AN EDITORIAL NOTE

The guest editors for this issue are Ian Adam and James Black.

In keeping with our editorial policy to assign one number per year to a special area of literature or to a special author, the July 1974 issue (Volume 5, Number 3) will be devoted to Australian and New Zealand literature. The guest editors for this number will be Grant McGregor and Christopher Wiseman.

George Wing is resuming his editorial duties with the October 1974 issue (Volume 5, Number 4).

Surface and Subsurface in Jane Austen's Novels

JULIET McMASTER

I Take the metaphor of my title from Charlotte Brontë's memorable criticism of Jane Austen:

> She does her business of delineating the surface of the lives of genteel English people curiously well; there is a Chinese fidelity, a miniature delicacy in the painting: she ruffles her reader by nothing vehement, disturbs him by nothing profound: the Passions are perfectly unknown to her . . . Her business is not half so much with the human heart as with the human eyes, mouth, hands and feet: what sees keenly, speaks aptly, moves flexibly, it suits her to study, but what throbs fast and full, though hidden . . . *this* Miss Austen ignores.[1]

It is the original and recurring objection to Jane Austen. Mark Twain complained that her characters are automatons which can't "warm up and feel a passion."[2] And even her admirers have defended her in terms which to her detractors are damningly faint praise. George Henry Lewes announced, "First and foremost let Jane Austen be named, the greatest artist that has ever written, using the term to signify the most perfect mastery over the means to her end . . . . Her circle may be restricted, but it is complete."[3] Elizabeth Barrett Browning was all too ready to concede to this view: the novels, she said, are "perfect as far as they go — that's certain. Only they don't go far, I think."[4] "Perfect," for Mrs. as for Mr. Browning, is a term of opprobrium. It means the reach doesn't exceed the grasp.

In the twentieth century Jane Austen certainly does not want for discriminating critics who make large claims for her significance, but even her admirers stand on her appeal to the head rather than the heart. Ian Watt quotes Horace Walpole's dictum that "this world is a comedy to those that

think, a tragedy to those that feel," and acknowledges "Jane Austen's novels are comedies, and can have little appeal to those who, consciously or unconsciously, believe thought inferior to feeling."[5] We have to a large extent conceded Charlotte's point, and agreed that Jane Austen's business is indeed with the head and not with the heart — we simply don't find her reaction as devastating a piece of criticism as she evidently meant it to be, valuing as we do the activity of the mind and the application of the intellect. We admire the unruffled surface, and have a properly Augustan reservation about the virtues of the kind of "vehemence" and "profundity" that Charlotte misses.[6]

And yet . . . do we really need to concede as much as we do? In our heart of hearts (and I use the phrase designedly) don't we know that a *full* reading of a Jane Austen novel is a very *moving* experience, as well as an intellectually delectable one? — that the moment of reconciliation when Mr. Knightley *almost* kisses Emma's hand is fraught with passion, just as is the occasion when Mr. Rochester crushes Jane Eyre to his breast in the orchard at Thornfield, while a violent midsummer storm is brewing?

Deep reservoirs as well as shallow ones may have unruffled surfaces: if unruffled surface is what we admire, then we need not look beyond it — and we can delight in the fidelity with which the surface of the lives of genteel English people is delineated; but if we do indeed value the dramatization of deep emotion, that too is there, and the more visible, if not the more obvious, for the apparent tranquillity.

Charlotte Brontë, accused on one occasion of equivocation, vindicated herself vigorously: "I would scorn in this and every other case to deal in equivoque; I believe language to have been given us to make our meaning clear, and not to wrap it in dishonest doubt."[7] I suspect Jane Austen would consider such a declaration somewhat crude. The naive Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey* has something similar to say of General Tilney's white lies: "Why

he should say one thing so positively, and mean another all the while, was most unaccountable! How were people, at that rate, to be understood?" (*NA,* 211).[8] And Catherine's education is to involve the realization that language need not always be interpreted literally.

Of course novelists and dramatists have traditionally made capital out of a discrepancy between the profession and the reality, and many a comic scene has been built around it. Here is Becky Sharp, justifying herself to Jos. Sedley when he has come to visit her in her disreputable lodgings: she has just stowed the brandy bottle, the rouge-pot, and the plate of broken meat in the bed.

> "I have had so many griefs and wrongs, Joseph Sedley, I have been made to suffer so cruelly, that I am almost made mad sometimes . . . . I had but one child, one darling, one hope, one joy, which I held at my heart with a mother's affection . . .; and they — they tore it from me — tore it from me;" and she put her hand to her heart with a passionate gesture of despair, burying her face for a moment on the bed.
>
> The brandy-bottle inside clinked up against the plate which held the cold sausage. Both were moved, no doubt, by the exhibition of so much grief. (*Vanity Fair,* Ch. 65)

Becky pours out her wrongs and her griefs; the brandy bottle and the rouge-pot tell a different story. Thackeray's procedure provides a convenient contrast to that usual in Jane Austen. Becky's speech is a gush of emotion; her meaning is totally a product of that energetic brain of hers, and one can almost hear the whirr and click of a calculating machine in action. Jane Austen's characters, on the other hand, conduct apparently rational conversations with each other on subjects of general interest, while simultaneously their *hearts* are deeply engaged. She is not particularly interested in the exposure of the hypocrite who uses social forms as a mask for his true motivation.[9] Nor is Charlotte Brontë, by the way — it is notable that in the proposal scene in *Jane Eyre* Jane declares explicitly, "I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom [or] conventionalities" (Ch. 23). Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe

have to maintain a proud reticence, or burst through the barriers of convention in order to express their feelings, and when they do burst through, they mean all they say; Becky Sharp and Blanche Amory are socially perfectly at ease in the display of emotion, but they mean something different. But Jane Austen's characters succeed in expressing themselves not in spite of custom and convention, but *through* them; and they mean not something different from what they say, like Thackeray's, nor all they say, like Charlotte's, but far more than what they say.

And here we come to Jane Austen's powerful use of understatement in emotional scenes. It is her frequent practice to bring a situation to a crisis, to provoke expectations of some climactic exclamation of the "What was her consternation to discover . . .!" type, and then to report instead some apparent commonplace of behaviour or polite converse. For instance (the italics in these passages are mine):

Elinor Dashwood and Edward Ferrars meet after a period of estrangement. He has been engaged to another woman; she believes him to be actually married. After her family's embarrassed reception of Edward, we hear that "she *sat down again and talked of the weather.*" And presently, "when she had ceased *to rejoice in the dryness of the season,* a very awful pause took place" (*SS*, 359).

Elizabeth Bennet has at last realized that Darcy is the man she loves, but just when she has come to believe that, because of her own and her family's behaviour, he will never approach her again. Her mother calls her to the window to see the arrival of Mr. Bingley. "Elizabeth, to satisfy her mother, went to the window — she looked, — she saw Mr. Darcy with him, and *sat down again by her sister*" (*PP*, 333).

Mary Crawford, in spite of her prejudice against younger brothers, has fallen in love with Edmund Bertram. She is engaged in a game of Speculation when the gentleman's conversation turns on the fitness of Thornton Lacey to be

a prestigious gentleman's residence: "Thornton Lacey was the name of [Edmund's] impending living, as she well knew; and *her interest in a negociation for William Price's knave increased*" (*MP,* 241).

Anne Elliot has steeled herself to speak to Mrs. Croft of her brother, Captain Wentworth, brave in the knowledge that Mrs. Croft knows nothing of the previous engagement: "Perhaps you may not have heard that he is married," added Mrs. Croft. [Anne] *could now answer as she ought.*" (*P.* 49)

Again and again Jane Austen indicates a severe emotional shock by this kind of understatement. She is not *avoiding* the presentation of strong feelings; she is presenting them by indirection. It is not because her characters have no feelings that they talk of the weather and make polite responses in such moments. Words would not carry the full weight of what they feel in any case. They observe the social forms, but not at the expense of crushing themselves. For they *can* express what they feel, but they can seldom express it directly or fully: to do so would be to lose the intensity, to be emotionally shallow. (That is what Jane Austen tried to suggest in *Sense and Sensibility,* when Elinor hears the man she loves is married, and *Marianne* goes into hysterics.) Her people speak in a succinct code, where A expresses not only A, but B and C as well.

So I would like to examine, in some detail, a few passages of dialogue, and to show how polite conversation, conducted on matters of apparently general import, and within the bounds of decorum, can be informed with a subsurface level of intense personal emotion. One thing is said on the surface; but below the surface are implied the individual's ecstacies and agonies. In this way I hope to mine out some of that rich and primitive ore which Charlotte Brontë misses.[10]

I will confine myself to the last three novels, partly for convenience, but also because I think that this is an aspect

of Jane Austen's art which she developed and refined, and uses with best effect later in her career. Lucy Steele's bitchy insinuations in *Sense and Sensibility* are relatively crude examples of a character's ability to suggest more than is stated, compared with Frank Churchill's elaborate *doubles entendre,* or with the kind of oblique communication that constantly goes on between Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth, where, though they seldom speak to each other, each constantly understands the full import of the other's speech better than their interlocutors do. And in my selection of passages I deliberately choose situations that parallel Charlotte Brontë's characteristic one, where the protagonist is forced to look on while the man she loves is courting an unworthy rival: a Blanche Ingram or a Ginevra Fanshawe, a Mary Crawford or a Louisa Musgrove. In such situations Jane Austen puts her reader on stage, as it were, since we become with the protagonist spectators who are intimately aware of unspoken implications in the exchanges we witness.

My first extract is from the famous excursion to Sotherton in *Mansfield Park.*[11] Mary Crawford, Edmund and Fanny, the trio who are so constantly associated, have begun to wander in the little "wilderness" of the park. Mary has just heard that Edmund is to take orders, and has had all her prejudices against younger brothers renewed. "A clergyman is nothing," she declares. Edmund defends his vocation.

> "A clergyman cannot be high in state or fashion. He must not head mobs, or set the ton in dress. But I cannot call that situation nothing, which has the charge of all that is of the first importance to mankind, individually or collectively considered, temporally or eternally — which has the guardianship of religion and morals, and consequently of the manners which result from their influence."

Mary remains unconvinced: "One does not see much of this influence and importance in society," she argues. And how can a clergyman be so influential when one "scarcely sees [him] out of his pulpit"?

Edmund tries to explain that preaching is not a clergyman's only business, and to enlarge on and explain his previous claim:

> "A fine preacher is followed and admired; but it is not in fine preaching only that a good clergyman will be useful in his parish and his neighbourhood, where the parish and neighbourhood are of a size capable of knowing his private character, and observing his general conduct . . . . And with regard to their influencing public manners, Miss Crawford must not misunderstand me, or suppose I mean to call [clergymen] the arbiters of good breeding, the regulators of refinement and courtesy, the masters of the ceremonies of life. The *manners* I speak of, might rather be called *conduct,* perhaps, the result of good principles; the effect, in short, of those doctrines which it is their duty to teach and recommend; and it will, I believe, be every where found, that as the clergy are or are not what they ought to be, so are the rest of the nation."
>
> "Certainly," said Fanny with gentle earnestness.
>
> "There," cried Miss Crawford, "you have quite convinced Miss Price already."

There is a touch of irony at Fanny's expense here. We see her as Mary sees her, as an insignificant good little thing; and she is still too much Edmund's creature, and his echo. Nevertheless, she is, with the reader, the spectator who sees more of the game than the contestants.

The dispute between Edmund and Mary is a fundamental one. It is the dispute between principle and style.[12] For her, as for her histrionic brother, who believes he would preach splendid sermons (341), preaching is all there is of a clergyman, because that is all that *appears;* it is the part of his profession that can be done with distinction and applause. But Edmund refuses to divorce status from function; he de-emphasizes the preaching, and insists on the practice: he is Jane Austen's version of Chaucer's poor parson. Edmund takes his stand on moral ground, Mary on aesthetic. So far they are distinguished in their general discussion on the duties and the status of clergymen.

However, the issue between them is personal and private too. In reply to Mary's gay, "There, you have convinced Miss Price already," Edmund urges,

> "I wish I could convince Miss Crawford too."
> "I do not think you ever will," said she with an arch smile; "I am just as much surprised now as I was at first that you should intend to take orders. You really are fit for something better. Come, do change your mind. It is not too late. Go into the law."
> "Go into the law! with as much ease as I was told to go into this wilderness."
> "Now you are going to say something about law being the worst wilderness of the two, but I forestall you; remember I have forestalled you."

Mary maintains her gay and even frivolous tone, but there is more at issue here, as all three know, than a general dispute on the merits of various professions. Edmund's underlying argument might be translated thus: "Respect the calling I have chosen, because I want to marry you." Mary's underlying answer goes, "Well, I'm interested in your offer; but you must conform yourself to my minimal requirements for distinction." They are neither of them fully conscious of this set of implications, but that is essentially the issue under discussion. That "Come, do change your mind. It is not too late," for all its playfulness, has its undertow of urgency.

In spite of Mary's trite witticism about law and the wilderness, Jane Austen evidently intends her readers to understand the wilderness emblematically. It was Mary who led the way into the wood, with its "serpentining" pathways, and Edmund enters it much as the Redcrosse Knight, accompanied by his Una, enters the Wandering Wood in which he encounters the female monster, Error. Related symbolism is unobtrusively developed elsewhere in the novel. Mary is the temptress, the siren, who plays the harp and sings. In another significant little scene involving the same trio, Edmund stands at the window with Fanny, who is like the figure of duty urging him to look up at the stars, while Mary goes to the piano to take part in a glee. He and Fanny agree to go out on the lawn to stargaze, but he finds himself unable to resist the music: "As it advanced, [Fanny] had the mortification of seeing him advance too, moving forward by gentle degrees towards

the instrument, and when it ceased, he was close by the singers, among the most urgent in requesting to hear the glee again" (113). This Odysseus has neglected to have himself tied to the mast. Our last glimpse of Mary is to be of her attempt to lure Edmund back to her, with "a saucy playful smile," as he says, "seeming to invite, in order to subdue me" (459). But this time he is able to say Get thee behind me, Satan.[13]

To return to the Sotherton scene: After Mary's sally about the wilderness, Edmund admits he can never achieve a witticism, and "a general silence succeeded." Fanny, as she so often is, has been the most acute sufferer as the witness of this veiled courtship, and presently she indicates her pain:

> "I wonder that I should be tired with only walking in this sweet wood; but the next time we come to a seat, if it is not disagreeable to you, I should be glad to sit down for a little while."
>
> "My dear Fanny," cried Edmund, immediately drawing her arm within his, "how thoughtless I have been! I hope you are not very tired. Perhaps," turning to Miss Crawford, "my other companion may do me the honour of taking an arm."
>
> "Thank you, but I am not at all tired." She took it, however, as she spoke, and the gratification of having her do so, of feeling such a connection for the first time, made him a little forgetful of Fanny. "You scarcely touch me," said he. "You do not make me of any use. What a difference in the weight of a woman's arm from that of a man! At Oxford I have been a good deal used to have a man lean on me for the length of a street, and you are only a fly in the comparison."

D. H. Lawrence unkindly called Jane "old maid."[14] And she certainly doesn't expatiate on what he calls "That exquisite and immortal moment of a man's entry into the woman of his desire."[15] But nevertheless, Edmund registers, and within the bounds of polite converse expresses, the thrill he feels at this physical contact with Mary.

There is again an emblematic quality in this threesome — Edmund between his two women, the one needing his arm, the other consenting to take it temporarily. It is a recurring triangle. Later in the novel, Fanny is the chosen

witness for another such scene: this one is literally a courtship, though played as a scene in a play. During the rehearsals for *Lovers' Vows,* first Mary and then Edmund separately seek out Fanny to hear their lines in the crucial proposal scene between Amelia and Anhalt. Fanny plays her role reluctantly enough:

> To prompt them must be enough for her; and it was sometimes *more* than enough; for she could not always pay attention to the book . . . . And agitated by the increasing spirit of Edmund's manner, had once closed the page and turned away exactly as he wanted help. It was imputed to very reasonable weariness, and she was thanked and pitied; but she deserved their pity, more than she hoped they would ever surmise. (170)

Fanny has been disliked by many because she has so much the air of a martyr; but her martyrdom is very real, for she is made to witness, and even to prompt, exchanges where the private signification is perfectly understandable and deeply painful to her.

Readers of *Mansfield Park* have often objected to what they take to be Jane Austen's summary treatment of the important matter of how Edmund, once he has lost Mary, comes to transfer his affections to Fanny:

> Scarcely had he done regretting Mary Crawford, and observing to Fanny how impossible it was that he should ever meet with such another woman, before it began to strike him whether a very different kind of woman might not do just as well — or a great deal better . . . . I purposely abstain from dates on this occasion. (470)

Such readers have I think missed one of the major subsurface movements of the novel: Edmund's unconscious courtship of Fanny, which is concurrent with his deliberate courtship of Mary. The reader is constantly informed of how his love for Mary and his love for Fanny grow *together.* The three are always "in a cluster together" (86), they seem "naturally to unite" (90). The more Edmund's ardour kindles for Mary, the more fervent become his feelings for Fanny. He speaks of them as "the two dearest objects I have on earth" (264). When he confesses his love for Mary to Fanny, he calls *her* "Dearest Fanny!" and

"[presses] her hand to his lips, with almost as much warmth as if it had been Miss Crawford's" (269). And when he writes to Fanny of his beloved, he tells her "There is something soothing in the idea, that we have the same friend, and that whatever unhappy differences of opinion may exist between us, we are united in our love of you" (420). He has indeed needed Fanny's "prompting," even in his courtship of the other woman.

