient to show his foolish exaggerations (106). Like Collins, Burnet is assailed for his politics - for being able to "smell popery at five hundred miles distance better than fanaticism under his nose" and for believing that all whose politics differ from his must therefore be Papists (107). Even in this pamphlet Swift finds an opportunity of asserting that the Queen and her present ministers have never prejudiced the Hanoverian Succession. (108)

But Swift's greatest work in 1713-4 was written during the final battle of pamphlets against the Whigs precipitated by

a) Swift made his claim to this office very cautiously; when it was given to Archdeacon Percival he dismissed the matter with angry scorn. See Cor ii 94 and note 1.

Steele, the friend who had disappointed him and attacked him a few months earlier.

The ninth article of the Treaty of Utrecht stipulated that the fortifications, sluices and moles of Dunkirk should be demolished within five months, the fortifications towards the sea within two months and the rest within three months (109). The peace had been concluded on March 31st. and proclaimed on May 5th. Two months later M. Tugghe, representing the magistrates of Dunkirk, begged the Queen in a memorial that the town might be spared. Bolingbroke replied that the Queen could not do this but Tugghe presented a second address which was printed ^{and} widely circulated. (110) At this point Steele intervened with No. 128 of the "Guardian" published on Aug. 7th. Most of the number was taken up by a letter signed "English Tory" which demanded that the promised demolition of ~~Dunkirk~~ should be carried out immediately and the menace of the French thereby lessened; "pray God" says the writer "that our mercy to France may not expose us to the mercy of France"; three times he emphasises that "the British nation expect the demolition of Dunkirk!"

This paper called forth several violent answers from the Tories objecting to Steele's method of addressing the Queen and his attitude to her prerogative. One came from the "Examiner" of Aug 21st. and another threatened Steele with parliamentary action (he had been elected member for Stockbridge, Hants on Aug. 25th. by 50 votes to 21) (a)

(a) Gay, Defoe, ^{and} Pope (quoted by Aitken 1 395 f) testify to the constituency's reputation as a rotten borough.

though he was not without his defenders. On Sept 7th. two commissions left for Dunkirk to see the demolition which was commenced on the 26th. By the 14th. Steele was preparing to defend himself and on Sept. 22nd. appeared his pamphlet "The Importance of Dunkirk Considered". (111).

The first twenty pages consist of Tugghe's memorial with its ten points why the existence of Dunkirk will benefit Great Britain commercially and with the letter of the "English Tory". Steele denies having attacked the Queen's prerogative and objects to his opponent's finding treason in the sentence "the British nation expect the immediate demolition of Dunkirk". (112) He goes on to give commercial reasons for demolishing the fortifications (113) and refutes Tugghe's memorial point by point. (114). He then returns to the question of prerogative which he says is "to be interpreted and understood by the rules of the joint welfare and happiness of prince and people". (115). He is sorry that such a weighty word should be shouted at such a small man as he (116) and asserts (as he had done previously in his letters to Swift) (117) (a) that he will "follow no leaders" but "Vote according to the dictates of my conscience". (118) The letter to the "Guardian" defended the Queen against Tugghe (119), he maintains, and the pamphlet ends with a panegyric on the Queen (120).

At this point Swift, his friendship for Steele now dead, took up his pen. There were several immediate answers to Steele's

(a) See above p 155f.

pamphlet including one in the "Examiner" (121) but Swift's "The Importance of the Guardian Considered" did not appear until the end of the following month (a).

Most of the pamphlet is either personal or political. Steele, he says, was not always ungrateful; he writes of the prodigious benefits of demolishing the fortifications of Dunkirk yet the Whigs originally said it was of no consequence; he assures readers that he gave up his offices before writing to the "Guardian" but he knew he had got all he could get and thought that the ministry would not survive much longer; he praises the bishops but recently "Whigs, Dissenters, republicans, socinians [and all] enemies to episcopacy" have praised them; he maintains that anyone can offer advice to the ministry and see things which the ministers can not; he asserts ("Importance" p 57) that he is actuated "by justice and truth and benevolence to mankind" but there are several prosaic reasons for his 'unselfishness'. Steele, to evade the uncomfortable charges of attacking the Queen's prerogative, has brought forward a foolish distinction between "the personal and political prerogative", Swift says, and castigates him with an imaginary rebuke from the Queen. The delay in the demolition transgresses no rule of government and adds nothing to France's power. Swift concludes "Let us all say what we please, Her Majesty will think herself the best judge and her ministers the best advisers ... and it is not altogether impossible that there may be some few reasons of state which have not been yet communicated to Mr. Steele". (122)

(a) In the "Post Boy" of Oct.29-31.

Steele was very open to attack all along the line and Swift shows him no mercy. Pompous pretensions to disinterestedness and criticism of the Queen and her ministers are easily shown to be false and mischievous but Swift makes the illogical claim that the ministry must not be subjected to such criticism merely because it is the ministry. It is more criminal, he argues, for the "Flying Post" to attack the ministry than for the "Examiner" to attack the Whigs just as Tory attacks on the bailiff of Stockbridge, to whom the pamphlet is addressed, would be a greater crime than Whig attacks on an insignificant local Tory; (123) but the analogy does not hold. As in his writings against Collins and Burnet Swift finds that mere quotation with little or no comment is sufficient for his purpose; but throughout the pamphlet Swift misquotes Steele a great deal (124). Clever hits at Steele's private character (125) made gaily and maliciously alternate with serious political accusations, (126) Steele is pressed to the last inch. His style, of which Swift had spoken with praise in the "Proposal for Correcting etc. the English Tongue" - praise of which he had been reminded during the interchange of letters (127) - is disparaged (128).