Of course the psychological probability of the confidante's becoming a principal in the love affair is frequently demonstrated in literature as in life. Ritualized comic versions of the situation appear several times in Shakepeare alone (not to mention *Lovers' Vows* itself), and Fanny in her role as prompter for Edmund might well say with Viola, "A barful strife!/Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife!" A more serious psychological study appears in *Henry Esmond,* where the hero woos Beatrix for a decade, making a confidante of her mother, and finally marries the mother instead. And George Eliot exploited the same situation for irony and pathos in the relation of Farebrother, Mary Garth and Fred Vincy, in *Middlemarch.*

Mary Crawford and Fanny, for Edmund, are a package deal; and at the end he simply discovers that he has mistaken the wrapping for the gift. So, in the scene at Sotherton I have been discussing, Edmund's decorous place between the two young ladies, courteously lending an arm to each, is an objective co-relative for the passionate tensions of the eternal triangle.

The next scene I would like to mine is from *Persuasion.*[16] It occurs during the walk to Winthrop, when Louisa Musgrove has just urged her sister Henrietta to visit her cousin and admirer Charles Hayter, in spite of the disapproval of the status-seeking Mary Musgrove, who feels she should connect herself better. Louisa boasts to Captain Wentworth of her part in the affair, while Anne accidentally overhears:

> "And so, I made her go. I could not bear that she should be frightened from the visit by such nonsense. What! — would I be turned back from doing a thing that I had determined to do, and that I knew to be right, by the airs and interference of such a person? — or, of any person I may say. No, — I have no idea of being so easily persuaded. When I have made up my mind, I have made it. And Henrietta seemed entirely to have made up hers to call at Winthrop to-day — and yet, she was as near giving it up, out of nonsensical complaisance!"
> "She would have turned back then, but for you?"
> "She would indeed. I am almost ashamed to say it."
> "Happy for her, to have such a mind as yours at hand!"

Anyone with sense and discrimination can see that Louisa is expressing herself with more force than intelligence: the sister who urges a persuadable mind in one direction may be as blameworthy as the sister-in-law who urges it in the other. But, with the kind of deafness to nuance and delicacy that characterizes the Mrs. Eltons of the world, she insists on her own irreproachable rectitude. Louisa's strengths and deficiencies, however, are not so interesting to us as Wentworth's misjudgements of them. For him all discussions on the influence of one person over another relate to himself, and his broken engagement to Anne, and Lady Russell's persuasion that caused the breach. When he says "Happy for her, to have such a mind as yours at hand!" he has mentally recast all the people in question, so that Henrietta has become Anne, himself Charles Hayter, Mary Lady Russell, and Louisa the advocate he wishes he himself had had eight years ago. The rights and wrongs of the case he has not yet come to terms with. All he feels now is, "*I* have suffered because Anne yielded to persuasion; therefore the others must have been wrong." This is the premise on which he bases his moral philosophy.

> "Your sister is an amiable creature; but *yours* is the character of decision and firmness, I see. If you value her conduct or happiness, infuse as much of your own spirit into her, as you can. But this, no doubt, you have been always doing. It is the worst evil of too yielding and indecisive a character, that no influence over it can be depended on. — You are never sure of a good impression being durable. Every body may sway it."

Here, of course, there is an irony for the reader. Wentworth is supposing that because Anne gave him up she is inconstant in her heart, whereas we know, as we listen with her, that *her* feelings have scarcely altered through eight years, and we will soon find out that the "firm" Louisa will transfer her affections in a few weeks.

> "Let those who would be happy be firm [he continues]. — Here is a nut," said he, catching one down from an upper bough. "To exemplify, — a beautiful glossy nut, which, blessed with original strength, has outlived all the storms of autumn. Not a puncture, not a weak spot any where. — This nut," he continued, with playful solemnity, — "while so many of its brethren have fallen and been trodden under foot, is still in possession of all the happiness that a hazel-nut can be supposed capable of." Then, returning to his former earnest tone: "My first wish for all, whom I am interested in, is that they should be firm. If Louisa Musgrove would be beautiful and happy in her November of life, she will cherish all her present powers of mind."

His solemnity is not really playful, though he is conducting an entertaining conversation — speaking aphoristically, and illustrating his maxims by apt analogy with elements of the autumn landscape. If we did not know the circumstances, we would be forced to suppose that this man has a bee in his bonnet about firmness: he is almost obsessive. "My first wish for all, whom I am interested in, is that they should be firm" — a curious priority! And then, "If Louisa Musgrove would be beautiful and happy in her November of life, she will cherish all her present powers of mind." He is thinking of the contrast with Anne. Anne, as he resentfully thinks of her now, is not beautiful and happy, but faded and miserable, and so she deserves to be in this and every other November of her life. That is the feeling that underlies his analogy. And in his little parable of the nut he is wiser than he knows. Louisa, in comparison with Anne, does have a limited range of sensibility, and can perhaps hope to achieve not very much more than "all the happiness that a hazel-nut can be supposed capable of." We need hardly pause over the quality of his advice — thus encouraged by him, Louisa does "cherish all her

present powers of mind," and, through her stubborn persistence on the Cobb at Lyme, nearly knocks out her brains altogether.

Captain Wentworth speaks with a weight of implication of which he is not, as Edmund is in the other scene, in control. His speech has been essentially an expression of his resentment against the persuadability of Anne Elliott, but the form it has taken is earnest praise of Louisa Musgrove:

> He had done, — and was unanswered. It would have surprised Anne, if Louisa could have readily answered such a speech — words of such interest, spoken with such serious warmth! — she could imagine what Louisa was feeling. For herself — she feared to move, lest she should be seen.

Captain Wentworth has essentially been saying: "Anne made me miserable by listening to someone else's advice"; Louisa has heard "What an admirable woman you are! I would like to make you happy." Anne has heard some combination of both. And from this time, particularly as Henrietta is now out of the picture, Captain Wentworth is considered by Anne and others to be virtually engaged to Louisa. He has committed himself to one woman because of her unlikeness to the one he is really thinking of.

From this commitment he is happily released by Louisa's fortunate facility in falling in love with Captain Benwick. He must then inform Anne that he had never been in love with Louisa. They are at a public assembly in Bath, and he must again make his declaration by indirection: "I regard Louisa Musgrove as a very amiable, sweet-tempered girl, and not deficient in understanding; but Benwick is something more." (182)

Now he is in control of his language of implication, and Anne is perfectly able to translate it: "His opinion of Louisa Musgrove's inferiority, an opinion which he had seemed solicitous to give, his wonder at Captain Benwick . . . — all, all declared that he had a heart returning to her" (185). The full declaration — and it is fuller in this novel than in any of the six — is to come in a scene that

exactly parallels the scene with the hazel-nut. Anne, in the fullness of her experience of eight years of fidelity to her love, speaks to Harville on the subject of constancy in men and women, while this time Wentworth is the eavesdropper. There is the same oblique communication between the two, and Wentworth like Anne has been put through the agony of jealousy. The spurious virtue of firmness has been re-categorized as obstinacy, and the real virtue of constancy is given due credit. As he listens, Wentworth is able to write, without indirection, words that are for Anne's eyes alone: "I am half agony, half hope . . . . I offer myself to you again with a heart even more your own, than when you almost broke it eight years and a half ago." (237.) Anne had a smaller proportion of hope to agony in the previous scene, but she had the same feelings, though they were never voiced, there and through most of the novel.

Captain Wentworth is closer to being a Mr. Rochester than any other of Jane Austen's heroes. When Mr. Rochester found himself tied to a woman he didn't love, he "unlocked a trunk which contained a brace of loaded pistols" (*Jane Eyre,* ch. 27), and when he was deserted by the one he loved, "He grew savage — quite savage on his disappointment . . . . He got dangerous after he lost her. He would be alone, too" (ch. 36). Now, perhaps Wentworth is not quite the stuff that Mr. Rochester was made of, and Jane Austen gives us no expanded account of his behaviour in his darkest hours after Anne rejected him. But we do have, in the course of conversation in the drawing-room at Uppercross, sufficient indication that he too has passed through the valley of the shadow. The Musgrove girls look for his first command, the *Asp,* in the navy list.

> "You will not find her there, [he tells them] — Quite worn out and broken up. I was the last man who commanded her. — Hardly fit for service then. — Reported for home service for a year or two, — and so I was sent off to the West Indies."

> The girls looked all amazement.
> "The Admiralty," he continued, "entertain themselves now and then, with sending a few hundred men to sea, in a ship not fit to be employed."

And when his brother-in-law tells him he was lucky to get even such a command as the *Asp,* he admits, "I was as well satisfied with my appointment as you can desire. It was a great object with me, at that time, to be at sea, — a very great object. I wanted to be doing something" (65). The reference to his state of mind on being dismissed by Anne is clear. We have seen "no teare-floods, nor sigh-tempests," no pistols removed from the trunk, no withdrawal from the society of man — just a light-toned conversation with new acquaintance about the course of his profession. But Anne and the reader can understand that his mood was as close to being suicidal as Mr. Rochester's was, that he went to sea in a leaky ship, and would as soon have gone to the bottom as not. He has been Jane Austen's restrained version of Childe Harold, a "gloomy wanderer o'er the wave."

Finally, I choose to consider another neglected girl who looks on while the man she loves pursues an unworthy woman; but this time the point of view is centred not in the neglected girl, but in the unworthy one — in the erring Emma, in fact. To get the full emotional impact of all that is going on in this novel, we must sometimes make the imaginative leap that is needed to understand what the restrained Jane Fairfax is feeling, for Emma herself is of course hot-headed but cool-hearted, and for most of the novel doesn't know her own feelings.

Few of us can fail to have been impressed by the extraordinary power of the Box Hill scene. I think its power resides in the fact that beneath all that conversation and badinage, and beneath the overstrained attempt to make a party go, there are two subsurface levels of action, which the alert reader is aware of, and which give the surface level a particular intensity. In one level, at least one of the principals is not aware of what is going on: Emma's unconscious love for Mr. Knightley is beginning to force it-

self to the surface of her mind, and makes her realize that "she felt less happy than she had expected. She laughed because she was disappointed" (368). Frank Churchill suggests that for her entertainment everyone must reveal his thoughts; Mr. Knightley asks pointedly,

> "Is Miss Woodhouse sure that she would like to hear what we are thinking of?"
> "Oh! no, no" — cried Emma, laughing as carelessly as she could — "Upon no account in the world." (369)

Divided from Mr. Knightley by the "principle of separation" that prevails (367), and pointlessly incurring his disapprobation by her joyless flirting with Frank Churchill, she is weighed down by a misery she can't define. From this state of mind arises her cruel joke at Miss Bates's expense, followed by her ride home in the carriage with the unconcealed tears running down her face.

In the other action, the principals are thoroughly awake to the language of implication, and are aiming covert barbs at each other which they mean to strike and wound. Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax, the secret lovers, have quarrelled, and his pointed attentions to Emma are designed to express to Jane his independence of her. He is under *Miss Woodhouse's* command, he implores *Miss Woodhouse* to choose and educate a wife for him, since he has no faith in his own choice. He and Jane proceed in their covert quarrel to break off their engagement. Frank comments of the Eltons (who like himself and Jane met at a public watering-place) that they are "lucky" their marriage is as happy as it is: his apparently general comments are deeply insulting to Jane.

> "Very lucky — marrying as they did, upon an acquaintance formed only in a public place! . . . — for as to any real knowledge of a person's disposition that Bath, or any public place, can give — it is all nothing; there can be no knowledge. It is only by seeing women in their own homes, among their own set, just as they always are, that you can form any just judgment. Short of that, it is all guess and luck — and will generally be ill-luck. How many a man has committed himself on a short acquaintance, and rued it all the rest of his life!" (372)

Jane Fairfax has her cue to answer: "A hasty and imprudent attachment may arise — but there is generally time to recover from it afterwards" (372-3). "Jane," he can be understood to say — (I wish I could write the scene as Charlotte would have liked it; but then I like it the way it is) — "Jane, now that I've seen you in your sordid little home, with your dreary family, I'm thoroughly disillusioned, and I wish to God I hadn't got involved with you." "Frank," she may be supposed to reply, "get lost." At any rate, as Frank afterwards acknowledges, "She spoke her resentment in a form of words perfectly intelligible to me" (441).

That form of words is not, I suspect, perfectly intelligible to Charlotte Brontë and her allies. She accused Jane of being deaf to the rhythms of the human heart, but she herself had no ear for the still small voice. She was attuned to what Scott called "The Big Bow-wow strain."[17]

In general terms I have been talking about the power of form to liberate rather than to limit. In art the restrictions of form and discipline do not confine, but rather *de*fine. "As well a well wrought urne becomes / The greatest ashes, as halfe-acre tombes" — the sentiment was shared and practised by Jane Austen, even if the metaphor would hardly be characteristic. Her novels are well wrought urns, where Charlotte's preference was more in the line of half-acre tombs. I have had occasion to quote Donne once before in this paper; and, strange bedfellows as they seem at first sight, Donne and Jane Austen have much in common. They both have the conviction that it is not the quantity of experience that counts, but the quality; and they both have the concomitant power to make "one little roome, an everywhere." They find the world's room in a bed, in a relationship, or in Highbury, or in those "3 or 4 Families in a Country Village" that Jane Austen delighted in writing about.[18]

We all know that Jane Austen was an ironist. Studies of her irony have formed the mainstay of much recent criticism of her novels. But we usually associate irony

with the intellect: we think of it as a polemical tool, or as a means of creating comedy through its illumination of incongruity; we assume the ironist maintains a cerebral detachment, like Mr. Bennet's in *Pride and Prejudice.* Marvin Mudrick even heads one of the chapters of his book on Jane Austen's irony "Irony and Convention *versus* Feeling."[19] But irony and feeling are not necessarily opposed: there is an irony used to express emotion as well as an irony used to make fun of it. Arthur Sidgewick pointed this out in an early and illuminating article on the term: "It often comes about," he said, "that while the lower stages of feeling can be expressed, the higher stages must be suggested. In the ascent the full truth will do; but the climax can only be reached by irony."[20] I do not claim quite this much for Jane Austen — she does not deal in the tragic experience of an Oedipus or an Othello —; but her power of understatement, and ability to express feelings by indirection, inform her novels with emotional intensity. She offers us far more than the *surface* of the lives of genteel English people.

NOTES

[1]Letter to W. S. Williams, April 12, 1850. *The Shakespeare Head Brontë* (Oxford, 1931), xiv, 99. Reprinted by B. C. Southam, *tical Essays* (Englewood cliffs, 1963), p. 7.

[2]Unpublished manuscript entitled "Jane Austen." I quote from Ian Watt's introduction to *Jane Austen: a Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, 1963), p. 7

[3]"The Lady Novelists," *Westminster Review,* 58 (July, 1852), 134. See Southam, p. 140.

[4]Letter to Ruskin, November 5, 1855. *Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning,* ed. F. G. Kenyon (London, 1897), ii, 217. See Southam, p. 25.

[5]*Jane Austen: a Collection of Critical Essays,* p. 4.

[6]Howard Babb has pointed out how "most of Jane Austen's critics are obsessed by a sense of her limitations." *Jane Austen's Novels: the Fabric of Dialogue* (Ohio, 1962), p. 3.

[7]See her introduction to *Wuthering Heights.*

[8]References are to *The Novels of Jane Austen,* ed., R. W. Chapman, third edition (London, 1932-4).

[9]The earlier novels have the most of this kind of traditional satire: General Tilney, Lucy Steele, and Caroline Bingley are deceitful; but Elizabeth, Mary Crawford, Emma and Captain Wentworth are self-deluded.

[10]Howard Babb has provided excellent analyses of these and other passages in *Jane Austen: the Fabric of Dialogue.* My emphasis differs from his, however.

[11]The main passage I am discussing in this section is *MP,* 92-5.

[12]Lionel Trilling points out how Mary Crawford "cultivates the *style* of sensitivity, virtue, and intelligence." *The Opposing Self* (New York, 1955), p. 220.

[13]Marvin Mudrick comments perversely on this passage, "Mary has suddenly become Satan," and calls this final view of her "a grotesque makeshift." *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* (Princeton, 1952), p. 165. He seems not to have noticed that the imagery throughout has prepared us for such a view of Mary.

[14]In "A Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*" (1930).

[15]*John Thomas and Lady Jane* (New York, 1972), p. 114.

[16]The main passage I am discussing in this section is *P,* 87-8.

[17]Scott was opposing this to what he called Jane Austen's "exquisite touch," and her "talent for describing the involvement and feelings and characters of ordinary life." *Journal of Walter Scott,* 1825-26 (London, 1939), ed. J. G. Tait, p. 135. See Southam, p. 106.

[18]Letter to Anna Austen, September 9, 1814. *Jane Austen's Letters,* ed. R. W. Chapman, second edition, (London, 1952), p. 401.

[19]*Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery,* p. 60.

[20]"On Some Forms of Irony in Literature," *Cornhill,* 58 (April, 1907), 499.

Funny Adolf

How do you hate this little man
with a weakness for cream puffs,
who couldn't make it into art school,
liked dogs and wasn't good
with girls? Who the hell wouldn't
identify with the Chaplin grin
and the penchant for a jig from time to time.
The fall of France was winning the Super-loto
you might say, enough excuse for joy.
How do you hate a man who hates Jews
but may have had one for a grandfather;
even *putsch* has a funny sound.
Or that buffoon Mussolini,
what a mate for a song-and-dance!
Who could roll his eyes like Step'n-fetch-it
and scowled for effect while reading a book
which, on close inspection, turned out to be
upside down. Casting a movie you could maybe
slip Hitler into a crowd scene, or use Benito
as a Grade B heavy. Continue.
Goering, for God's sake, you saw on TV
last night, he's everybody's pompous ass,
and Hess crashing in England — so long sucker! —
a Nazi straight out of Marx (Brothers).
That's your cast of villains. I can't hate them.
I do the others.

FRASER SUTHERLAND

Grainne Ni Mhaille

(County Mayo)

When Grace O'Malley, pirate
sea-queen and castle builder,
much captured and escaped
found her seaway up the Thames
to Elizabeth's Presence,
she was put questions about
loyalty and liegeman's aims.

A translator made the two
acquainted, Grace sixty-three
claiming still and yet she could
sail a galley, rule a crew,
would but Her Royal Highness
license the fire and the sword
to guard Ireland's western coast.

I get the fey picture of
two queens, one jewelled and most
golden in velvet and lace —
powder pale — and the other
more leather than lavender,
beyond concern for her face,
all stance, stride, all seaworthy.

Can't you hear some old courtier
jealous of his young missy
page her from Grace's straight side
asking then "Who was that knight
I seen you with last, Wife?"
getting for reply "That was
no knight, that was a Lady."

WILLIAM MCLAUGHLIN.

Metamorphosis in The Rape of the Lock

ROBERT FOLKENFLIK

THE character of Clarissa in *The Rape of the Lock* has been the subject of sharp modern criticism, though she has not lacked spirited defenders. She has been pilloried both as a hypocrite and as the common-sensical, spoil-sport destroyer of the poem's toyshop world.[1] Perhaps Pope thought, as Jane Austen would later, that he had written a work too "light and bright and sparkling" and wanted in 1717 to bring in another tone. According to his own account, he added Clarissa's speech to the 1717 version of *The Rape of the Lock* in order *"to open more clearly the Moral of the Poem."*[2] His was a problem in the rhetoric of fiction. How could he convey a positive ideal through the presentation of negative instances? This is always the satirist's problem, but in a poem which had to serve at once as satire and panegyric the problem was particularly acute.

"The stealing of Belle Fermor's hair," said Pope to Spence, "was taken too seriously . . . ."[3] *The Rape of the Lock* takes its terms from Arabella Fermor's behavior. Her over-reaction to the cutting of her lock becomes the normal scale for every action in the poem, as its hyperbolic title suggests; and since all the other actions are of even less consequence, their heroic elevation measures her distance from reality. The mock-heroic is not used in this poem primarily to judge modern society by the standards of a more heroic age.

The Rape of the Lock is not *To Augustus* before its time, satire masquerading as panegyric. Pope solved his problem through an implied critique within a texture of praise. The satire becomes sharper, as Earl Wasserman has demonstrated, when we probe the contexts of Pope's allusions.[4] Yet Pope, as his "Dedication" to Arabella Fermor with its

explanation of the most rudimentary terms of epic criticism reveals ("The *Machinery,* Madam, is a Term invented by the Criticks . . ."), did not expect her to apprehend this level of the satire; indeed, he seems to count on the sharpest thrusts being missed by her, if not by the *cognoscenti.*[5] Pope conveys what even Arabella Fermor could apprehend through his use of metamorphosis.

The Rape of the Lock is Pope's most Ovidian poem. Pope creates, as has been remarked, a dazzling world of beautiful surfaces with which he is half in love himself; but he knows that one cannot simply love them, for, as he implies through his use of metamorphosis, they cannot last. The poem starts with the rising sun but ends with a star that will remain when all suns set, including the mortal Belinda, who is compared to the sun throughout. Hence the mixture of wise sadness and amusement along with love and sympathy.

The use of metamorphosis is double-edged. On the one hand it seems to imply a conservation of matter — beautiful things merely change into different beautiful things, giving us a world of kaleidoscopic glitter; on the other hand we have permanent transformations: the vase shattered, the lock cut (the possibility of its growing back is deftly left out of consideration), virginity lost, beauty gone, death. The unnatural metamorphoses, supernatural or artificial, while often attractive, are always delusive. The natural metamorphoses are permanent and hardly welcome, but they are real. The burden of the poem is to show Arabella Fermor, and by extension all young ladies and all of us — the beauty is a more poignant example of the general condition — the true state of affairs.

The sylphs, beautiful and charming — transparent in several senses of the word — hold out a promise not only of narcissistic pleasure but also of immortality. They once were women themselves. This is one of the metamorphoses which sends the moral sense on holiday and moves the poem from the real world to a fairyland. Ariel, by re-

collecting the sylphs' transformations, leads us to expect a world where a lovely thing changes into something else, different but equally delightful :

> As now your own, our Beings were of old,
> And once inclos'd in Woman's Beauteous Mold;
> Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
> From earthly Vehicles to these of Air. (I, 47-50)

There are overtones here of the voice from beyond the grave. We may also notice that "beauteous Mold" is oxymoronic, perhaps suggesting the Biblical image of the potter's clay.[7] Our strongest sense, however, is of "soft transition."

The sylphs are not only metamorphic beings but also the cause of metamorphosis in others: "With varying Vanities from ev'ry Part, / They shift the moving Toyship of their Heart" (I, 99-100). There is such a whirligig of motion in these lines that we can hardly keep them in focus. Ariel claims, in an argument analogous to one Pope was to advance seriously in *An Essay on Man,* that the seeming disorder of women is actually caused by the invisible activity of the sylphs:

> Oft when the World imagine Women stray,
> The *Sylphs* thro mystick Mazes guide their Way,
> Thro' all the giddy Circle they pursue,
> And old impertinence expel by new . . . .
> This erring Mortals Levity may call,
> Oh blind to Truth! the *Sylphs* contrive it all.
> (I, 91-4, 103-4)

"All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see:" Ariel's topsy-turvy morality makes moralists err. They seem not only wrong but sinful. The sylphs, substituting for the Homeric gods and Miltonic angels, absorb and pervert the ostensible religious standards in the poem.[8]

Under such tutelage what wonder that Belinda acts as high priestess to bring a deity — herself — into being? As she cosmetically converts herself into a goddess, and a warrior goddess at that, we are treated to the microcosmic world in her boudoir:

> This Casket *India's* glowing Gems unlocks,
> And all *Arabia* breathes from yonder Box.
> The tortoise here and Elephant unite
> Transform'd to *Combs,* the speckled and the white.
> Here Files of Pins extend their shining Rows,
> Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux. (I, 133-8)

The minuscule is aggrandized, and the impressively large appears diminished. As in the later transmogrifications of the three seal rings from buckle to whistle to Belinda's bodkin, the tortoise and elephant — together a symbol of the world — are reduced in meaning as well as size.[9] The slightly blasphemous cast of the whole scene is set off by the incongruous "Bibles", incongruous, that is, until we see them as jeweled bibelots.

The sylphs' disarming interpretation may hold the stage at this point, but we have a number of other suggestions as to the real end of metamorphosis. The cave of Spleen, Pope's adaptation of the epic underworld, is clearly a demonic vision of metamorphosis, full of up-dated Ovidian grotesqueries. In this fantastic world, the return of the repressed ("Maids turn'd Bottels, call aloud for Corks") is accompanied by the unpleasant side of conventional feminine mutability: the spleen and headache, affectation and tears. If the tone of the early cantos can be summed up in the line "*Belinda* smil'd, and all the world was gay," here the tone is signaled by the gnome's prayer:

> Hear me, and touch *Belinda* with Chagrin;

Though we would be reducing the poem to see Belinda as a manic-depressive, the cutting of the lock transforms her entirely from one mode of being to another. Pope's hyperbolic praise early in the poem insures that her fall will be extreme.

Even before we enter the Cave of Spleen, however, the comparisons Pope makes at the moment the lock is cut are intimations of mortality. Among the things which are permanently transformed, we find the china vessel, last item in an anticlimactic catalogue which moves down the scale of being from husbands to lap dogs. But this vase, whose

religious and sexual overtones have received much comment,[10] is the heroine of a couplet tragedy:

> Or when rich *China* Vessels, fal'n from high,

The image is Aristotelian in its depiction of a fall from a high and prosperous state. And the oxymoronic status of the tragic hero (compare Othello's "an honorable murderer") is brilliantly conveyed by the second line's conflations of beauty and destruction. The *hubris* which links the china and Belinda is present in the "painted Fragments," for Belinda had earlier converted herself into a goddess by painting her face. After these "sacred Rites of Pride" at the end of Canto I, Belinda sails down the Thames:

> But now secure the painted Vessel glides,
> The Sun-beams trembling on the floating Tydes,
> While melting Musick steals upon the Sky,
> And soften'd Sounds along the Waters die. (II, 47-50)

Martin Price, who notes that the phrase "painted vessel" applies equally well to Belinda and her boat, compares the passage of Dalila's arrival in *Samson Agonistes*,[11] and perhaps with Eliot's combined allusions in *The Waste Land* to *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Rape of the Lock* in mind, we can see another tragic temptress on her barge.

The anaphoric lines which describe Belinda's emotions when her lock is cut also contain hints of Belinda's ultimate fate:

> Not youthful Kings in Battel seiz'd alive,
> Not scornful Virgins who their Charms survive,
> Not ardent Lovers robb'd of all their Bliss,
> Not ancient Ladies when refus'd a Kiss, . . .
> E'er felt such Rage, Resentment and Despair,
> As Thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd Hair. (IV, 3-6, 9-10)

The effects are partially muted through anticlimax (Not *Cynthia* when her *Manteau's* pinn'd awry"), but the lines which refer to women otherwise insinuate a life history, the same basic response at stages in a misspent life. The scornful virgin *will* survive her charms, and what the virgin denies the "ancient lady" may beg for.

Up to this point in the poem, every explicit statement has been favorable to Belinda. All criticism has been by implication. In 1717, however, Pope decided that he needed his norms voiced as a way of bringing the implicit criticism into prominence.

Clarissa explicates the values at heart of the poem.[12] Belinda is concerned solely with appearances, but Clarissa inquires after essence: "Say, why are Beauties prais'd and honour'd most . . .?" The adoration they receive should have some stability:

> How vain are all these Glories, all our Pains,
> Unless good Sense preserve what Beauty gains:
> That Men may say, when we the Front-box grace,
> Behold the first in Virtue, as in Face! (V, 15-18)

The options are quickly canvassed. If one could live in a world of rapidly changing beautiful appearances, Belinda's ethics would be sufficient:

> Oh! if to dance all Night and dress all Day,
> Charm'd the Small-pox, or chas'd old Age away;
> Who would not scorn what Huswife's Cares produce,
> Or who would learn one earthly Thing of Use?
> To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,
> Nor could it sure be such a Sin to paint. (V, 19-24)

As elsewhere in the poem, religious terms evoke larger ideals which can not come fully into the structure. Sin is brought lightly into conjunction with painting and serves to evoke the overtones present in the fall of china, as Clarissa indicates the metamorphosis which will take place regardless of Belinda's protean changes:

> But since, alas! frail Beauty must decay,
> Curl'd or uncurl'd, since Locks will turn to grey,
> Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
> And she who scorns a Man, must die a Maid;
> What then remains, but well our Pow'r to use,
> And keep good Humour still whate'er we lose? (V, 25-29)

The possibilities considered are presented as mutually exclusive and exhaustive. Clarissa sees variety as reducible to an either/or situation which leads to a final impasse: "all shall fade" in any case. "Whate'er we lose" puts the lock in its place among things great and small which are

of less importance than Belinda's attitude towards them. Clarissa's logic is similar to that of many *carpe diem* poems ("If to dance . . . " "but since . . . " "What then remains . . ."), but it is adapted to other ends. This speech with its playfulness and posturing would not instruct Belinda to seize the day, but to remember that there is a tomorrow. Clarissa's speech parodies, as Pope revealed in a footnote, "The Episode of Sarpedon." Sarpedon urges death in battle; Clarissa wants Belinda to call off the fight.[13] Given the difference in circumstances, equanimity replaces magnanimity as a virtue.

Belinda is spared the full harshness of the alternative. Pope suggests in another tone what Hamlet tells the skull of Yorick, "Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come." Pope's own famous depiction of what old coquettes become appears in the "Epistle to a Lady":

> As Hags hold Sabbaths, less for joy than spight,
> So these their merry, miserable Night;
> Still round and round the Ghosts of Beauty glide,
> And haunt the places where their Honour dy'd.
> See how the World its veterans rewards!
> A Youth of frolicks, an old Age of Cards,
> Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
> Young without Lovers, old without a Friend,
> A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sot,
> Alive, ridiculous, and dead forgot. (239-48).

This ferocious vision is too strong for *The Rape of the Lock*. There we have not the living-dead hags but the charming sylph who, "though she plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards" (I, 54). Pope hides his terrors through the strategic use of metamorphosis.

Reuben Brower has commented with characteristic intelligence and tact on the closeness in tone of *The Rape of the Lock* and Pope's "Epistle to Miss Blount, with the Works of Voiture." "The lady," he observes, "is offered the same consolation and defence in both poems."[14] What we should notice in the following lines is the emphasis on what can be achieved in the mutable world in which human beings actually live:

> Trust not too much your new resistless Charms,
> Those, Age or Sickness, soon or late, disarms;
> *Good Humour* only teaches Charms to last,
> Still makes new Conquests, and maintains the past . . .
> (59-62)

Belinda does not think in terms of a tomorrow, but Pope's perspective allows him his urbanely ironic tone, because it takes in more time than the single day on which the rape occurs. Tragic theory may have had something to do with limiting his action to one day, but his consummate artistic sense led him to see the ironic implications of presenting one day in a life. The identity of Clarissa's advice to Belinda and Pope's to Martha Blount should be no surprise, for within the context of *The Rape of the Lock* Belinda is being invited to do on a human level what Pope does on an artistic level by turning her lock into a star (and by extension her being into his poem): this metamorphosis with its Ovidian echoes turns the changeable into the timeless. Belinda cannot stave off time's final triumph, but within her life she can create a being with duration, a self which, in Clarissa's words, "preserves what beauty gains."

The emphasis is not on the process of character formation, as it would be for the Romantics, but on the product, the formed and steady character. Such a character, once attained, would be in a sense static, but it must be actively maintained despite the temporal dangers to which it will be subjected. Once the transformation which Clarissa recommends has been completed, radical metamorphosis will be an external phenomenon against which the good-humoured character preserves a balance. Metamorphosis has been central to Belinda's life without her being conscious of it. Clarissa tries to make her aware that metamorphosis, even of one's own person, must be seen as external to human consciousness. This is an attempt to create a kind of consciousness for Belinda which she does not have and which, in the context of the poem, she refuses.

Pope's metamorphosis of the lock into a star at the end of the poem is an Ovidian device: a way of saving his

heroine at a point when, on the level of experience, she is unable to get out of her predicament. This is, however, an ironic redemption; although unable to create a consciousness for herself, Belinda will be able to illuminate others. The poem begins with a warning from a sylph, but the entire poem is an admonition from the poet. It is also a gift. As the dedication and the poem's conclusion make clear, Pope offers Arabella Fermor more than a *quid pro quo*. He gives her a better lock to take the place of the one she has lost; and her acceptance of the poem in the spirit it was given will be at once a recognition of its truth and an action which will show she has the character Belinda lacks.

NOTES

[1]Rebecca Price Parkin, *The Poetic Workshop of Alexander Pope* (Minneapolis, 1956), pp. 127, 171-2; Murray Krieger, "The 'Frail China Jar' and the Rude Hand of Chaos," *Centennial Review*, 5 (1961), 176-94.

[2]The words may be Warburton's rather than Pope's. *The Rape of the Lock and Other Poems*, ed. Geoffrey Tillotson (London, 1962), II, 199 n. All references in the text will be to canto and line of this edition (hereafter referred to as Twickenham). In addition to Tillotson's comments and notes, the most important work on metamorphosis in *The Rape of the Lock* appears in Rueben Brower's *Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion* (Oxford, 1959) and two recent articles, Ricardo Quintana, "'The Rape of the Lock' as a Comedy of Continuity," *Review of English Literature*, 7 (1966), 9-19; Ralph Cohen, "Transformation in *The Rape of the Lock*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 2 (1969), 205-25.

[3]Joseph Spence, *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men, Collected from Conversation*, ed. James M. Osborn (Oxford, 1966), I, 43.