From Oct. 1713 to Feb. 1714 there was a lull in the battle as far as Steele and Swift were concerned. At Christmas the Queen fell ill and the dangerousness of her condition raised Whig hopes and set Whig intrigues in motion (129). It also had the effect of uniting the Tories. But the Queen's recovery, as Arbuthnot foresaw (130), and the ministers' unity, as Swift foresaw (131), were only temporary.

On Oct. 22nd. a week before the publication of the "Importance of the Guardian Considered" an advertisement appeared in the "Englishman" announcing the forthcoming publication of a pamphlet by Steele. Subscriptions were invited and from time to time further announcements were made (132). Swift ridiculed this delay and method of advertisement in a poem published on Jan. 7th. 1713-4. "The First Ode of the Second Book of Horace paraphrased and addressed to Richard St--le Esq.".

"Thou pompously will let us know
What all the world knew long ago..
Thy genius has perhaps a knack
At trudging in a beaten track" (133)

On January 19th. "The Crisis" at length was published and sold 40,000 copies. (134) It set out the story of the Hanoverian Succession with all the laws on the subject. Pamphlets appeared defending and attacking the "Crisis" and the ministry thought that it had so much influence that Swift was called on to answer it. (135) He cannot have wanted much urging and a few days before Parliament re-assembled on Feb. 16th, "The Public Spirit of the Whigs" was published.

Like many of Swift's pamphlets it is a continuous alternation and mixture of personal and political matters and the latter are divisible into general and particular issues. Swift begins with several slighting references to Steele's literary ability (136) and passes to his dedication to the clergy. Steele, he says, has not always been so respectful to their cloth (137) but his exhortation to them to lay his "comment upon the act of settlement"

before their congregations "is the right Whig scheme of directing the clergy what to preach" (138). "Not ten clergymen in England (except non-jurors)" would welcome the Pretender, asserts Swift (139), and he once more accuses the Whigs of being the Jacobite faction (140). Swift rejects, as he says the clergy would reject, Steele's contention that "we have a religion that wants no support from the enlargement of secular power" and he insists on the support of the state "unless God would please to confer the gift of miracles on those who wait at the altar". (141) The passages cited by Steele "to prove the lawfulness of resisting princes" are passed by with little comment for Swift knows that they will speak for themselves (142). The maxims on liberty which Steele had inserted are treated with contempt and ridicule. (143).

Swift then comes to the Union with Scotland. This was effected, he writes, not to secure any "possible good" but "to avoid a probable evil" and was forced upon us "by the wrong management" of Godolphin (144).^(a) But to break the Union as was recently attempted (b) would be dangerous "while there is a pretender abroad" (145) The Union has been greatly to Scotland's benefit and the peers in particular have profited financially. (146)

After a few pages in which he speaks in his own defence as the author of the "Conduct of the Allies", Swift attacks Marlborough for the wealth which he acquired during the war and

(a) A charge repeated later in the year in the "Memoir relating to that change" see P.N. v 372.

(b) see above p 157.

and the Whigs for their ambition, selfishness and unscrupulousness. The allies' deficiencies in the field are once more brought up and the Restraining Orders rather speciously defended - the Imperialists and the Dutch urged Ormonde to fight so that that might delay the peace. (147) The demolition of Dunkirk gives Swift an opportunity to remark on Steele's skill in "demolishing at home". (148) From this personal sally he passes quickly to the Emperor, Portugal and the Catalans (149). But neither with flippancy nor with serious arguments can Swift hide the fact that Catalonia was badly treated by Bolingbroke and the promised privileges not restored (150) (a). The pamphlet ends with strong exception taken to a paper by Steele published in his "Englishman" (no. LVII, dated Feb. 15th. 1714) (151). In that number it had been asserted that "the present ministers were not educated in the Church of England but are new converts from prebytery". This, says Swift, is a lie and in any case it "would be no disgrace if it had been a truth". Such an admission is strange from the opponent of all dissent but once again it may be Oxford the "Would-be Tory patron of dissent" (152) speaking. (b).

The Scotch peers naturally resented the treatment they received in "The Public Spirit of the Whigs" Their complaint was

(a) W. Sichel "Bolingbroke and his times" (1901) defends the statesman (463-5) and shows that the case has two sides.

(b) As in "Some Reasons to prove...": see above p144f.

presented to the House of Lords which declared the pamphlet " a false, malicious and factious libel" and asked the Queen to offer a reward for the discovery of the author. Consequently £300 was offered and Swift, losing his courage, prepared for flight by asking Archdeacon Walls "to renew his letters of absence;" these letters he was glad to note did not confine him to England. Oxford sent him a bill, possibly for £100, to help Morpew the publisher and Barber the printer who had been given into the custody of the Black Rod. (a) Nevertheless the ministry was able to protect Swift and went as far as to have a man ready to admit the authorship. (153).

Steele was less fortunate. His maiden speech in the Commons, ill chosen and presumpt^uuous, drew upon him the anger of friends and ridicule of enemies. In her speech to parliament on Mar. 2nd. the Queen had spoken of people who "go about to distract the minds of men with imaginary dangers". "The Crisis" was adjudged to have that effect and after much debate Steele was expelled from the House of Commons. (154).

In both Houses of Parliament the Tory divisions became increasingly apparent. In the Commons, owing chiefly to the

(a) Oxford was most probably speaking the truth when during a debate he said he knew nothing of the pamphlet. He depended on the Scotch peers for his majority in the Lords and would not willingly alienate them. The first edition of the pamphlet was withdrawn and in succeeding editions the offending paragraphs were cut out. (Cor 11129f note 5.)

defaulting of a large body of Tories led by Sir Thomas Hanmer whose election to the Speaker's chair had not secured his allegiance as Oxford expected, ^tThe ministry's majority fell to 48 on a motion that the succession was not in danger. In the Lords the majority was only 12 and an opposition motion on measures to be taken against the Pretender was defeated by only two votes; all the Tory bishops except Atterbury and Crew, the time-serving Jacobite, voted against the ministry (155)

To Archdeacon Walls Swift wrote "we are in a confounded situation at present". (156) The Duchess of Ormond wrote to him on April 24th. expressing her grief at seeing her friends, obviously the ministers, "run counter to their own interest and give their enemies such advantages". (157) A letter from the Reverend John Gere of the same date shows that Swift must already have considered leaving London for Gere writes that "at last the happiness of entertaining" Swift "must be owing to ... the divisions and misunderstandings at Court". (158) But a long letter from Swift to Peterborough written on May 18th. best shows the ministry's incapacity - "I do not remember.. that we have continued above four days in the same view, or four minutes with any manner of concert"; "I never led a life so thoroughly uneasy as I do at present. Our situation is so bad that our enemies could not ... have placed us so ill if we had left it entirely to their management"; "after every conversation I come away just one degree worse informed than I went"; "the height of honest men's wishes at present is to rub off this session, after which,

no body has the impudence to expect that we shall not immediately fall to pieces"; "we act altogether by chance .. the game, such as it is, plays itself". (159)

Oxford's personal position was made worse by the incident known as 'the Duke of Cambridge's writ' and by the Schism Bill. When the Dowager Electress Sophy applied for the writ of summons which would enable her grandson the Electoral Prince (later George II) to take his seat in the Lords as Duke of Cambridge, Oxford advised the infuriated Queen to comply with the perfectly legal request. The writ was grudgingly issued but when the Elector heard of the matter he understood and repudiated the whole affair. The most serious result of the incident was that Oxford's stand for what was legal cost him the last shreds of the Queen's confidence. (160).

The Schism Bill, Bolingbroke's "great diversion" (161) to crush his rival and reunite the Tories under his own leadership, was aimed to prevent the Dissenters from teaching in any way. It considerably embarrassed Oxford who for many years had tried to persuade the Dissenters that their interests were safe in his hands. (162).

Throughout the passage of the Bill Oxford preserved a "sulky silence". He and Bolingbroke continued to quarrel and both Cabinet and party were divided. Even Swift could not now reconcile them. He had to recognise that the Lord Treasurer, lethargic, soured and suspicious was no longer fit for office.

He advised him to resign at the end of the session and make way for Bolingbroke. Then despairing of "ever being of any further use to the ministry Swift left London on June 1st. In his own words-

"By faction tir'd, with grief he waits a while
His great contending friends to reconcile
Performs what friendship, justice, truth require
What could he do but decently retire?"

He spent a few days at Oxford and arrived at John Gere's rectory, Letcombe Bassett, Berkshire. on June 4th. The Lord Treasurer seems not to have been very interested in Swift's departure and Bolingbroke was "very merry" upon the subject. Nevertheless amongst others "the greatest consternation" followed upon his "retirement". (163)

Gere was a "melancholy, thoughtful man" and his rectory a dull place (164). "But if this place were ten times worse" wrote Swift "nothing shall make me return to town while things are in the situation I left them" (165). To Archdeacon Walls and Arbuthnot he also wrote of his weariness of courts and ministers. (166)

But neither the pamphleteer nor the friend could let his pen be idle at such a juncture. As early as June 12th. Swift wrote to Ford that he was "going on with the discourse of which you saw the beginning". Obviously he had begun it before leaving London but equally obviously he felt impelled to continue it. This "discourse" was "Some Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs" which was posted to Ford on July 1st. with orders for publication (167). Ford gave it to Barber to be printed but the

latter unfortunately showed it to Bolingbroke who kept it for several weeks making alterations and corrections. These Swift refused to accept when eventually the MS was returned and he abandoned the publication of the work (a) which did not appear until 1741.

The pamphlet is not sparing of criticism of the ministry. It has frequently approached "very near the brink of ruin, together with the cause of the church and monarchy committed to their charge"; it "has no tolerable foot of security" and this can be imputed less" to the address and industry of their enemies as to some failures among themselves"; despite its majority it has habitually been on the defensive; despite its public spiritedness and integrity it has lost many friends in the last two years and it has suffered "from the want of a due communication and concert" and "from dissensions between the great men at court". "A ship's crew quarrelling in a storm, or while their enemies are within gunshot is but a faint idea of this fatal infatuation". Oxford is criticised (though not by name) for "negligence, weakness" and secrecy; Bolingbroke, as is to be expected after his own correction of the MS. is not censured at all. Once more Swift repeats that he has the ministers' own assurances that they have not intrigued with the Pretender. The Whig leaders themselves, adds Swift, have assured him that they do not believe that the ministry really had

(a) The history of the MS. is told in Swift's Correspondence 1170, 176, 179, 180, 188, 192, 194, 209, 224, 231, 235, 239. Writing to Bolingbroke on Aug. 7th. Swift emphasises his good intentions. (p 224).