[4]Earl R. Wasserman, "The Limits of Allusion in *The Rape of the Lock*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 65 (1966), 425-44.

[5]Twickenham, II, 142.

[6]See Brower, *Pope*, p. 150.

[7]One thoroughly traditional epitaph would be: "Stranger, as you pass me by, As you are now, so once was I. As I am now, so you will be. Prepare for death and follow me." The potter's clay as a symbol of frail humanity in the hands of God appears in Jeremiah 18:1-6, 19:1, 10-11; Isaiah 29:16; Romans 9:20-21, etc. See Gisela Zick, "Der Zerbrochene Krug als Bildmotiv des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 31 (1969), 149-204. And for similar imagery see Aubrey Williams, "The 'Fall' of China and *The Rape of the Lock*," *Philological Quarterly*, 41 (1962), 412-25.

[8]In a footnote Pope draws a connection between the sylphs and the fallen angels (I, 145 n.). It is also worth noting the frequency with which variations on the word "mortal" appear (I, 27, 103; III, 101; IV, 93; V, 44). Together with the oft-noted sexual euphemism "die" they suggest possibilities which the sylphs ignore.

[9]For Pope's probable knowledge of the symbol, see Martin Price, *To the Palace of Wisdom* (Garden City, New York, 1964), p. 151.

[10]See especially Cleanth Brooks, "The Case of Miss Arabella Fermor" in *The Well Wrought Urn* (New York, 1947), pp. 80-104.

[11]Martin Price, *Palace*, p. 153.

[12]There is perhaps something unpleasant in Pope's economical decision to have the woman who assisted the Baron point the moral. She is not in any way hypocritical, but in retrospect her action in producing the "glitt'ring Forfex" smacks a bit of teaching Belinda a lesson rather than educating her. Pope trusts that the tone of her speech — its genuine sympathy — will carry its own weight. And since Clarissa existed merely as a bit player before Pope conceived her speech, her motivation as the Baron's accomplice may not bear too much looking into.

[13]See Ralph Cohen, "Transformation," 214-7, for a close comparison.

[14]*Pope*, p. 149.

New Light on "The Excursion"

ALAN G. HILL

A fresh approach to *The Excursion* is long overdue if Wordsworth is to take his rightful place among the sages of the early Victorian period. But the obstacles in the way of this are great. There is little general agreement as to what, if anything, Wordsworth was trying to achieve in this vast, even sprawling, structure, and it has never attracted the steady critical attention that would have made it more accessible now. Apart from the tragic tale of Margaret in Book I, which in the form of *The Ruined Cottage* was written much earlier, the poem is largely ignored except as evidence of Wordsworth's poetic decline. Jeffrey's notorious verdict — "This will never do!" — has re-echoed in one form or another down the years.

The poem really deserves a better fate altogether. As one of the great reassertions of traditional values and beliefs against the sceptical spirit of the Enlightenment, it is a work no student of the nineteenth century can afford to neglect. But a more favourable estimate is impossible while the whole *raison d'etre* of the design remains problematic.

Wordsworth's own remarks about *The Excursion* (particularly in the *Preface* of 1814) and its relation to the unfinished *Recluse* reveal little about his intentions in organizing the poem as he did. A few influences are fairly clear: the dialogues of Plato, and possibly those of George Berkeley as well, the didactic and contemplative poetry of the eighteenth century, and finally travelogues like John Thelwall's miscellany *The Peripatetic* (1793). But none of the sources and analogues discussed by Judson Stanley Lyon (*The Excursion, A Study,* New Haven, 1950, pp. 29-

60) really account for the peculiar *temper* of the poem and the apparently inconclusive ending which Wordsworth gives to the debate between Solitary, Wanderer and Pastor. Did he reject Coleridge's advice that he should expound "a vital Christianity" only to flounder in uncertainty, at heart unconvinced himself and merely dramatising an internal debate which he could not resolve, "three persons in one poet," as Hazlitt complained? Curiously enough, it is just those who emphasise Wordsworth's growing conformism and orthodoxy in those years when *The Excursion* was taking shape, who also call in doubt the tentative nature of his conclusion.

The problem may perhaps best be tackled indirectly by considering the procedure of a much earlier dialogue, the *Octavius* of the second or third century writer Minucius Felix. For he, like Wordsworth, was feeling his way into the minds of his contemporaries, trying to direct their thoughts into new channels, but building on existing beliefs and attitudes rather than repudiating them. Affinities between Wordsworth's "conversational" poem and the first Christian dialogue in Latin suggest that the two works are linked, but up till now there has been no direct evidence to connect them. I am very grateful to Professor Chester C. Shaver of Oberlin College, Ohio, for allowing me to refer to Wordsworth's *Library Book* of 1829 in the Houghton Library at Harvard before the publication of his own comprehensive catalogue of Wordsworth's books, and so for the first time to establish the poet's familiarity with the *Octavius*.

Wordsworth apparently owed his knowledge of Minucius Felix, like so much else, to Coleridge, who refers to the *Octavius* as early as 1797 (*Notebooks*, ed. K. Coburn, i. 313). He probably introduced Wordsworth to the work as soon as they became intimate during the Alfoxden period. Later on his copy followed him to Keswick and after his breach with the Wordsworths and final departure from the Lakes, the book must have remained behind in the

Wordsworth household; for it was listed among Wordsworth's books at Rydal Mount in 1829, with the direction that (along with other volumes belonging to Coleridge) it was to be returned to his son Derwent, at that time a clergyman in Cornwall. This must have been done some time before Wordsworth's death and the break-up of his library, since the *Octavius* is not recorded in the Rydal Mount Sale Catalogue of 1859 (printed in the *Transactions of the Wordsworth Society,* 1882-7). The book thus survived, and eventually found its way a few years ago to the Coleridge Collection at Victoria College, Toronto, where by courtesy of the Library authorities I was recently privileged to examine it.

Coleridge's *Octavius,* in the handsome edition of Jacob Ouzel, or Oiselius (1631-1686), the Dutch humanist and Professor of Public Law at Groningen, was published at Leyden in 1652. This was just over a century after the work had been rediscovered following its disappearance in the Middle Ages. The volume included a cognate work of quite a different spirit, the *De Errore Profanarum Religionum* of Julius Firmicus Maternus, which had also been rediscovered in the Renaissance. Taken together, the two writers imply strikingly different attitudes towards the pagan Roman religion and Christianity, the first emphasising the common ground between them, the second their mutual antagonism. To Wordsworth, setting out in *The Excursion* to bridge the gap between his readers' experience and sympathies *as men* and the higher truths of philosophy and religion, the whole volume offered an object-lesson in strategy that would not fail to impress him, given his own cast of mind.

Questions about the author and dating of the *Octavius,* and its affinities with Tertullian and Cyprian, have been actively pursued since the time of Harnack, and need not delay us here. But something needs to be said about the design and temper of the work, which are very relevant to the present inquiry. The *Octavius* has always appealed to

those who, like Coleridge and (later) von Hugel, feel that the Christian character is most lastingly established by a gradual preparation in which the sympathies are enlarged and prejudice removed before revealed truth is reached. This was essentially Wordsworth's own view too, in his letter to Francis Wrangham of 5 June, 1808:

> I will allow you that Religion is the eye of the Soul, but if we would have successful Soul-oculists, not merely that organ, but the general anatomy and constitution of the intellectual frame must be studied: farther, the powers of that eye are affected by the general state of the system. My meaning is, that piety and religion will be best understood by him who takes the most *comprehensive* view of the human mind, and that for the most part, they will strengthen with the general strength of the mind; and that this is best promoted by a due mixture of direct and indirect nourishment and discipline.

This point of view is really inimical to the Evangelical frame of mind which stresses the unique experience of conversion, arising from encounter with revealed truth; and Wordsworth's aversion to Evangelical methods is well known. The *Octavius* might be taken at first sight as an attempt to establish Christianity on rationalist and eclectic lines without appeal to Revelation, as if it somehow foreshadowed the methods of Strauss and Renan. But this is to misunderstand the whole drift and purpose of the work just where it comes closest to *The Excursion.*

The occasion of the *Octavius,* it will be recalled, is a trip or excursion by three lawyer friends from Rome to Ostia while the courts are in vacation. This popular resort offers them fresh air for their deliberations — the seashore setting is delightfully described — but as the port of Rome and meeting-place of faiths, it is also an appropriate venue for an excursion of the mind as well. For the speakers in the dialogue are casting about for the truth and seeing how far their arguments will take them, just as the boys pictured on the beach playing "ducks and drakes" are seeing how far they can skim their pebbles over the placid surface of the sea.

The author, as impartial arbiter, presides over the de-

bate between Caecilius, the sceptical pagan traditionalist, and Octavius, champion of Christianity. This strategy ensures that justice is done to both sides and that Caecilius, the loser, who may be said to represent the uncommitted Roman intelligentsia, is not humiliated though his conversion is a foregone conclusion. For while demonstrating the superiority of Christianity, Minucius Felix contrives to suggest the common ground it shares with the higher philosophy of paganism. He tries to bring about an accommodation between the two, reserving his scorn for the ridiculous and degrading fables of popular mythology. Unlike Tertullian, he is anxious to turn as much as possible from the past to Christian use. Christianity, he seems to say, is the perfect development of time-honoured truths descending through Plato to Cicero and Seneca, and presents no threat to Roman civilization and social order. The living stream of faith had only to be diverted into a wider and deeper channel.

This bridge-building operation is elegantly accomplished through the dialogue form. Octavius answers Caecilius's arguments one by one: he raises no fresh issues or problems which cannot at once be dealt with, and though he ends with an eloquent tribute to the Christian character, he says nothing about the higher mysteries of Christianity. He confines himself to establishing the unity of God, the resurrection of the body (not, however, from Christ's example but from types and analogies in the world of nature), and future rewards and punishments. The basic groundwork of belief, the indispensable first stage for lasting conversion, has been laid, and Caecilius's progress to the next stage, that of revealed truth, is assumed rather than described. The ending, which would be inconclusive in a philosophical treatise, is perfectly appropriate to a conversation piece where the development of ideas must be subordinated to dramatic form and cogency.

Now if Wordsworth was thoroughly familiar with the *Octavius* and felt a certain kinship of spirit with its author,

it seems more than likely that he determined to give a similar shape to his own "conversational" poem, though in the end this was somewhat concealed by the illustrative tales and descriptive pieces which he groups around his central arguments. He reflects the same tentative strategy as Minucius Felix, mediating between different points of view and seeking common ground between his speakers by an appeal to general human experience. The Wanderer asserts a few general truths that are independent of Revelation: Providence, human immortality, and an active communion between Man and God through the "active principle" in Nature. Wordsworth then introduces another speaker, the Pastor, to illustrate the further development of these truths in the Christian Church, though the Solitary is not asked to grapple with them at this level. The poet thus embodies in the structure of his dialogue the two stages of initiation (what he calls at ix. 616 the "degrees and steps" furnished by God) which Minucius Felix implies. Wordsworth himself, the "I" figure, joins in occasionally and tries to keep his own position distinct from the others, though his sympathies would seem to lie most with the Wanderer, whose Wordsworthian credentials are set out in Book I. Wordsworth's spokesmen may seem dogmatic in tone, but (contrary to what is often implied) there is strictly speaking very little dogma in the poem. At the end, the Solitary is nowhere near ready for the revealed religion of the Pastor, though he has gone some way with the Wanderer in the direction of "renovation" (ix. 785). The further consequences of this were left over to the sequel which was never written, though the Fenwick Note of 1843 to *The Excursion* suggests that the Solitary was finally to be won back to Christian faith and hope by observing a religious ceremony in his native region of Scotland, which recalled his early childhood to him.

The Solitary's cynicism, grounded in the tragedies of his married life and the disappointments of the French Revolution, and nourished on Voltaire's flippancies, has induced a

spiritual torpor which cannot be corrected by intellectual argument alone. Errors of the "calculating understanding" have indeed contributed to his present impasse. A subtler strategy could appeal to different sides of his (and human) nature, in particular his sense of the majesty and power of the natural scene and the demands of common humanity: what Wordsworth in his letter to Catherine Clarkson of December 1814 called the "innumerable analogies and types of infinity" and "the countless awakenings to noble aspiration" in the Bible of the Universe: "the commonplace truths," as he later pointed out to Coleridge, that lurk "inoperative and undervalued" in men's minds.

If only he knew it, the Solitary already half possesses the means for working his own rehabilitation. He first appears comforting a bereaved child (ii. 503-11) and mourning the loss of the aged pensioner who has shared his life in the lonely valley far removed from the haunts of men. He it is who describes the twin peaks overhanging the vale and the "mute agents" stirring there which shape "A language not welcome to sick hearts" (ii, 716). To him, too, is granted the vision of the cloud city, "the revealed abode/ Of spirits in beatitude" (ii. 827ff.), immediately after the discovery of the dying pensioner on the fells. He even seems to understand the spiritual aspirations of hermits and monks, and "The life where hope and memory are as one" (iii. 400). To these imaginative sympathies the Wanderer addresses himself, developing significances in the Solitary's own experience which he may not be aware of himself. Later on, in the *The Churchyard Among the Mountains,* the Pastor adds his "solid facts" and "plain pictures" from the moral histories of his humble parishioners, and the dead join forces with the living. Wordsworth's design is stretched to the utmost limits by the mass of evidence he adduces from the whole "stream of tendency" in nature and human history to suggest that on balance faith is preferable to despondency, and it does almost swamp his dialogue structure. But the long view *is* necessary. What

may seem a matter of doubt to the "calculating understanding", is a source of hope to the visionary "excursive" power of the mind (iv. 1263), which takes the most comprehensive view of things. The Solitary is no more a man of straw than Caecilius. His arguments are respected: indeed some of them are very telling, his criticisms of the "smooth and solemnized complacencies" of organised religion, for example (v. 376). His life needs to be redirected into deeper channels, but the process is not to be hurried. When he mentions the Evangelical doctrine of the Redeemer (iv. 1098-9), he is gently led back to the "Authentic tidings of invisible things" that emanate from the Bible of the universe (iv. 1144).

The climax of *The Excursion,* in which several previous *motifs* fall into a meaningful relationship, is the Wanderer's assertion at the beginning of Book IX of "An *active* Principle" immanent in the phenomena of Nature and in the mind of Man. The whole passage offers striking resemblances to the *Lines composed . . . above Tintern Abbey* and was in fact written at much the same time. Both passages exemplify Wordsworth's conviction, set out in the important letter to Catherine Clarkson already referred to, that the argument from design — Paley's analogy of the watchmaker and the watch — was an inadequate and misleading way of speaking about God's relationship with the world. Further on in the same letter he puts forward a more active analogy (suggested by his small son) for God's mode of operation, the movement of the wind. Now it so happens that Minucius Felix was also preoccupied with this problem. In the course of his exposition to Caecilius, as if to emphasise the common ground between them, Octavius sets out the argument from design, borrowing largely from Cicero's *De Natura Deorum* and Seneca; but later on when characterising the *Christian* belief he substitutes a much more active and immanent concept of God's role, which strikingly anticipates the famous lines in *Tintern Abbey.* After mentioning in passing the analogy of the wind, Minu-

cius Felix writes (*Octavius* 32. 7-9; English translation following):

> . . . unde enim deus longe est, cum omnia caelestia terrenaque et quae extra istam orbis provinciam sunt deo plena sint? Ubique non tantum nobis proximus, sed infusus est. In solem adeo rursus intende: caelo adfixus, sed terris omnibus sparsus est; pariter praesens ubique interest et miscetur omnibus, nusquam eius claritudo violatur. Quanto magis deus auctor omnium ac speculator omnium, a quo nullum potest esse secretum, tenebris interest, interest cogitationibus nostris, quasi alteris tenebris! Non tantum sub illo agimus, sed et cum illo, ut prope dixerim, vivimus.
>
> For how can God be far away, when everything in the sky and on earth and everything outside the realm of this world are full of God? He is not just close to us everywhere; he is actually infused in us. Consider the sun once again. It is set in the heavens, but its rays are scattered all over the earth. It is present everywhere at the same time, and it has part in and mixes with all things; yet nowhere is its brightness spoiled. God is the originator of everything, he examines everything and from him nothing can be kept secret; how much more, then, is he present in the darkness and present in our thoughts, in that other darkness, as it were. Not only are all our actions under his scrutiny, but all our life, I could almost say, is spent with him.[1]

However we may choose to interpret Wordsworth's "sense sublime/Of something far more deeply interfused", the *Octavius* must surely now be included along with *Aeneid* vi. 726-7 (which it perhaps echoes) as a possible source or influence on these lines.