any Jacobite leanings. Furthermore, continues Swift, the Pretender is quite unsuited to be King of England. The Hanoverian Succession is firmly secured, he adds, and explains that the Elector has refrained from attempts to "gain over" the party in power because he knows he can rely upon their loyalty and "keeps only fair with the others". (i.e. the Whigs) because he is doubtful of their allegiance. The Hanoverian Succession is one essential. The other is "that the Church of England should be preserved entire in all her rights powers and privileges". To this end "all doctrines relating to government [should be] discouraged which she condemns": all schisms etc. be checked; her "open enemies" (including "Dissenters of all denominations") not trusted with the smallest degree of civil or military power and her "secret adversaries" (Whigs, low-churchmen, republicans, moderation men etc.) be shown no favour by the Crown. Not since the "Letter concerning the Sacramental Test" (a) and the "Remarks upon ... The Rights of the Christian Church" (b) in 1708 had Swift used such direct and emphatic language in writing of the political relations of Dissent to the state; but while he was writing in 1714 the Schism Bill was being debated in parliament. He concludes that to secure "the constitution in church and state" the "domestic adversaries" must be "deprived of all power to do mischief". (168)

Two days after despatching the MS. of "Some Free Thoughts" to Ford, Swift wrote to Oxford. He does not say anything about

(a) see above p 117f.

(b) see above p 121f.

his "discourse" but he must have known that Oxford would recognise it as his work and in advance he half apologises for the references to him; "in your public capacity you have often angered me to the heart but, as a private man, never once". (169) He goes on to express his willingness to attend him in retirement (170)-an offer which Oxford accepted almost a month later, after his fall (171)

The nearness of that fall was made more apparent to Swift by the letters that reached him from London. Treasurer and Secretary still quarrelled and Ford wrote bitterly that if they "lived near one another and a house between them was on fire I fancy they would contend who should put it out until the whole street was burned". Lady Masham deserted Oxford; "the Colonel [i.e. Oxford,] and his friends give the game for lost on their side"; "the cry is still on the Captain's [i.e. Bolingbroke's] side". (172) (a)

Yet for all that Oxford seemed resolved to die hard, "kicking and cuffing about him like the devil". He held on to the Treasurer's staff with "a dead gripe", as Arbuthnot wrote, and showed no inclination to hasten matters by resigning. Indeed he was "more cheerful than usual" and Arbuthnot reported that he "visits, cringes, flatters, etc. which is beyond my comprehension". (173)

On July 25th. Swift wrote to Oxford announcing his approaching return to Ireland, his "licence for absence being so near out"; yet if Oxford resigns "in a few days, as I am told

(a) See also Cor ii.157f, 167, 172, 179, 181, 189, 190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197. (letters of June 22nd. - July 25th)

you design to do" he will "readily attend" him in his retirement in Herefordshire (174).

But Oxford had no intentions of resigning and fought with fury to retain his post. "If he would have taken half so much pains to have done other things as he has of late to exert himself against the Esquire i.e. Bolingbroke he might have been a Dragon instead of a Dagon^(a)" lamented Arbuthnot. (175) But his supporters were too few. His only friends were Ormonde, Bromley, and Trevor; Harcourt, Atterbury and Lady Masham joined Bolingbroke; Dartmouth and Poulett were neutral.(176). On July 27th. the Queen gave way to his enemies and dismissed him. Her reasons, as reported to Swift by Lewis, were that he "neglected all business", "was seldom to be understood", that he misinformed her, "never came to her at the time she appointed", "that he often came drunk" and showed "ill manner, indecency and disrespect" to her (177)

The Queen had withdrawn her favour from Oxford but she did not grant it to his rival. Lewis, writing to Swift, maintained that Bolingbroke's limitations and faults were against him. The Queen, knowing that, appointed no successor to Oxford. Still, with no Lord Treasurer, the Secretary was the man in command.(178)

The day he was dismissed Oxford wrote to Swift "I have had no power since July 25th. 1713" and asked him to spend such time as he could spare in Herefordshire with him. He enclosed a

(a) in a note in Swift's handwriting on a letter of this period Oxford is^said to have been "so called by the Dean by contraries, for he was the mildest and best minister that ever served a Prince" (Cor ii 150 note 4.)

verse jingle on his own fate -

"To serve with love,
And shed your blood,
Approved is above,
But here below
Th'examples show
'Tis fatal to be good" (179)

Once in power Bolingbroke was cautious and uncertain (180) He put out a feeler towards the Whigs and invited their leaders to dinner (181). ("What if the Dragon had done so?" wrote Lewis to Swift, (182). He eloquently emphasised his devotion to the House of Hanover but Stanhope bluntly asked him to choose between the Whigs to bring in Hanover, and France to try to bring in James. Bolingbroke, embarrassed and dumbfounded, could answer nothing. The Whigs were unperturbed and departed to further their preparations for action on the Queen's death. (183).

On July 30th. the Queen's illness took a turn for the worse, and early in the morning of August 1st. she died. Her last act had been to give the Treasurer's staff to Shrewsbury, unanimously recommended and by the Privy Council. (184)

When the lists of Regents chosen by the Elector George were opened, they were found to contain the names of thirteen Whigs, four Tories and the unattached Pembroke. Of the ex-officio Regents three were Whig and four Tory. Bolingbroke as Secretary was not among the latter; neither was he named by the Elector. Nevertheless he refused to let Atterbury proclaim James III. (186)

Swift heard of the Queen's approaching demise from Barber, Lewis and Ford. Early in the afternoon of Aug. 1st. the

vicar of Wantage sent him the "melancholy news" of her death. (188) Two days later Bolingbroke wrote "The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday, the Queen died on Sunday. What a world is this and how does Fortune banter us". In a postscript he adds "I have lost all by the death of the Queen but my spirit" and declares that "The Whigs are a pack of Jacobites; that shall be the cry in a month if you please" ⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ i.e. if Swift would help him with his pen. But the dean saw the situation more clearly than the politician and in his answer wrote "I do not find there is any intention of managing you in the least" and expressed doubt whether Bolingbroke could ever recover from the blow (190). He likens the late ministry's "proceedings" to a "man of four score, or in a deep consumption going on in his sins, although his physician assured him he could not live a week". (191).