There remains to be considered the other work included in Coleridge's *Octavius,* the *De Errore Profanarum Religionum,* and this need not delay us long. If the first work was congenial to Wordsworth, the second would be entirely antipathetic and would only have the effect of confirming his preference. Firmicus' treatise belongs to a later period, the middle of the fourth century, when Christianity was in a far more favourable position in the Roman Empire in relation to paganism, following the conversion of Constantine. Firmicus, a writer on astrology and recent convert to Christianity, has no time for compromise on the 'common ground' of belief, nor does he make it easier for pot-

ential converts to feel at home in Christianity by allowing their instinctive beliefs, suitably modified, to flow on in the new channels. The climax of the work is a violent denunciation of paganism, even in its higher form of Neo-Platonism, and an impassioned appeal to Constantine's successors to extirpate it root and branch. The *De Errore* may be indispensable to the student of ancient religions, but its intolerant persecuting temper is unpleasant to contemplate and a terrible portent of what was to come when Christianity gained the upper hand and turned against its opponents the weapons from which it had itself suffered for so long. Wordsworth's feeling for the pre-Christian religions, it will be recalled, was quite different: this feeling shows both in Book IV of *The Excursion* and in the *Ecclesiastical Sketches,* where his ecumenical temper and hatred of persecution are most apparent.

This necessarily brief discussion of *The Excursion* in relation to Minucius Felix suggests that Wordsworth embarked on the poem with a much clearer design and purpose than he is usually credited with; that the overall structure by no means reflects Wordsworth's ultimate "bafflement"; and that charges (from James Montgomery and John Wilson among others) that his treatment of Christianity is incomplete are misplaced. His own understanding of the proper relationship between poetry and religion was set out in the *Essay Supplementary to the Preface of 1815* and later on in his letter to Henry Alford of 21 February 1840, and is perfectly consistent with the interpretation of the poem offered here:

> I was particularly pleased with your distinction between religion in poetry and versified religion. For my own part, I have been averse to frequent mention of the mysteries of Christian faith; not from a want of a due sense of their momentous nature, but the contrary. I felt it far too deeply to venture on handling the subject as familiarly as many scruple not to do . . . . Besides general reasons for diffidence in treating subjects of Holy Writ, I have some especial ones. I might err in points of faith . . . .

Whether Wordsworth was entirely successful in achieving what he set out to do is of course another question altogether: one which could only be settled by a very full reappraisal of characters, dramatic development and style, the progression and interrelation of the central ideas, and — it must be added — by a more extensive investigation of pre-eighteenth-century influences on Wordsworth, which have been curiously neglected. But at least the emergence of this new source, the *Octavius*, opens up the possibility now of a fresh and (I believe) more fruitful approach to the poem.

NOTES

[1]This translation of Minucius Felix' lines is by Professor John C. Yardley of the University of Calgary.

TWO POEMS BY BERT ALMON

Advice for a Hunter

Calling her evasive, you raid her secrets,
so she runs about like an anxious plover
leading you from one false nest to another,

chirping *here, over here,* far from the spot
where the genuine feelings lie huddled.
The relentless hunter bags no birds, you see,

and when you turn to making nets, take this hint:
leave a flaw in the weaving, the spell requires
an open gate to let the Spider Goddess out.

Gulf Island Princess

She wanted an island with no snakes,
but Galiano has a few, so she goes out
only when it rains, wearing high boots.
Now she wants a glassy moat, serpent-proof,
to guard her bower.
Then she'll await her lover:
crossing the moat
on his two legs, stumbling
crossing the moat
on all fours, slipping
crossing the moat
on his belly, wriggling.

The Narrator of Don Juan

DAVID PARKER

AS a poet and as a man, Byron was a poseur, everyone agrees, but some of Byron's posturing is more interesting than most poets' sincerity, and by no means everyone disapproves of it. Nevertheless, for those like myself who feel that what there is of value in Byron is not to be dissociated from this posturing, there is a problem; not one that immediately affects our enjoyment of the poetry, but one that can ultimately do so, once we start puzzling about meaning: it is often difficult to know who is saying what is said, how seriously, and with what shade of irony, if any. The problem has been complicated by current intellectual fashions. Problems of identity are all the go, and it is tempting to see Byron as a Regency Borges with a passion for masks, as a precursor of existentialism, or as a devotee of the absurd. I think he probably does have some importance in the history of these phenomena, but simply to say that Byron was doing what lots of writers today are trying to do seems to me neither accurate, nor a good way of seeing where he stands in literary history, nor indeed a reason why we should admire what he wrote.

One critic who has managed to state the problem, without falling into the pedantry encouraged by intellectual fashion, is John Wain.[1] Byron's failure to establish his own true identity, he argues, prevented him from having "a fully successful relationship with his poetic imagination." Byron's method, he suggests, was to project an image of himself, "and then let the image do the writing." Because he lacked the confidence to look deeply into his own mind, he fell into the trap of projecting oversimplified images, who wrote oversimplified poetry for him.

I agree that Byron failed to establish his own true identity, that his life and his poetry may be seen as a series of experimental postures, and, like John Wain, I cannot see how he would have developed had he lived, but it seems to me that in one poem at least this failure was no handicap. In *Don Juan,* I believe, Byron exploited his lack of firm identity, his posturing habit, to create a work of enduring value, in which the oversimplification is transmuted into something richer and more satisfying.

The oversimplification is found in each of the multiple narrative voices that all wakeful readers of *Don Juan* notice. Some critics have been offended by these multiple voices, but most readers enjoy them, and it seems to me that the critic should be wary of finding blemishes where the common reader finds only things to enjoy. I am thinking of the narrator's trick of appearing in alternative and contradictory guises. At one point he tells us he is past his "days of love"; at another, that he is "fond of a little love," fond of the "old pleasures," "so they but hold." Almost as soon as the prevailing worldly and tolerant attitude towards sexual irregularity has been established, we come across stanzas such as the following, expressing a prudish distaste for amatory verse:

> Ovid's a rake, as half his verses show him,
> Anacreon's morals are a still worse sample,
> Catullus scarcely has a decent poem,
> I don't think Sappho's Ode a good example,
> Although Longinus tells us there is no hymn
> Where the sublime soars forth on wings more ample;
> But Virgil's songs are pure, except that horrid one
> Beginning with 'Formosum Pastor Corydon.'
>
> (1.42)

One could go on listing examples for a long time.

Objections of the sort John Wain makes are set aside by critics who favour the interpretations endorsed by intellectual fashion. They explain the multiple voices of *Don Juan* by making Byron out to be a modern, with a taste for the absurd, in the modern sense. The meaning of the poem, they suggest, is to be found in the ironic

dissonance of the many voices. "Its irony," says William H. Marshall, "is terminal rather than instrumental."[2] This is not an explanation likely to satisfy an enquiring mind; its anti-historical tendency has obvious disadvantages. Indeed, it has been opposed,[3] and fairly successfully I feel, but it seems to me that the way the different narrative voices are united has yet to be fully explained.

The notion that the irony is "terminal" is no longer tenable, once we recognize the pervasive mocking tone, which suggests a judging mind, the narrator's or Byron's, assessing each of the multiple voices. It is only at one level, a fairly low and immediate one, that we find ourselves thinking of, and responding to, the sort of mind that prefers "decent" to "chaste," that speaks with relief of Virgil's "pure" songs, and that dare not refer to the second eclogue, except as "that horrid one / Beginning with 'Formosum Pastor Corydon.' " Most of today's readers, I suppose, see that there is a joke in such passages, first of all because they know Byron. A reader new to Byron might recognize the mockery in this passage, because it is out of tune with what's gone before. But you don't need to know Byron, or to have read any but this single stanza, in order to see that there is a joke. By itself, the stanza makes us aware of the judging mocking mind, a mind that delights in human absurdity (I'm not now using the word as a modernist slogan), but delights also in rising above it, in fixing or placing it, by giving it a crazy elegance of a sort the mind mocked could never devise and would never approve. In this stanza, the rhymes alone make us aware of the judging mind. And whenever the dissonant narrative voices chime in, the comic rhymes, the seemingly casual versification (in truth cunning) — all the things that give the unmistakable air of pretence — clearly indicate that there is something behind the diversity, that the irony is not terminal. The oversimplified images suggest a hidden complexity.

By itself, of course, a tone is not enough to provide a poem with unity. We don't recognize a tone as such, unless it suggests something deeper. My contention is that the multiple voices are united in our recognition, partly induced by the tone, that the narrator is a version of the rogue, who traditionally discovers identity in diversity. Byron's admiration for eighteenth-century literature is well-known, and some critics have demonstrated, specifically, his debt to picaresque fiction.[4] I should say, however, that I feel the narrator's roguishness is not to be explained simply by the identification of a specific "influence." He has qualities fundamental to rogues found throughout the long tradition of rogue literature.

Juan himself is a version of the rogue, but the narrator, in his mode of thought rather than in his actions, is the one who evokes more often the sentiments that belong to rogue literature. It is his commentary that gives the work its distinctive flavour. It is he who focuses the hatred of cant and hypocrisy, such as we find in *The Alchemist;* he who glorifies faith in impulse and truth to nature, such as we find in *Tom Jones.* And it is he who, through being protean, attains to a higher, freer identity. From Mak the sheep-stealer in the Towneley Mysteries, to Felix Krull, rogues have always been lovers of disguise, mimicry and imposture. The narrator of *Don Juan* takes his place in this tradition. Like the character in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Wilde is surely one of Byron's literary progeny), he discovers that one is more alive, more alert to the possibilities of life, the more one stretches oneself to embrace alternatives and contradictions. He discovers that, when it is difficult to approach truth at all, it is better to approach it obliquely, from many points, than to pretend it is easy from one.

Recognizing that the narrator is a version of the rogue helps solve not merely the puzzle of the multiple narrative voices; it helps solve the puzzle of how far we should allow ourselves to hear Byron's own voice in the poem. It

doesn't matter whether we tell ourselves we are listening to Byron, or to an image projected by Byron, or to a dramatically conceived narrator. The important thing is, we are listening to someone discovering identity through diversity, someone getting at the truth with the help of a variety of alternative disguises. This someone stands behind, concealed, knowable only through deduction and intuition. Perhaps the most sensible thing to say would be that Byron himself is the figure we ultimately sense or detect, and that the narrator is a projected image, the last layer of disguise. That, however, is by no means the only profitable way of imagining the latent structure of the poem. The point is, there is something complex behind the surface simplicities, but it is definable only in terms of those simplicities.

It might be objected that considering *Don Juan* as a piece of rogue literature is no more helpful than considering it as a piece of absurd literature. Both traditions suggest that there is something wrong with conventional attitudes towards truth and identity, and that imposture is a significant activity. Yet there are differences, and *Don Juan,* I feel, has some of the qualities that distinguish rogue literature from absurd literature. The latter usually suggests that there are no certainties: that what we think of as truth is convenient fiction, what we think of as personal identity is role-playing. Sometimes this postulate produces a grim or freakish comedy, but almost always, in the background, there is despair, or at best glum stoicism. Rogue literature, too, questions what is normally accepted as truth, and casts doubt on the fixity of human identity, but it usually does this on the understanding that it is primarily the certainties endorsed by society it is criticizing; rarely does it strive towards the metaphysical nihilism of absurd literature. If it is in any way nihilistic, it is not so glumly; rather, in the dissolution of certainties it finds freedom and scope for the imagination; not a pretext for *angst.* Even while we criticize them

morally, we admire the imagination and appetite for life of Lazarillo de Tormes, of Falstaff, of Roderick Random. We find their scepticism about rules and theories exhilarating, not dismaying. *Don Juan* provokes the same exhilaration. In it, the feeling of moral liberation and the gusto, that belong to rogue literature, blend imperceptibly with the love of freedom and of truth to nature, characteristic of romantic literature. The narrator of *Don Juan* is the rogue as romantic sensibility.

It is not just that looking at *Don Juan* as rogue literature makes us see it better than looking at it as absurd literature. It seems to me that this way we are more likely to do justice to the intelligence and sanity of the poem. Rogue sentiment and the romantic love of freedom both easily turn into superficial gesturing, but not so easily as the existentialist *angst* that seems to be at the heart of absurd literature. The trouble with this *angst* is that it is well-founded only if you believe the universe has let you down, if you feel it has neglected its clearly defined duty to provide you with certainties. Absurd literature is the literature of an age of transition; its value lies more in the way it records characteristic experiences of the age, than in its insight into enduring truths. Too often, it amounts to little more than the formalized self-pity of the generation. *Don Juan* is altogether more robust than most absurd literature. There is a continuous energy behind it that stops it from ever degenerating into superficial gesturing (however much it makes superficial gesturing its subject matter). Its clarity of vision demands that the poem be put in a different category from absurd literature.

Some readers might resist thinking of the narrator of *Don Juan* as a rogue, because he is aristocratic in temperament and style. He is familiar with members of the Spanish gentry, and he writes in a lordly fashion, with the manner of a man who finds it easy to laugh at modish ideas, persons and institutions, because his breeding sets him

above them. It would be wrong to see this as something disqualifying him from being a rogue. Rogues are drawn to gentlemanly and aristocratic styles, and there seems to be an obscure link between rogues on the one hand, gentlemen and aristocrats on the other. Some rogues, like Mak the sheep-stealer and the hero of Quevedo's *La Vida del Buscón,* are enthusiastic mimics of upper-class styles. Some, it is suggested (ironically or otherwise), are good at upper-class styles because of a natural affinity with gentlemen and aristocrats: Robin Hood in the ballads, for example, Macheath, and Fielding's Jonathan Wild. And some rogues have an easy command of upper-class styles because, like the heroes of Restoration comedy and Roderick Random, they really are gentlemen or aristocrats.

During the Restoration era, in fact, it became fashionable to assume that all true gentlemen had something in common with rogues (it helped distinguish them from the hypocritical bourgeoisie). The old equation, "rogues are like gentlemen," was reversed. But the way had been well-prepared by the rogue tradition in literature. In the ballads, Robin Hood is a yeoman with a courtly style. At the end of the sixteenth century, Anthony Munday made him a real aristocrat, the wronged Earl of Huntingdon.[5] Within a few years, it became natural to think of rogues as possessing a certain elegance. In *Volpone,* Mosca speaks admiringly of

> . . . your fine, elegant rascall, that can rise,
> And stoope (almost together) like an arrowe;
> Shoot through the aire, as nimbly as a starre;
> Turne short, as doth a swallow; and be here,
> And there, and here, and yonder, all at once;
> Present to any humour, all occasion;
> And change a visor, swifter, than a thought:[6]

The rogue's very protean nature is thought of as elegant. By the time of *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1625), we find an old-fashioned low-class rogue, Sir Giles Overreach, being defeated by one of the new upper-class gentleman-rogues, Welborne, whom Massinger evidently thought

naturally superior in wit and resourcefulness. In the Restoration era, as I say, both in comedy and, it seems, in life, gentlemen and aristocrats thought of themselves as rogues. The tradition was carried forward by *The Beggar's Opera* and by eighteenth-century fiction. During the Regency period, the Restoration feeling about rogues and gentlemen was evidently revived in social life and, by Byron among others, in literature.

The style, or rather styles, of *Don Juan* is one of the things that points to a link with the rogue tradition. "Carelessly I sing," the narrator tells us, "But Phoebus lends me now and then a string" (VIII.138). This is a fair description — of the effect at any rate. We admire the ramshackle gracefulness of the verse, and the way it moves imperturbably from one contradictory note to another. Rogues are always masters of style, and of quick changes between styles. It is part of their delight in disguise, mimicry and imposture. This is another area, too, in which the rogue and the gentleman meet. We can think of the narrator of *Don Juan* as one of the mob of gentlemen who write with ease, or we can think of him as a rogue with a love of brilliant surface. For a complete response, we have to think of him as both.

As many critics have pointed out, there is an exactness of control lying behind the seeming carelessness of the verse of *Don Juan*. Byron had a good ear, and a sure taste for effect. The effect of carelessness is carefully contrived. It is largely a matter of courting poetic disaster, striking a pose, or moving from one pose to another, in such a way that the reader is convinced the precarious balance will be lost, and is disproportionately pleased when it's not. The narrator behaves, verbally, like one of those circus performers who are both clowns and acrobats. Doing a trick, he always manages to give an impression of clumsiness, of impending failure, but always at the last moment he converts clumsiness into grace, and succeeds. And like the acrobatic clown, the narrator makes those he

mockingly pretends to imitate seem silly and dull; what he does is a sort of demonstration of his contempt for such actions, such postures.

It shouldn't, then, be too difficult for us, when we are reading *Don Juan,* to identify with sufficient precision who is saying what is said. It is a rogue, a prankster, whom we perceive precisely because we are addressed by so many contradictory voices. It makes little difference whether we assume this rogue to be Byron or a dramatically conceived narrator. It is a little difficult to tell how seriously any particular utterance is made, and what shade of irony, if any, we are supposed to detect, but not much more difficult than it usually is in ironic literature, or, speaking more specifically, in rogue literature. Reading the poem, we get to know the rogue behind the various disguises; our sense of character, our natural discernment, teaches us how to assess each utterance, for its degree of seriousness and degree of irony. Most sensible critics have realized this, and I don't propose to demonstrate what they already have. The judicious reader will agree with Helen Gardner's reply to the charge that *Don Juan* is amoral (a charge implicit in the notion that it is a piece of absurd literature). "It is preposterous to call *Don Juan* an amoral work," she says. "Apart from the obvious moral passion in many passages, we are in no doubt as we read that Byron admires courage, generosity, compassion and honesty, and that he dislikes brutality, meanness, and above all self-importance, hypocrisy and priggery."[7] We are in no doubt, that is, that Byron's values, formally presented through the medium of the narrator, are ultimately the values that lie behind most rogue literature worth reading. They are the values of Ben Jonson and Henry Fielding.