Oxford was elated at Bolingbroke's fall and attacked him for his Jacobite intrigues in more bad verse, this time in a letter to Dartmouth. (192). He cancelled his plans for retiring into Herefordshire and remained in London, hopeful of favours from the new king. (193). But when the king reached England on Sept. 18th. the coldest reception was reserved not only for Bolingbroke but also for Oxford. (194).

On Aug. 9th. Swift wrote the last political work of this sojourn in England, "Some Considerations upon the Consequences hoped and feared from the death of the Queen". (195). It consists of ten paragraphs and goes over the familiar ground of the

ministerial changes of 1710 and Oxford's character. Once again the latter's difficulties are stressed - the Queen's dilatoriness and timorousness, the feeling in parliament and the country against low church. But in its unfinished state the work is negligible.

The Whigs were in the ascendant; his friends were in a hopeless position; he could be of no use to Oxford in London; his letters of absence were soon to expire. Accordingly on Aug. 15th. Swift wrote to Oxford wishing him "good success in this new scene" and announced his intention of going to Ireland immediately; he will return only if "some juncture of affairs shall make my friends think it may be of any use". (196). The next day he left Letcombe Bassett and reached Dublin on Aug. 24th. (197).

It has been suggested (198) that he took with him to Ireland the beginning of another historical pamphlet, "Memoirs relating to that change which happened in the Queen's ministry in the year 1710" but the piece is dated Oct. 1714. The dismissals of Godolphin and Marlborough are attributed to personal rather than political motives in the Queen, (199) whose ability "artificially to disguise her passions" is noted. (200) Instances of Marlborough's interference and ambition are given and the story of the ministerial changes following Sacheverell's trial is recounted briefly (201). After a personal digression explaining his own position 1701-10 (202)^(a) Swift reverts to the new ministry

(a) see above p 123f.

and Harley's plans and activities until he was stabbed by Guiscard. To the period of Harley's illness Swift attributes the beginning of his misunderstandings with St. John who was entertaining prospects of succeeding his colleague if he should die. With the statement that Harley on his recovery was made an earl and Lord Treasurer and St. John a baron the "Memoirs" abruptly end. (203) They are not well planned and their importance lies only in the light they throw on Swift's actions 1701-10. But they show no traces of the bitterness and disappointment felt at recent events in England.

Neither in the correspondence of his first few months in Ireland is there any indication how Swift felt now that Whiggism and Dissent were in power in England. He must have writhed at the thought of it but not a sign of his agony appears in the pleasant banalities exchanged with Knightley Chetwode (204) or in the personal affairs discussed with Vanessa. (205) The last letter of the year consists mainly of an account of the obstreperous drunkenness of his servant Tom on the seashore. (206)

But his friends knew how he was feeling and early in September Arbuthnot wrote to Pope "I have seen a letter from Dean Swift; he keeps up his noble spirit and though like a man knocked down, you may behold him still with a stern countenance and aiming a blow at his adversaries". (207) He was assailed incessantly by lampoons (208) - attacks begun before his departure from England. On Oct. 19th. Arbuthnot wrote to him of the supersession of all his friends. (209. (Bolingbroke had been dismissed six or seven

weeks earlier) (210). Swift gave way to despair and illness supervened. In such a mood he wrote a short poem "In sickness" complaining of his lonely, unloved state in Ireland, with no "kind Arbuthnot's aid" and "no obliging tender friend". In the last six lines he begs for death and concludes -,

"Expir'd to-day, entomb'd to-morrow
When known, will save a double sorrow" (211)

But he recovered to take up his pen once more on behalf of the fallen ministry and in 1715 he began "An Enquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's Last Ministry". Much of the work is devoted to the personalities of the day - the queen herself, Ormonde, Oxford, and Bolingbroke and the quarrels of the last two. The Queen, who had been too much "directed" by the Whigs, "fell into the other extreme and became difficult to be advised" (212) when the Tories came to power in 1710; she showed no inclination to help the new ministry and was not displeased when the vote went against her ministers in Dec. 1711; she continued to be unamenable, "cautious and slow", "suspicious"; she became "very fond of moderating schemes" and shared the obstinacy of her sex. (213) Ormonde, "now attainted for high treason" is given warm praise (214) and Bolingbroke is praised for his great gifts and capabilities and his grasp of foreign affairs, but censured for his intemperance and affectation. (215) Oxford naturally receives more attention than the others. He is praised for his virtue, his modesty, his steadiness, his good nature and good humour, his control of passion (which only failed him at the end of his ministry), his learning, his exact judgment, his unrivalled

knowledge of the constitution, his fearlessness, his liberality, his affability and courtesy. But once more he is arraigned for his faults - his secretiveness, his "reservedness of temper", his procrastination, his inability to acquire friends. Swift again stresses Oxford's difficulties between an obstinate monarch and a clamorous party but asserts that his greatest fault was "too much compliance with his mistress". (216)

With ministers of such abilities in power Swift confesses to some difficulty in explaining the ensuing troubles of the ministry. He attributes them chiefly to the quarrels of the leaders. The "public good" seemed assured with the friendship of Oxford, Bolingbroke and Harcourt, he asserts, yet this friendship became "indifference and suspicion" and later "the greatest animosity and hatred". (a) How "their dissensions grew, I shall ... very impartially relate". When Oxford was recovering from Guiscard's attack and Bolingbroke was in command things happened "which bred a coldness and jealousy" and when he returned to the head of the ministry he found the Queen obstinate and indifferent though she created twelve new peers readily enough and thereby saved the ministry in Dec. 1711. That crisis may have been due to Oxford but he cannot "justly be blamed for preserving his cause, his friends and himself" by a lawful expedient. (217)