Supporters of John Wain's thesis might object that the rogue tradition is not something a poet can devote his creative life to exploiting. He may try it once, or a few times even, but he has to go on. At best it offers only

a provisional adjustment to social and psychological fact. It doesn't offer a mode for discovering the deepest truths. I would agree; but I would also point out that such an objection, severely adhered to, puts out of court a great deal of literature most qualified readers admire. It implies that we should admire only the very greatest. What I am trying to suggest is this: I don't think it is true to say that Byron's failure to establish his own true identity prevented him from having "a fully successful relationship with his poetic imagination," if by that it is meant that Byron never wrote anything of significance in which this failure is not manifest, and which is not in some way spoiled by it (I think that's what John Wain does mean). *Don Juan* might not tell us whether Byron ever discovered himself, but it doesn't matter. In *Don Juan* we have a poem, unique in its way of course, but at the same time very nearly perfect of its type. And paradoxically, in the very diversity of voices heard within the poem, we perceive a man who, if he has not actually discovered himself, has got very near to it (close enough, indeed, for the purposes of the poem), through a process of exclusion: through identifying a multitude of inadequate and despicable moral postures, and thus disowning them. Negative though this process may be, it shows us a complex and volatile personality achieving at least a provisional stability, and that's no mean feat for a poem to perform.

NOTES

[1]"Byron: The Search for Identity," *Essays on Literature and Ideas* (London: Macmillan, 1963).

[2]*The Structure of Byron's Major Poems* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), p. 177.

[3]See George M. Ridenour, "The Mode of Byron's *Don Juan*," *PMLA*, 79 (1964), 442-46.

[4]See, e.g., A. Horn, *Byron's Don Juan and the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1962).

[5]See Anthony Munday, *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, afterwards called Robin Hood of Merrie Sherwodde* (1598/99).

[6]III.i.23-29, *Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1937), V, 1-137.

[7]"*Don Juan*," *The London Magazine*, 5 (July 1958), 64.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge as Abolitionist

BARBARA TAYLOR PAUL-EMILE

AS a young man, Samuel Taylor Coleridge was deeply concerned about slavery; his writing on the subject can be divided into two distinct periods. The first, extending from 1792 to 1798, could be called his more liberal abolitionist phase. During this time he expressed distress over the very existence of slavery and publicly lectured against it. The second phase began in 1808 after a silence of ten years. In that year he wrote a review of Thomas Clarkson's new book on slavery for the *Edinburgh Review*. By this time, his liberalism had been moderated into paternalism, and his main concern became the "civilizing" of Africans. By 1833, when the slaves received partial emancipation, the poet expressed shock at the rashness of the action. This change in Coleridge's thought on the slavery issue from the political liberalism of youth to the strict conservatism of age is worth examining.

In 1792, while Coleridge was still a student at Cambridge, much interest was being generated by pubic debates and discussions on the moral and ethical values called into question by human slavery. Thomas Clarkson had won the Latin prize at Cambridge in 1785 for writing on the topic: "Is it Right to Make Men Slaves Against Their Will?" In 1792, Coleridge won the Browne Gold Medal for a "Greek Ode on the Slave Trade," subtitled "Sors Misera Servorum in Insulis Indiae Occidentalis," or "The Wretched Lot of Slaves in the West India Islands."[1] The subject was being hotly debated by University clubs and literary societies from Harvard to Oxford and Cambridge in England, and Coleridge's theme reflects the strong literary interest generated by this explosive topic.

In a letter to his brother George on April 2, 1792, Coleridge remarked: ". . . I have been writing for *all* the prizes — namely — The Greek Ode, the Latin Ode, and the Epigrams. I have little or no expectation of success — . . . The prize medals will be adjudged about the beginning of June. If you can think of a good thought for the beginning of the Latin Ode upon the miseries of the W[est] India Slaves, communicate — My Greek Ode is, I think, my chef d'oeuvre in poetical composition."[2] As it turned out, Coleridge used the subject of slavery not for his Latin but for his Greek Ode.

Some of the ideas expressed in the poem by the young Coleridge foreshadow the attitude with which he would view slaves and slavery for the next few years. He expresses sympathy for their cause and condemns their oppressors, calling on Nemesis to send "burning punishment" on those "who are sated with the persecution of miserable people . . ." Of those who do not take part in this traffic he says, praising himself immodestly:

> This muse who is the disciple of virtue
> Will take pleasure in mentioning your name
> This muse with the blessing of the sufferers
> Will raise your name to heaven!

In "Ode to the Departing Year" (1796), Coleridge composed a stirring and magnificent poem which expresses the poet's anguish over contemporary world events, focusing attention mainly on England and chastising her for her part in increasing the misery of humanity.

The departing year appears as a speaker in a cataclysmic vision and prophesies the destruction of England because of her wrongs against Africa:

> But chief by Afric's wrongs,
> Strange, horrible, and foul!
> By what deep guilt belongs
> To the deaf Synod, 'full of gifts and lies!'
> By Wealth's insensate laugh! By Torture's howl!
> Avenger, rise!
> For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,
> Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow?
> Speak! from thy storm-black Heaven O speak aloud!

And on the darkling foe
Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud!
O dart the flash! O rise and deal the blow![3]

Seeking to preserve his own personal integrity, the poet disassociates himself from the prophesied national calamity:

Away, my soul away!
I unpartaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer and daily toil
Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
Have wail'd my country with a loud lament.[4]

These are the words of Coleridge as a young man. Pained by the unexpected turn of the French Revolution, he was to turn away from his prophetic stance. He later found it necessary to add the following note to this poem: "Let it not be forgotten during the perusal of this Ode that it was written many years before the Abolition of the Slave Trade by the British Legislature, likewise before the invasion of Switzerland by the French Republic . . . ."[5] Clearly, the purpose of this note is to justify his having written such an inflamed piece. The older Coleridge, able to understand and accept England's general political behaviour, would not have reacted with such harsh candour to similar situations.

In *France, An Ode,* first published in the *Morning Post* in 1798 as *Recantation*: *An Ode,* Coleridge included a stanza on slavery and the slave trade which has not so far been found. In *Politics in the Poetry of Coleridge,* Carl Woodring suggests that possibly Daniel Stuart, editor of the *Morning Post,* "or some inconceivable sub-editor . . . took the precaution of excluding it . . ."[6] We know, however, that generally it "linked slavery with impressment for war as murder done continuously under national guidance and responsibility."[7] In place of this stanza a note appeared in the *Morning Post* stating that "The fifth stanza, which alluded to the African Slave Trade as conducted by this Country, and to the present Ministry and their supporters has been omitted, and would have been omitted,

without remark if the commencing lines of the sixth stanza had not referred to it."[8]

The first four lines of the sixth stanza are as follows:

> The Sensual and Dark rebel in vain,
> Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
> They burst their manacles and wear the name
> Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain![9]

The poet here is referring to the French leaders and their supporters who had attacked Switzerland and as a result angered and embarrassed many of their supporters in England. The French, capable of such treachery, were unlike the Blacks, slaves "by their own compulsion."

Evidently the missing stanza alluded to the English government's support of slavery and the trade. It is probable then that its omission was not in the interest of poetical form but for practical political reasons. The *Morning Post* had made a name for itself as a bold speaker for radical and revolutionary ideas. It supported France, but was now in the process of rethinking its position after the new direction of the French Revolution became obvious. The Post was "currently in retreat on the issue of democratic freedom . . . In early March, Stuart was summoned before the Privy Council; in late March, Perry of the *Morning Chronicle* was sentenced to Newgate for three months."[10] It might well be that at this time the *Morning Post* thought it politically unwise to print the fifth stanza which attacked the government quite openly. As Coleridge grew older, his own revolutionary ardour cooled, and possibly he felt no need at a later date to replace this stanza.

In 1794 Coleridge and Southey planned their grand scheme to establish a colony on the banks of the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania. In a letter to Southey dated November 3, 1974, Coleridge mentions two servants, possibly slaves, and says: "the *Men* do not want assistance—at least, none that *Shad* can particularly give—And to the Women what assistance can little Sally, the *wife* of Shad, Give — more than any other of our married women? Is she to

have no domestic cares of her own? No house? No husband to provide for? No children?"[11] However unrealistic Coleridge's work schedule for himself and the settlers might be, the principles of independent self-support and self-reliance remain.

In order to raise funds for the venture, Coleridge decided to give two courses of six lectures at Bristol. The first set dealt with the Civil War under Charles I and the French Revolution; the second dealt with revealed religion. One of the lectures given at this time was on the slave trade:

> Tomorrow Evening, Tuesday, June 16, 1795, S. T. Coleridge will deliver (by particular desire) a lecture on the Slave Trade, and the duties that result from its continuance. To begin at 8 o'clock, at the Assembly Coffee-House, on the Quay. Admittance, One Shilling.[12]

Nothing remains of this lecture. The choice of subject, however, reflects Coleridge's continuing concern with slavery as an issue.

In another letter to Southey, he makes his position on slavery in the proposed Colony even clearer:

> My feeble and exhausted Heart regards with criminal indifference the Introduction or Servitude into our Society —; but my Judgement is not asleep: nor can I suffer your Reason, Southey! to be entangled in the web, which your feelings have woven. Oxen and horses possess not intellectual Appetites — nor the powers of acquiring them. We are therefore Justified in employing their Labor to our Benefit — Mind hath a divine Right of Sovereignty over Body — But who shall dare to transfer this Reasoning from 'from Man to Brute' to 'from Man to Man'! To be employed in the Toil of the Field while *We* are pursuing philosophical Studies — can Earldoms or Emperorships boast so huge an Inequality? Is there a human Being of so torpid a Nature, as that placed in our Society he would not feel it? — A *willing* slave is the worst of Slaves — His *Soul* is a Slave. Besides, I must own myself incapable of perceiving even the temporary *convenience* of the proposed Innovation.[13]

The plans for establishing in Pennsylvania fell through because Robert Southey, the leader of the group, was required to remain in England and study law in order to secure a legacy willed to him on that condition. The collapse of their plans was a serious loss to Coleridge. It was

now necessary for him to shift emphasis and look for alternatives. For a time it appeared as though he would become a Unitarian minister.

It was the wish of his father, a vicar, that Coleridge be prepared for the clergy. Although he did not enter the profession, his interest in religion stayed with him throughout his life. In a letter to his brother George, Coleridge implies that religion does not condone slavery, and he points instead to the gospel as a means of alleviating human distress. He says "I have been asked what is the best conceivable mode of meliorating Society — My answer has been uniformly this — 'Slavery is an Abomination to every feeling of the Head and Heart — Did Jesus teach the *Abolition* of it? No! He taught those principles, of which the necessary *effect* was — to abolish all Slavery . . . You ask me, what a friend of universal Equality *should* do — I answer — 'Talk not of Politics — *Preach the Gospel*!' "[14]

Coleridge's most finely reasoned arguments against slavery are to be found in his short-lived journal, *The Watchman*. This periodical, published in 1796, was supposed to review books, to present some poetry, to attack injurious governmental policies, and in sum to be a liberal publication. An essay on the slave trade appeared in the fourth number on Friday, March 25, 1796.

In the first paragraph of the essay Coleridge begins by asking the question, "Whence arise our miseries? . . . From Imaginary Wants."[15] From this he proceeds to show that " . . . if each among us confined his wishes to the actual necessaries and real comforts of Life, we should preclude all the causes of Complaint and all the motives of Iniquity."[16] Our basic needs are often supplied; it is the desires created by the imagination which often lead men astray in their attempts to satisfy them. From this point, he undertakes a damaging study of the question of the slave trade and slavery, where he ridicules the position of the pro-slavery forces who maintain that interference from

government or abolitionists would lead to national disaster.

Up to 1807 the fight was centred on abolition of the slave trade, not slavery itself. The struggle was difficult enough as it was, and any talk of emancipation was thought to be premature. Coleridge's attack on Pitt further on in the essay, therefore, referred only to the latter's dallying over the Slave Trade Bill, not emancipation. "There are some who think Mr. Pitt sincere in his zeal for the abolition of this Trade; and I must certainly applaud their charity: but charity itself will allow that there are suspicious circumstances. Several violent and unpopular bills have lately been carried through both Houses — how came this bill, (certainly not an unpopular measure) to fail?"[17] Later in his life Coleridge was to claim that Pitt was one of the great supporters of the Abolition cause. At the time of the *Watchman* essay, however, he was politically still very much to the "left" of the Prime Minister.

After a ten-year silence Coleridge once again began to comment on slavery and on Africans. In a letter dated May 23, 1808, to Francis Jeffrey, the fiery and controversial editor of the *Edinburgh Review,* Coleridge asked for a favourable review of Thomas Clarkson's newly-published book on slavery, a work which he had been permitted to read in manuscript form. In his letter to Jeffrey, Coleridge said: "I write to you now merely to intreat — for the sake of mankind — an honourable review of Mr. Clarkson's 'History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.' I know the man, and if you knew him you, I am sure, would revere him, and your reverence of him, as an agent, would almost supersede all judgment of him as a mere literary man. It would be presumptuous in me to offer to write the review of his work. Yet I should be glad were I permitted to submit to you the many thoughts which occurred to me during its perusal."[18]

Coleridge claimed that he wrote to Jeffrey regarding the review of Clarkson's work because Mrs. Clarkson had in-

dicated to him that a severe review might have an adverse effect on her husband. It is likely, knowing the extent to which Jeffrey disapproved of the Romantic poets, that Coleridge hoped to prevent Jeffrey from extending his wrath to a close friend and associate.

Whatever the reason, Coleridge's intercession was successful. Jeffrey in a polite letter asked him to write the review, which appeared in the *Edinburgh,* July 1808.

In the first paragraph of the review Coleridge points out that one cannot discuss Clarkson's work within the traditionally prescribed framework of criticism which refers only to "style and arrangement." One must deal primarily with the subject or substance of the work, for it is to this that the author gave his foremost attention. Clarkson's book, Coleridge notes, "contains the history of the rise and progress of an evil the most pernicious if only because the most criminal, that ever degraded human nature" (355).[19] "In short," he continues, "the present work is the history of one great calamity, — one long continuous crime; involving every possible definition of evil: for it combined the wildest physical suffering with the most atrocious moral depravity" (356).

At first there is great praise for William Pitt, who "by his eloquence, and by his authority gave confidence to the cause of justice, and currency to the dictates of reason. When we consider the solemnity of his protestations, and the great political interest of those whom he disobliged by his exertions, it is painful, and almost impossible to admit any doubt of his sincerity" (366). Then in an ironic turnabout the piece continues: "Yet, if he was sincere, he certainly was not zealous in the cause; and neglected so many opportunities of promoting it . . . . For the long space of twenty years, Mr. Pitt could persuade about three fourths of the members of Parliament to adopt any scheme of finance, or external policy, which he chose to countenance, — but he could never once prevail with a bare majority to support him against the slave traders and con-

signees of sugar in Bristol and Liverpool" (367). The reviewer goes on to point out that it was not until after the war with Holland, when such colonies as Guiana, Demarary and Bernice fell to the English, that abolishing the slave trade was given serious consideration. At that time, the older and established planters wanted the importation curtailed, seeing a threat to their position and wealth if these new possessions were allowed to buy slaves and develop into competing sugar islands. So "the clamours of the sugar-dealers produced the interference which humanity and justice had formerly solicited in vain" (367).

In several letters to friends, Coleridge was later to deny that he wrote two of the political passages in the review: the passage disparaging Pitt, and that praising Wilberforce. In a letter to Allsop he said: "When the Review was published, in the place of some eulogiums due to Mr. Pitt and which I stated upon the best authority (in fact, they were from Tom Clarkson himself) was substituted some abuse and detraction."[20] In a footnote to this passage he added: "Was not this a fraud, a moral forgery? And this man, who attained notoriety and influence by conduct and practices like these, is he not a Judge, whose office it is to punish such acts in others?"[21]

In a letter to T. J. Street in 1809, Coleridge had occasion again to refer to this incident. He speaks of his intention to republish this "review on Clarkson's History of the Abolition in the *Edinburgh Review,* which was most shamefully mutilated; but in two paragraphs added (in a vulgar style of rancid commonplace metaphors) made to contradict myself — first in a nauseous and most false ascription of the Supremacy of merit to Mr. Wilberforce, and secondly in an attack on Mr. Pitt's Sincerity substituted for a Paragraph in which I had both defended it and him; and proved that of all the parliamentary Friends of the Africans he was the most efficient. With the exception of these paragraphs, I trust, you will read the Review with some satisfaction, even as it now stands . . ."[22] In another

letter to Thomas Poole on January 12, 1810, he says that he prefers to write for newspapers, "for Reviewing, which is more profitable and abundantly more easy, I cannot engage in, as I hold it utterly immoral — and was confirmed in it by the changes, Jeffrey made, in my Review of Clarkson's History of Abolition in the *Edinburgh Review,* the only case in which I thought myself warranted to make an exception."[23]

As editor of the *Edinburgh Review,* Jeffrey had become quite well known for the freedom with which he handled pieces submitted to him. Undoubtedly he must have felt it necessary to insert his own critique into Coleridge's review as the attack on Pitt was certainly not written by the poet since his political outlook had altered by this time. Possibly Coleridge's admiration for Pitt provoked Jeffrey, who was definitely a Whig, causing him to omit those passages and insert his own. The swift turning away from veneration and praise, on the one hand, to sarcastic ridicule on the other is a favorite technique of Jeffrey and one which he had used often enough in his assessment of the works of contemporary poets. The fact that Coleridge did not question the passages on slavery and on the colonizing of Africa upon publication of the piece suggests that he was satisfied that they had remained unembellished by Jeffrey.

The review illustrates the beginning of the shift in Coleridge's opinions. As he grew older, he began to move away from the political liberalism of his youth, and at this time, 1808, his attitudes towards slavery, the state and the English church began to undergo a change. More and more he began to fear that abolition would lead to great social disorders, and that the state's stability would be threatened by this upheaval. He became less concerned over the plight of the Africans and began to emphasize the cultural importance of religion for them. He stressed the ameliorating value of Christianity and the inevitable superiority of the Europeans who espoused this religion. In

the *Edinburgh Review,* he wrote the following: "It cannot be denied that the superstitions of the Africans will occasion great difficulties and embarrassments; but, by systematic repression of all religious proselytism, except indeed that most effective intrument of conversation, the Christian conduct of our agents; by a prudent and affectionate attention to the wishes and comforts of the chieftains, and the Mandingo priests; and by sedulous endeavours to enlighten them as men; this obstacle might gradually be removed, — at all events greatly lessened" (377).

In order to set a code of conduct "Let no alarming zeal be betrayed;" Coleridge advises: "rather let the initiation into Christianity be held up as a distinction, — as a favour to be bestowed; and it need not be doubted, that natural curiosity will prompt the chieftains; and most intelligent of the African tribes, to inquire into the particulars of a religion professed by a race confessedly so superior to them, and that the sense of superiority will act as a powerful motive toward adoption of it" (378).

In the best tradition of sound economics, philanthropy and profit would go hand in hand. Coleridge suggests that "civilizing commerce" be begun at once with Africa. His plan would lead to profit on both sides. In support of this design he suggests that the forts along the West coast of Africa which were used for slave-holding and slave-trading be converted into cultural centres. "Privileges, both useful and flattering, should be held forth to such of the African tribes as would settle round each of these forts; still higher honours should be given to the individuals among such settlers, as should have learnt our language, and acquired out arts of manufacture or civilization" (377).

Coleridge's conception of society, at this point, influenced his change in attitude towards Africans and slavery. As a young man, he saw society as essentially classless. His support of the Pennsylvania colony illustrates this idea. In religious matters he tended toward Unitarianism. As he grew older, however, his attitude on both these subjects

changed. He "came to have a very different conception of state and Church. In his raw Jacobinical days, it is true, he had been as individualistic as anyone; as a philosopher and a political theorist he had at first been an avowed disciple of Locke, Hartley, and Godwin. But he had learned from Plato, from Kant, from Schilling and above all from Burke — the thinkers who became the great lights of . . . his later seeing — to regard society as an organism."[24]

He now believed that society was composed of parts which together made up a whole. Each part must carry out its assigned function in order to benefit the whole. The state is composed of the National Church, whose function is to "keep alive art, letters, and all things spiritual."[25] The landed and commercial classes will serve to balance each other, with greater governmental power and control being given to the landed classes. The people of the state will benefit from the interrelatedness. In essence, we have arrived at the "central point of Coleridge's political philosophy. The State is 'a moral unit, an organic whole.' The individual's place in the State is ultimately determined by his value to the State. This value is an absolute of experience, like any other moral judgment. What we call the rights and duties of the individual — the two are inseparable — are the external, tangible marks by which we may know whether that individual has his proper place in the State. It is misleading to say that men have *equal* rights and duties, but we must say that all have *equally* rights and duties."[26]

As Coleridge came to believe this, the state appeared to him more and more sacred and timeless. "He felt that there was urgent call for change; but it was change not in the direction of the novel and untried — it was change in the backward direction, a return to the original ideas of Church and State which had been lost."[27] His concept of society is reflected in his attitude towards reform in general. Although he was always concerned with many of the social ills of his age, such as child labour, the shabby and

unhealthy living conditions of the oppressed, the open abuse of poor people in general by the new industrial system, Coleridge in his maturity was anti-democratic. He believed "in aristocracy, in respect for rank and ancestry and the maintenance of certain fixed gradations of Society."[28]

His plans for the Africans involved attempts to improve their lot, not really to change their position in society. He had come to believe in the enormous benefits of education not only for the Africans but for the poor and illiterate Englishmen. As far as he was concerned hope for reform lay in moral improvement of all classes in society, their Christian education and redemption from materialistic values. He had come to believe that nothing should break the interdependence of the higher, middle and lower classes. Viewed from this position, although the moral and physical welfare of slaves should be looked after, slavery as a state was not particularly alarming.

More and more Coleridge came to feel that influence in government should correspond to the amount of property owned.[29] Indeed, "although Coleridge's conservatism was willing to do everything for the people, it was strenuously opposed to allowing anything to be done *by* the people . . . . He showed Burke's profound distrust of the political capacity and moral stability of the average man."[30] He was most unfriendly to unions and other associations of labourers. When therefore, a slave calls for freedom, this does not mean that he should become free. Without the proper moral education, and instruction as to his place in the state he cannot determine what is to his good.

In 1809 Coleridge planned a new periodical, *The Friend: a Literary, Moral and Political Weekly Paper.* It ran at a loss and folded that same year. In essays VII and XIV of this journal, Coleridge attacked those who boasted that his age was one of great enlightenment. He pointed to various failings of present society: the illiteracy of the population, the ineffectiveness of particular political policies, and the

failure of the French Revolution. He declares that only a few men are responsible for improving the conditions of humanity and among them are Thomas Clarkson, Grenville Sharp, William Wilberforce, and members of the Society of Friends, who worked effectively against slavery. In a lecture delivered in May 1808, the content of which is similar to the substance of these essays in *The Friend,* he praises Clarkson again as one who had accomplished much good.

In his "Lectures on Shakespeare and other Dramatists" (1812), Coleridge discussed *Othello.* Here he deals with the question of racial identity. Did Shakespeare create Othello as a Negro? After quoting Roderigo's lines: "What a full fortune does the thick — lips owe, If he can carry't thus," Coleridge says:

> . . . and here comes one, if not the only, seeming justification of our blackamoor or negro, Othello . . . Can we imagine [Shakespeare] so utterly ignorant as to make a barbarous negro plead royal birth, — at a time too, when negroes were not known except as slaves?[31]

Coleridge's attitude here reflects how he had come to regard Africans. He is astonished at the thought that anyone could possibly conceive of Othello as being negroid. He feels it "monstrous to conceive" of shared romantic feeling between "a beautiful Venetian girl" and "a veritable negro." Othello must be a Moor. If Shakespeare made this error in dramatization, there is no reason to "adopt one disagreeable possibility instead of a ten times greater and more pleasing probability." He even goes so far as to admit Desdemona's "want of balance" if this romance were true.

Coleridge's approach to the discussion of this aspect of *Othello* is not literary, but racial. His reference to the roles of the dramatis personae in the play serves only to substantiate his theory, and literary concerns are subordinated to the question of Othello's ethnic background.

In earlier references to black people as they appeared in English literature, Coleridge had expressed appreciation of the portrayal of the black Colonel in Mrs. Bennett's *Beggar Girl.* In a letter to Wordsworth dated 1798, he discussed the role of Negro slaves in *Count Benyowsky* (a tragic comedy written by Kotzebu and translated from the German by W. Render in 1798) who, he felt, were poorly drawn.[32] In a discussion of the defects of *Castle Spectre,* by M. G. Lewis, he points to poor style and structure. Of one of the characters, he says: "Now Hassan is a negro, who *had* a warm & benevolent heart; but having been kidnapped from his country & barbarously used by the Christians, becomes a Misanthrope."[33] In these cases the characters are dealt with briefly and dismissed.

The older Coleridge made his position on the relation of ethnic peoples to one another quite clear when he repeated and endorsed, during one of his evening conversations on February 24, 1827, Blumenbach's scale of the family of man:

1

Caucasian or European

2. Malay	2. American
3. Negro	3. Mongolian-Asiatic[34]

Upon the emancipation of the slaves in 1833 Coleridge said: "Have you been able to discover any principle in this Emancipation Bill for the Slaves, except a prinicple of fear of the abolition party struggling with a fear of causing some monstrous calamity to the empire at large! Well! I will not prophesy, and God grant that this tremendous and unprecedented act of positive enactment may not do the harm to the cause of humanity and freedom which I can not but fear! But yet, what can be hoped, when all human wisdom and counsel are set at naught, and religious faith — the only miraculous agent among men is not invoked or regarded! and that most unblessed phrase — The Dissenting *interest* — enters into the question."[35]

Coleridge's final attitude on slavery is two-fold. On the one hand, he wants to improve the condition of the slaves as well as that of all poor people in England. He does not, however, want any sudden freedoms or liberties to be granted to them as this might upset the hierarchical pattern on which society is based. He had become convinced that inequality was acceptable in society as long as all members were instructed as to their proper place and duties through religious edification. Prior to emancipation he had remarked: ". . .I utterly condemn your [abolitionist's] frantic practice of declaiming about their rights to the blacks themselves. They ought to be forcibly reminded of the state in which their brethren in Africa still are, and taught to be thankful for the providence which has placed them within the reach of the means of grace."[36] Coleridge had passed from youthful abolitionism to settled conservatism.

NOTES

[1]*Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge,* ed. J. D. Campbell (London. Macmillan and Company Ltd., 1925), pp. 476-677. I quote from a translation of "Sors Misera . . ." by Apostolos Marmaras, University of Colorado, 1970.

[2]*Collected Leters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge,* ed. E. L. Griggs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), I, 34.

[3]*The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge,* ed. E. H. Coleridge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), I, 165.

[4]Coleridge, I, 168.

[5]Coleridge, I, 168.

[6]Carl Woodring, *Politics in the Poetry of Coleridge* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), p. 183.

[7]Woodring, p. 50.

[8]Coleridge, I, 247.

[9]Coleridge, I, 247.

[10]Woodring, p. 181.

[11]Griggs, I, 122.

[12]Joseph Cottle, *Reminiscenes of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1847), p. 14.

[13]Griggs, I, 121-122.

[14]Griggs, I, 126.

[15]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "On the Slave Trade," *The Watchman* in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge,* ed. Lewis Patton (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1970), II, 130.

[16]"On the Slave Trade," I, 131.

[17]"On the Slave Trade," I, 137.

[18]*The Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. E. H. Coleridge (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1895). II, 527-528.

[19]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, review of Thomas Clarkson's *History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade* (London, 1808), *The Edinburgh Review*, XII (May 1808). References to this review in my text cite page numbers.

[20]Allsop, p. 113.

[21]Allsop, p. 55.

[22]*Unpublished Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. E. L. Griggs (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933), II, 4.

[32]Griggs, *Unpublished Letters*, II, 32.

[24]F. T. C. Hearnshaw, "Coleridge, the Conservative," *Nineteenth Century*, CXVI (July, 1934), 109.

[25]Crane Brinton, *Political Ideas of the English Romanticists* (New York: Russell and Russell Inc., 1962), p. 78.

[26]Crane Brinton, *English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 82.

[27]Hearnshaw, 108.

[28]Bernard N. Schilling, *Human Dignity and the Great Victorians* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), p. 56.

[29]Schilling, pp. 56-57.

[30]Hearnshaw, 109.

[31]*The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. W. T. Shedd (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1884), IV, 178-179.

[32]Griggs, I, 378.

[33]Griggs, I, 378.

[34]Shedd, VI, 279.

[35]Shedd, VI, 459.

[36]Shedd, VI, 457.

Charles Edward Stuart

He was not worth the thirty grand
they offered that they might hang him high.
Fuddled by cannon-blast and five-star brandy
from the cellars of cool President Forbes
he crawled shivering over misty Skye,
a schoolboy funking an initiative test.
There would be no insignia on his peacock breast,
nor garter glittering at his slender thigh.
Over the sea he had left brave men to die
in agony within earshot of Culloden Moor,
and already Captain Caroline was down in the glen.
Lame Lochiel would not now reach marathon.
The hungry eagle searched the barren Cuillins.
And Flora MacDonald? How could she fancy
that tipsy fugitive lisping in ruffled lace,
now a liability? To save his pretty face
she exchanged garments: and, the transplant
deeper than the actual shawl, he was shipped
to duty-free booze and death in sunny Italy.

LORN M. MACINTYRE.

The Role of Tom Pinch in "Martin Chuzzlewit"

JERRY C. BEASLEY

IN a recent essay called *"Martin Chuzzlewit*: Pinch and Pecksniff,"[1] Michael Steig argues at some length for recognition of the crucial role of Tom Pinch in Dickens' sixth novel. Steig quite rightly observes that most criticism of *Chuzzlewit,* including excellent commentaries by J. Hillis Miller, Steven Marcus, and Barbara Hardy, has tended to underplay Pinch's importance.[2] And yet, Steig claims, "Tom Pinch is the most fully developed character in the work, as he is the only one . . . whose psychological development is presented in detail" (p. 181). The essay goes on to examine the relationship between Tom Pinch and Pecksniff, showing how the characterization of Pecksniff, one of Dickens' greatest creations, actually relies upon an interdependent connection between the arch-hypocrite and his selfless servant Tom Pinch. I find Steig's argument persuasive. But I should like to go even further, and argue a point that Steig only hints at in an early reference to Hablot K. Browne's frontispiece to *Chuzzlewit*: namely, that Pinch, while he may not be the novel's finest achievement, nevertheless stands at its moral and structural center, and is therefore in a certain respect its most important character.

Browne's frontispiece positions Tom Pinch, by far its largest figure, at the center of a flurry of little drawings representing important characters and scenes from the novel. The frontispiece reflects, I believe, Dickens' own conception of the central place of Pinch. The novel itself supports such a contention, for the very *idea* of Tom Pinch — the ultimately selfless man, radiating honest warmth

and unqualified love — is vital in a story which seeks, as Dickens explained in the Preface to the "Cheap Edition" of the novel, to "exhibit in a variety of aspects the commonest of all the vices; to show how Selfishness propagates itself; and to what a grim giant it may grow, from small beginnings."[3] I would agree with Steven Marcus that the unity of Dickens' novel is essentially thematic; and, while admitting certain formal weaknesses, I would take issue with Barbara Hardy's magisterial judgment that the novel is truly one of those "loose baggy monsters" that made Henry James shudder so. *Chuzzlewit* may not sustain its rhythms and its atmosphere so well as, say, *Great Expectations,* but the novel orders itself more effectively than Barbara Hardy suggests. It does so rather in the manner of a work like *Don Quixote,* by focusing insistently on a powerful idea, progressively turning it over and over and examining it again and again, giving its treatment such resonance that the novelistic statement gains coherence by the sheer force of ingenious repetition. Tom Pinch is essential in this process. Every major character in the novel is decidedly "selfish," and Pinch relates to each of them individually, and to all of them at once, in some important ways. It is just not quite true, as Barbara Hardy claims, that Tom Pinch has "practically nothing to do" in *Martin Chuzzlewit.*[4]

Dickens' imagination was "naturally dialectical" in its movement, as Steven Marcus has aptly observed,[5] and indeed a strategy of pairings and contrasts informs the whole structure of *Chuzzlewit.* This strategy is most critical as it affects the way characters are created and deployed in the novel. Consider, for example, the remarkable transformation of Montague Tigg into the alternative identity of Tigg Montague. Chuffey is a non-self whose virtual non-existence complements the aggressive selfhood of Anthony Chuzzlewit.[6] The great comic characters, Pecksniff and Sairey Gamp, are actually fragmented personalities. Pecksniff, a consummate hyprocrite, projects a false, con-

trived image while masterfully concealing his true self; Mrs. Gamp has created a fully developed alter ego, Mrs. Harris, who "lives" almost a separate existence but whose "being" is actually quite important to the definition of the self Mrs. Gamp presents to the world. Tom Pinch's function in *Chuzzlewit* partakes of the general strategy of parallels and contrasts. In the first place, as everybody recognizes, the novel blatantly offers Pinch as the opposite of Pecksniff — as a kind of dramatized moral alternative. In a brilliant early passage, Dickens ironically compares Pecksniff with his horse, suggesting that the horse resembled his master

> in his moral character, wherein . . . he was full of promise, but of no performance. He was always, in a manner, going to go, and never going. [He] was for ever so perfectly satisfied with his own speed, and so little disconcerted by opportunities of comparing himself with the fastest trotters, that the illusion [of going] was the more difficult of resistance. He was a kind of animal who infused into the breasts of strangers a lively sense of hope, and possessed all those who knew him better with a grim despair. (p. 117)

In the same passage Tom Pinch, who is never ridiculed in this fashion, receives a glowing tribute: "Blessings on thy simple heart, Tom Pinch, how . . . thoroughly, as with thy cheerful voice thou pleasantly adjurest Sam the hostler 'not to let him go yet,' dost thou believe that quadruped desires to go, and would go if he might! Who could repress a smile — of love for thee, Tom Pinch, and not in jest at they expense . . . . ?" (pp. 117-118). Derision for Pecksniff, a loving smile for Tom Pinch: these are the extremes of treatment that Dickens persists in throughout the novel. The "simple heart" of the intensely sentimentalized Pinch balances the hypocrisy of the grotesque Pecksniff, and becomes a standard of judgment. Similarly, Pinch's lack of guile balances the total cynicism and deviousness of Jonas Chuzzlewit. At the end of Chapter 39, we find a passage which introduces the matter of this balance, alluding at least obliquely to Jonas, who has recently become involved with that other greedy cynic, Tigg Montague. "Tom,

Tom!" the narrator exclaims, "The man in all this world most proud of his distrust of other men . . . shall never find . . . the time come home to him, when all his wisdom is an idiot's folly, weighed against a simple heart!" (p. 692). Likewise, in the early episodes of the novel, Tom's wide-eyed honesty provides a contrast to the mean-spiritedness of young Martin.