When Bolingbroke was made a viscount he unjustifiably blamed Oxford because he had not been given an earldom. At this

(a) Bolingbroke wrote to Windham "I abhorred Oxford" Cor.ii 214 note 2.

point the split between the two men deepened and divided the court. Oxford's procrastination was inexcusable but for the Queen's obstinate disposition; Bolingbroke, with his "frank, open" nature could not conceal his resentment. The Queen, knowing of these differences, blamed Oxford for the "ill consequences" -- at home and abroad", but refused to accept his resignation. Soon the Lord Treasurer stood practically alone; he realised his difficulties would continue whether the Queen lived or died. During the last six months there was nothing but "quarrel, and misunderstanding, animosity, and hatred between him and his former friends". Oxford did as little as he could, relapsed into "silence and sullenness" and received in return from the Queen "fresh instances of neglect and displeasure". (218).

The quarrel between the two ministers, Swift continues, might have been ended if "the Treasurer had dealt with less reserve" and if Bolingbroke had had in Oxford "that confidence .. which so sincere a friend might reasonably have expected". But they lacked friends to compose their difficulties - most of them preferred not to "intermeddle"; Prior was in France and Swift himself was one of their few remaining common friends; he was on the most candid of terms with both but his hopes of effecting a reconciliation at the last minute were not fulfilled. (219).

About eleven weeks before the Queen died Oxford told Swift that "he found his credit with her wholly at an end". Swift asked both him and Bolingbroke whether the present "mischiefs

(a) See p. 175 above.

might not be remedied in two minutes" and whether in the present state "the ministry would not be infallibly ruined in two months". To both questions Bolingbroke replied "Yes" but Oxford characteristically "evaded both" and only invited him to dinner next day. But a few days later, writes Swift, concluding his account of the ministry's fall, he left for Berkshire. Summing up, he blames "these misfortunes" on the Queen, the Treasurer and his friends (220).

Never before had Swift written such a downright account of the ministry's downfall. He had blamed Oxford and Bolingbroke before but never so emphatically or with so much detail. Neither had he apportioned so much blame to the Queen, but naturally he would not have done so as long as she lived, though he had hinted during her life that her attitude placed her chief minister in a very uncomfortable position (221) (a). Swift sees the Queen and her two chief ministers as three people each one of whom is unwilling to take a step towards some common ground upon which all misunderstandings could easily be cleared away. Throughout the work he never attributes the ministry's fall to anything but its dissensions and those were due to personal considerations and passing events; no doubt is thrown on the competency of either Oxford or Bolingbroke beyond that implied in the procrastination of the one and the hastiness of the other. Swift sees the ruin of such a talented ministry as a not easily explained tragedy. Swift's removal from

(a) But as the introduction to M.M.C. Bath says (p xi) "The Queen's letters abundantly evince the ascendancy which Oxford had over her" v pp 208 ff.... but this was 1711

the actual events by several years and from the scene by some hundreds of miles makes the tragedy all the more apparent to him and in this work he stresses that more than the purely political events.

"The Enquiry into the Behaviour .." is dated June 1715.

As Swift wrote it the Commons had decided to impeach Ormonde and Bolingbroke. (222) A month later, articles of impeachment were drawn up against Oxford. (223). After two years in the Tower he was acquitted, mainly on account of differences on the question of procedure between the two houses (224) In the year of his release, 1717, Swift wrote a second chapter for "The Enquiry into the Behaviour ..."

The charge of intriguing with the Pretender had been one of the chief articles of impeachment against Oxford and this second chapter is the fullest refutation of such charges that Swift ever penned. Swift begins by saying scornfully that such charges against Oxford would be more appropriate in a pamphlet than among articles of impeachment and twice he insists that if the ministry had hoped to bring in the Pretender it would obviously have begun intriguing from the moment it took office in 1710. Many "very eminent persons of the opposite side" assured him, Swift asserts, that they did not suspect the Queen or her ministers of favouring the Pretender (a). Swift himself asked "almost every person in great employment" if they knew anyone,

(a) "Some Free Thoughts" PW. V 408. quoted above p 172 f.

excepting non-jurors, who would welcome the Pretender and barely five or six were named to him. "I must have had either very bad luck or a very small share of common understanding not to have discovered some grounds at least for suspicion .. I shall never be brought to change my opinion, till some one, who had more opportunities than I, will be able to produce any single particulars from the letters, the discourses or the actions of those ministers as a proof of what they allege". (225). Swift must certainly have had that bad luck and if he was not lacking in understanding he was at least "stone blind" (226). French archives (a) could have provided him with sufficient evidence of Oxford's and Bolingbroke's complicity.

But he goes on to point out that all the ministers were too young ever to have felt allegiance to James II, that the peace treaties ensured the Hanoverian Succession, that the solid majority in the Commons against the ^{introduction} ~~re-establishment~~ of the ~~Pretender~~ ^{Pretender} ~~Strait~~ could not have been converted to Jacobitism, that the illness of the Queen 1712-4 made Jacobite intrigues too hazardous and that it was not in the ministry's interest to support the Pretender-and by interest - "we are to judge the intentions of those who manage public affairs". (227)

The most surprising feature of this chapter is that Swift must have written it with the knowledge that two years

(a) see selections made by LGW. Legg. EHR. xxx. pp 501-18, by F. Salomon "Geschichte des letzten Ministeriums Annas von England" and by Trevelyan op cit iii 336-40. See also H.M.C. Stuart papers, passim.

earlier Bolingbroke and Ormonde, in March and August respectively of 1715, had arrived at the Pretender's Court. The former was appointed James's secretary and brought some much needed competency to the Pretender's cause, but after the rising later in the year James dismissed him, "le seul Anglais capable de manier ses affaires". (a) Perhaps this dismissal had confirmed Swift in his good opinion of Bolingbroke and he probably argued, and that with a great amount of truth, that Bolingbroke would never have tried to bring in James, (228) (b) but that his threatened impeachment drove him, impetuous as always, into his arms. There is no indication in this chapter of the flight of Bolingbroke and Ormonde. Swift is concerned only with the ministry of 1710-14, which, he was convinced, had never intrigued with the Jacobites. Certainly as far as he knew or rather, as far as he had been permitted to know, they had not intrigued, for Oxford and Bolingbroke had taken great pains to keep him in the dark (229). The sincerity of Swift's continued denials from the "Four Last Years" onward is not to be doubted, but the success of the ministers' deception is remarkable.

In the last paragraph Swift maintains that he has written with the "utmost impartiality", and allowed for the motives

(a) Berwick's "scathing comment on his brother's folly" B. Williams 150-6.

(b) See p 176 above.

of interest and passion, for, he continues "I am not so weak as to think one ministry more virtuous than another, unless by chance". In England one of the two parties will always have "the general interest of church and state" more in its "private interest" than the other. Its opponents, to strike a balance, will be "obliged to take in all the subaltern denominations of those who dislike the present establishment". They will eventually be "taken into power under an ignorant, unactive, or ill-designing prince" and somehow contrive "to become the majority". Such "abuses in administration" may last a long time and the people may "wish to be governed by arbitrary power". (229a) This to Swift is the danger and he obviously implies that at the present time it threatens from the Whigs.

The "Enquiry into the Behaviour..." was Swift's last work for the Tory ministry of 1710-4. With the "Four Last Years", "The Conduct of the Allies", "Memoirs relating to the change..." and "Some Free Thoughts", it forms the greater part of what Swift wrote for his projected history of the reign of Anne. Writings such as "Advice to .. the October Club", "Some Reasons to prove...", "The Public Spirit of the Whigs", "The Importance of the Guardian considered", minor and more partisan works, are ante-rooms to the main building.

Swift had first raised the question of the Historiographer'

office in a letter to Addison in August 1710. (230) Nearly four years later he addressed a memorial to the Queen desiring the post in order "to serve his queen and country". (231) Arbuthnot, Lady Masham, and Bolingbroke (a) solicited for Swift in July 1714 (232) but the office was given to Thomas Madox, an antiquary of the dry as dust type. (233). In the "Memoir" relating to that change, Swift imputes the failure of his application to that "incurable disease, either of negligence or procrastination which influenced every action both of the Queen and the Earl of Oxford" (234).

But Swift also had a personal motive for writing a history of the Queen's reign. He had considered that in the "Four Last Years" he was justifying the policy and actions of his friends Oxford and Bolingbroke (235). He had written for the same purpose too in the "Conduct of the Allies" and to safeguard his ministerial friends he had written the "Advice to ..the October Club" and the "Public Spirit of the Whigs". In the letter to Oxford on July 3rd, in which he had drawn the distinction between the man and the minister, Swift wrote of the unfailing kindness he had always received from him. "If I live" he continued, "posterity shall know that and more, which .. is all the return I can make you". (236). The "and more" was to be the part played by Oxford in Anne's reign and particularly 1710-4. For this purpose Swift hoped for the office of historiographer.

But he never obtained it. None the less he made the promised

(a) But Swift doubted the sincerity of Bolingbroke's solicitation (Cor ii 210) but the latter certainly pressed Shrewsbury for it. (cor ii 419) Shrewsbury as Lord Chamberlain had some part in the disposal of the post and Swift, writing to Pope seven years later, said that he disdained to accept it from a person without "steadiness and sincerity" (Cor.ii 114f)

"return". He had begun making it in the "Four Last Years" and now in the "Enquiry into the Behaviour" he made his last "return". The work contains the familiar censures which Swift had continually passed upon the minister, (237) but it also contains the most glowing tribute which he ever paid to his friend. (238).

CONCLUSION.

Swift's writings 1696 to 1717 were mostly on behalf either of Sir William Temple or of the Harley administration. The productions which were most independent of circumstances, "A Tale of a Tub" ~~and the religious pamphlets of 1709~~ (practically the only part of Swift's writings during this period which cannot be called 'occasional') ^{and the religious pamphlets of 1709} were yet influenced by Temple and the Tory ministry for the "Tale" continued the theme of "The Battle of the Books" and the pamphlets, with their Tory attitude to the church, were a prelude to the political writings.

But in supporting Temple and the Tory ministry of 1710-4, Swift on both occasions found himself on the losing side. In the one case victory was an illusion; in the other it never came. Swift seems to have had a genius for supporting the wrong party.

The clue to these years - the formative ones in his life - is to be found not in his politics nor in his literature but in his religion. Above all he was a churchman. He began his political life as a churchman, but finding the Tories more attentive to the church as he thought it should be, he gave them his support. He was unreasonable and prejudiced in his attitude to Dissent but it was the unreason and the prejudice of unswerving sincerity. The Tories regarded the church much the same as he did. Therefore he preferred them to the Whigs to whom he had never been deeply attached. The High Church attitude of his new friends and the continued Low Church of the Whigs joined with personal friendships to confirm the new allegiance. But even after 1710 and during the

bitterness and bigotry of the ensuing party strife he can lift himself above mere party considerations, see the fundamental similarities of Whig and Tory, recognise the pettiness of their differences. Perhaps he too, like another great Irishman and Tory "to party gave up what was meant for mankind".

NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY.

ABBREVIATIONS.

The following abbreviations have been used in the notes and bibliography.

- TT,BB - "A Tale of a Tub" & "The Battle of the Books"
ed. Guthkelch & Nichol Smith (Oxford 1920)
- PW - Prose Works of Swift, ed T.Scott 12 vols (189⁷~~8~~-1908)
- JS - Journal to Stella (PW vol 11)
- CHEL - Cambridge History of English Literature.
- CMH - Cambridge Modern History.
- DNB - Dictionary of National Biography.
- EHR - English Historical Review.
- HMC - Historical Manuscripts Commission.
- JEGP - Journal of English & German^{ic}~~ic~~ Philology.
- JMH - Journal of Modern History.
- MLN - Modern Language Notes
- MLR - Modern Language Review.
- NQ - Notes & Queries
- PMLA - Publications of the Modern Language Association of America.
- PQ - Philological Quarterly.
- RES - Review of English Studies.
- SP - Studies in Philology.
- TLS - Times Literary Supplement.
- OBS - Oxford Bibliographical Society.
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N O T E S.

CHAPTER I.

- (1) See R.F.Jones "Ancients and Moderns" (St. Louis 1936) and "The Background to 'The Battle of the Books'", Washington University Studies (St.Louis 1920) 99-162.
- (2) See H. Rigault "Histoire de la querelle des anciens et des modernes" in Oeuvres Complètes (Paris 1859) tome 1; A.E. Burlingame "The Battle of the Books" in its historical setting". (New York 1920) 103-95.
- (3) Rigault i. 167-221, 266-94. ¹⁸²⁵
Fontenelle "Oeuvres" (Paris ~~1927~~) v 37-63, iv 35-54.
- (4) Rigault. i 295-314.
St.Evremond "Oeuvres" (Paris 1927) i 273-81.
- (5) Sir William Temple, "Miscellanea" ii (fifth ed.1705) 1f.
- (6) "Miscellanea" ii 9-13.
- (7) "Miscellanea" ii 42 f.
- (8) DNB. XXV. 96 f.
- (9) D. Stimson "The Gradual Acceptance of the Copernican Theory of the Universe". (New York 1917) 39-48, 71-94, 101-5.
- (10) "Miscellanea" ii 43-6.
- (11) "Miscellanea" ii 46 f.
- (12) "Miscellanea" ii 52-4.
- (13) "Miscellanea" ii 55,58.
- (14) "Miscellanea" ii 58 f.
- (15) "Phalaridis Agrigentini Tyranni Epistolae" edited by Charles Boyle 1695. a 31 - a 41.
- (16) R. Bentley "Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris, Themistocles, Socrates, Euripides and Aesop's Fables" appended to the second edition of Wotton's "Reflections upon ancient and modern Learning". (1697) p 62 f.
- (17) "Miscellanea" ii 60-2.
- (18) "Miscellanea" ii 64-9.

- (19) "Miscellanea" ii 71.
- (20) Thomas Sprat "History of the Royal Society" (1667) 417-9
- (21) "Miscellanea" ii 71 f.
- (22) "Miscellanea" ii 72.
- (23) T.B.Macaulay "Critical & Historical Essays" (1898) ii 105. (a)
- (24) W.Wotton "Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning" (1694)
(b) a 5 ii.
- (25) c.q. Sprat 346-80
- (26) Wotton. A. 5 i, a 7 i.
- (27) Wotton 4 -10.
- (28) "Miscellanea" ii 42; Wotton 58 f.
- (29) "Miscellanea" ii 6; Wotton 82.
- (30) "Miscellanea" ii 42 f; Wotton 207-16.
- (31) "Miscellanea" ii. 57, 62-70; Wotton 342-53.
- (32) Sprat 417-9. "Miscellanea" ii. 71f; Wotton 357-9.
- (33) Wotton 158, 194 f. 309.
- (34) "Miscellanea" ii. 166 - 98
- (35) "Miscellanea" ii 14-19, 257-85; Wotton cc 9.10,11. (10343)
- (36) Wotton 238, 241, 253, 264.
- (37) Boyle "Phalaridis Epistolae". a 3 i - a 4 i.
- (38) Boyle "Dr. Bentley's Dissertation ... examined" (1698) 32 f.
(also known as "Boyle against Bentley")

(a) He points out (p.97.) that Temple "knew not a word of Greek".

(b) References to Wotton, unless otherwise stated, are to this, the first edition.

- (39) Wotton, ed.2, xxxivf.
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- (32) Letter from George Gibson the collator to his cousin. Rev.
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- (3) Franklin's "Phalaris" (1749) quoted by R.C. Jebb. "Bentley" (1882) 82.
- (4) Thos. Tyrwhitt "De Babrio" (1776); J.S. Watson "The Life of Richard Porson". (1861) 28. Both quoted by J.E. Sandys "History of Classical Scholarship". (1903-8) 11 405.
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 - (b) A collection of Latin verses; Dean Aldrich and Alsop attacked Bentley in their contributions.

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- (20) BB 229-32
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- (26) part 1. 11 35-61, part 11 *passim*, part 111 906-1288.
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- (29) PMLA. XLVII 175 note 19. ~~TT~~.
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