In all of these instances, Tom's character supplies a kind of moral barometer of loving selflessness by which other characters are measured. In effect, the significance of these characters' experience is understood at least partly in the light of Tom's example. This basic feature of the novel's strategy is fairly obvious, and does not need more elaborate definition here. But it is an oversimplification to describe Tom's role only in these terms. *Martin Chuzzlewit* focuses on the theme of selfishness, which is to say that it deals with people's unwillingness to establish meaningfully reciprocal relationships with the world. Greed is a most blatant form of selfishness, and a good many characters in the novel are greedy. But hypocrisy is another and perhaps more insidious form. J. Hillis Miller has described the hypocrite Pecksniff as a fragmented personality internally engaged in a kind of reflexive relation between two selves; such a splitting allows him to "perform selfish acts as though they were acts of public service and generosity."[7] The projected self is false, but it functions to justify the true self. An individual so fragmented puts on a mask, which becomes a functioning part of the personality, and such an individual inevitably perceives the world with faulty vision and responds to it unreciprocally. The result is isolation. Sairey Gamp, and Pecksniff himself, are the novel's most extreme examples of this form of isolation from other people. But Tom Pinch also partakes of these failures in reciprocity, although not in such spectacular fashion. The novel gives considerable attention to the business of dramatizing Tom's struggle with his failures, and to his success in establishing an integrated personality

and a harmonious relationship with the world. This growth in Tom's character supplies, through contrast, a meaningful gloss on the characters who do not develop in this way.

In Dickens' scheme of things, persistence in a wrong-headed vision of the world constitutes a failure in human reciprocity; in other words, it is a form of selfishness. For a good many years of his life Tom Pinch's very identity has depended upon Pecksniff, and this dependency reflects a fragmentation of personality similar to that manifested by Pecksniff and Mrs. Gamp. Tom, in his meekness, blindly regards his own being as bound and defined by that of his "patron," whom he sees as standing in a paternal relation to himself. Furthermore, in the face of incontrovertible evidence (of the kind presented to him by John Westlock), he persists in affirming the honor and goodness of this false man as a means of preserving and justifying his personal self-image. His blindness leads to distortions in his relationships with other people, while it also poses a threat to his own welfare, and paradoxically helps to validate the mask of honor that Pecksniff wears. Pecksniff has exploited Pinch, as John Westlock once tries to explain to his friend. "I have grown up in his house," Tom replies, "I am in his confidence, I am his assistant, he allows me a salary: when his business improves, my prospects are to improve too." Westlock responds sarcastically: "He doesn't keep you as his assistant because you are of any use to him; because your wonderful faith in his pretensions is of inestimable service in all his mean disputes; because your honesty reflects honesty on him . . ." (pp. 74-75). On a later occasion, Westlock insults Pecksniff's character, and Tom rises to leave his presence. "I cannot listen to this," he admonishes his young friend, and when Westlock begs his pardon, he answers, "It's not my pardon you have to ask, John. You have done *me* nothing but kindnesses" (pp. 263-264). John thereupon addresses Pinch, begging Pecksniff's pardon: it is granted,

and they drink the arch-hypocrite's health. Clearly, Tom does not make an adequate distinction between Pecksniff and himself, and despite his words to the contrary, he cannot separate a challenge to Pecksniff's honor from an injury to his own.

The extent of Pinch's commitment to Pecksniff becomes clearest at the time when it is about to be broken. During his pivotal conversation with Mary Graham, whom he quietly loves "from his soul with such a self-denying love as woman seldom wins" (p. 562), he suddenly learns the truth about his patron. Pecksniff has meanly attempted to violate Mary's honor. His ugly lust ironically parallels Tom's own self-effacing, purer desire, and this contrast strikes Pinch with great force, driving him to clear vision as no other kind of evidence has been able to do.[8] Previously, Tom had occasionally worried that he might someday out of his own inadequacy prove to be the agent of his patron's destruction — his "evil genius" (p. 462). Now, having recognized the truth, Pinch knows that the real Pecksniff is not the idol he had worshipped, and that he must be repudiated. In his discovery, Tom had the anguish of remembering what Pecksniff "never was." For as his "blindness in this matter had been total and not partial, so was his restored sight. *His* Pecksniff could never have worked the wickedness of which he had just now heard, but any other Pecksniff could; and the Pecksniff who could do that could do anything, and no doubt had been doing anything and everything except the right thing all through his career" (p. 563). This is an excruciatingly painful recognition, causing great suffering to Tom, whose "compass was broken, his chart destroyed, his chronometer had stopped, his masts were gone by the board; his anchor was adrift, ten thousand leagues away" (p. 563). Tom faces, it seems, the dissolution of the boundaries of his own being. "There was no Pecksniff; there never had been a Pecksniff; and all his other griefs were swallowed up in that" (p. 571).

But, as is frequently the case in Dickens' novels, suffering has a redemptive power, and for Tom it leads to a new knowledge of himself, and a new perspective on the world. His image of Pecksniff destroyed, he is no longer blinded by its false light, and furthermore he is now able to find self-definition without fragmentation. The result is a reintegration of his personality. This process is gradual, but very nearly total. The famous "Man in the Monument" passage showing the exiled Tom in London, trying to find his way to John Westlock at Furnival's Inn, brings the process to completion. The Monument itself resembles Pecksniff, and upon discovering that the attending Man in the Monument (of whom he is about to ask directions) is a "Cynic; a worldly man," Tom decides that he cannot put trust in him (p. 652). Only moments later, after chancing to meet Charity Pecksniff in the street, Pinch realizes that "the altered relations between himself and Pecksniff were somehow to involve an altered knowledge on his part of other people, and were to give him an insight into much of which he had had no previous suspicion" (p. 654). In fact, Tom has already given signs of such insight. Very shortly before this time, while sitting over breakfast with Westlock and discussing the newspaper advertisements, Tom makes some astute observations: "Here," he says, "are all kinds of employers wanting all sorts of servants, and all sorts of servants wanting all kinds of employers, and they never seem to come together . . . . It really seems . . . as if people . . . found it a comfort and consolation to proclaim 'I want such and such a thing, and I can't get it, and I don't expect I ever shall!' " (p. 641). Such keen perception of failures in human reciprocity is new to Tom, as is his power to recognize hypocrisy when he sees it. When he goes to fetch his sister Ruth from her employers, he instantly sees their meanness and pretentiousness for what it is, and thinks to himself that perhaps "there are more Pecksniffs than one" in the world (p. 644). However, from his "guileless dis-

trust" of the maze of London's streets and manners, Tom does not develop into a cynic. The novel makes it clear even before his departure from Salisbury that he was "far from being sage enough to know that, having been disappointed in one man, it would have been a strictly rational and eminently wise proceeding to have revenged himself upon mankind in general, by mistrusting them one and all" (p. 629). On the contrary, Tom now possesses a balanced vision of the world.

The intervention of old Martin Chuzzlewit in Tom Pinch's life in no way undermines the novel's affirmation of Tom's new wisdom and stature. Old Martin replaces the false paternal image of Pecksniff, but he is a truly supportive figure whose very anonymity implies an assertion of Pinch's capacity to sustain his personal identity. Tom's words to his sister, describing a "lurking" sorrow over his unfulfilled love for Mary Graham, reveal a degree or renunciation and a maturity of feeling very few characters in the novel can match: "There has fallen in my way a good and beautiful creature, who but for the selfish regret that I cannot call her my own, would, like all other good and beautiful creatures, make me happier and better!" But "I hardly dare to call this lurking something a sorrow," he goes on; for "whatever name it may justly bear, I thank Heaven that it renders me more sensible of affection and attachment, and softens me in fifty ways" (p. 846).

It is precisely the kind of sensitivity and personal equilibrium achieved by Tom that characters like Pecksniff, Jonas, and Sairey Gamp are never able to reach. In the presence of Pinch and others, old Martin melodramatically strips off Pecksniff's mask, and the hypocrite reacts predictably — it has always been a "special quality, among the many admirable qualities possessed by Mr. Pecksniff, that the more he was found out, the more hypocrisy he practised" (p. 753). Significantly, his words to Martin suggest an ironic parallel to unspoken feelings earlier ex-

perienced by Tom when he learned the truth about Pecksniff: "You have deceived me, sir. . . . To have been deceived implies a trusting nature. Mine is a trusting nature. I am thankful for it" (p. 890). Pecksniff has indeed been tricked, but by the man he would have used ruthlessly if he could. He proceeds to "forgive" old Martin, thus declaring with finality his refusal to discard the false face he has always worn before the world. It is difficult to tell whether Pecksniff has duped himself as completely as he had once duped Tom Pinch, or whether he actually has the kind of self-knowledge Fielding attributes to the hypocrite in the Preface to *Joseph Andrews*. At any rate, he remains a fragmented and therefore isolated individual, totally unwilling to establish a meaningfully reciprocal relationship with his fellow human beings. He is thoroughly reprehensible, and the account of Tom Pinch's similar but differently resolved crisis helps to carry and define the judgment that the novel passes against Pecksniff.

Jonas Chuzzlewit and Sairey Gamp are likewise judged in light of the contrast between their experience and Tom's. The re-integration of Pinch's personality that comes after he is disabused of his false image of Pecksniff provides a commentary on Mrs. Gamp's response to Betsey Prig's declaration about Mrs. Harris: "I don't believe there's no sich a person!" (p. 834). Like Pecksniff, Mrs. Gamp refuses to yield up her false self-justification, and she too remains a divided personality, hopelessly separated from the world. Jonas Chuzzlewit's drive for control, first over his father and then over Tigg Montague's financial empire, splits and isolates him disastrously. Jonas trusts absolutely no one except himself; his own false self-image is supported by an entirely negative estimate of everybody else, which also feeds his desire for power. As a viciously devious man who reaches out to destroy others, Jonas paradoxically indulges in the most radical kind of reflexive action within the self; he succeeds in destroying his own being. His grasp for supremacy over others re-

sembles Pecksniff's and Mrs. Gamp's, but he represents selfishness in its crudest and least "human" manifestations. Late in the book, when his escape from Montague's clutches is aborted by a message Tom unwittingly bears to him, Jonas turns upon Pinch with a clenched hand: "There are not many human faces," the narrator observes, "capable of the expression with which he accompanied that gesture" (p. 704). Tom's loving, selfless nature, and his positive movement toward equilibrium and happiness, contrast sharply with Jonas' cruelty, and with his disintegration and ultimate self-destruction.

Tom Pinch's character defines an important alternative to the moral posture represented by *Martin Chuzzlewit's* chief exponents of selfishness. But Tom also relates significantly to the experience of the novel's titular "hero," young Martin. Like Tom, Martin undergoes a maturation process, and his "crisis" occurs in the novel simultaneously with Tom's; the most pertinent chapters (31, 33, 34, 36, and 37) are almost exactly juxtaposed. Generally selfish and insensitive, but basically good-natured, Martin is blindly committed to a false image of himself as a genius capable of great success in America. He awakens to clear vision only after a fever and a narrow escape from death. His own recovery comes at the beginning of his companion Mark Tapley's affliction, and as he sorrowfully witnesses poor Mark's suffering, the spectre of "Self, Self, Self" comes to haunt him (p. 597). The dramatization of Martin's awakening is abbreviated, though it is fuller and more convincing than some critics of *Chuzzlewit* have admitted. Nothing rings hollow when, just before sailing for England, he speaks of this experience to his American friend Mr. Bevan, solemnly remarking that we "live and learn, Mr. Bevan! Nearly die and learn: and we learn the quicker" (p. 617). Undoubtedly, Martin's transformation gains credibility through the presence of Mark Tapley, a selfless creature whose very existence is a standing judgment on Martin. Mark serves the important pur-

pose of extending into the American episodes the idea of his old friend Tom Pinch, and at one point, Martin's thoughts make this connection quite explicit. While ruminating over Mark's kind helpfulness toward an unfortunate fellow passenger and sufferer, his mind turns to Tom; it occurs to him that Tom "would be very likely to have struck up the same sort of acquaintance under similar circumstances"; and he wonders at the ways in which Mark and Tom, "two people so extremely different," were "like each other, and were unlike him" (p. 596). What Tom represents, as mirrored in Mark, works with great force upon Martin at this juncture, and with great success. Furthermore, the treatment of Martin's growth into moral maturity gathers authority by analogy with the account of Tom's similar but more fully detailed process of maturation. Mark Tapley, whose role in the novel is of course not limited just to the service of "playing" Tom Pinch in the American episodes, ultimately goes through his own process of moral development, renouncing his selfish habit of gaining "credit" by finding jollity in grim situations where others find only misery. He realizes, as J. Hillis Miller has put it, that "there is a lack of generosity in the desire to be wholly alone in one's unselfishness."[9]

At the end of the novel, Martin gains the reward of Mary Graham's hand in marriage, and Mark is wed to Mrs. Lupin. Ruth Pinch and John Westlock also marry. But Tom enjoys no such rewards, and it has sometimes been seen as a contradiction in this novel about the vice of selfishness that its chief exemplar of selflessness is left alone at the end. Perhaps it is an unwitting contradiction. The almost embarrassing picture of Tom playing his organ — that instrument once elevated by Mary Graham's touch (p. 462) — for the rest of his days might be used to support such a contention, although it is difficult to believe that Dickens was at all aware of the auto-erotic suggestiveness of this picture. In fact, Dickens obviously meant to show us a genuinely happy Tom Pinch at the

end of the novel, and he placed him significantly at the very centre of its resolution. Tom is not alone at all. A dinner held in anticipation of the coming nuptials displays him, surrounded by all those loved ones whose lives he has touched, in a state of great joy: "If there were a genial face at that board, it was Tom's. They all took their tone from Tom. Everybody drank to him, everybody looked to him, everybody thought of him, everybody loved him . . . His heart was full, he said, of happiness. And so it was. Tom spoke the honest truth" (pp. 902-903). Dickens' language is especially patronizing in the novel's late comments on Tom, as Steig and others have complained, and it is hardly arguable that the sentimentalized treatment of Pinch only intensifies annoyingly at the end. Nevertheless the aim in the last chapters is to re-emphasize the focus upon Tom Pinch as a character whose experience has, through analogy and contrast, served to sharpen the definition of other characters' experience and to clarify its significance. The purpose is also to re-emphasize the function of Tom as exemplar. His virtue may not have been rewarded in marriage, like that of his fellow "good" characters. But his kind, selfless nature is shown to be powerfully fertile. The final brief paragraph of the novel places Tom against the background of a garden "bestrewn with flowers by children's hands" (p. 918). By contrast, Jonas is dead, Mrs. Gamp is displaced, and Pecksniff has degenerated into a drunken old fool.

As the novel concludes, Tom Pinch radiates warmth and happiness in all directions, participating with full reciprocity in the lives of everyone. The image of Tom at the organ, as drawn by Dickens and reflected in Browne's frontispiece, gains another kind of significance when seen in this connection, for the instrument sounds out the "noble music" of unselfish love in the "rich swelling" of its "mellow harmony" (pp. 916, 918). The vital role assigned to Pinch in the closing chapters of the novel is perfectly consistent with what Dickens has made him perform up to

this time. Tom is, throughout *Martin Chuzzlewit*, at the very centre of things. He may not be so memorable as Pecksniff, Sairey Gamp, or even Jonas or Tigg; but it seems reasonable to claim for him a much greater importance than Dickens' critics have usually recognized. Virtually all significant experience in the story is seen in the light of his example, and takes at least part of its definition from a reflection cast by his central character. This has a meaningful unifying effect upon the novel. I would submit that, when looked at with reference to the crucial role of Tom Pinch, *Martin Chuzzlewit* appears to be a more carefully organized, more fully coherent narrative than has always been allowed.

NOTES

[1]*Studies in the Novel*, 1 (1969), 181-187.

[2]See Miller, *Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1958), pp. 98-142; Marcus, *Dickens: From Pickwick to Dombey* (New York: Basic Books, 1965), pp. 213-268; Hardy, *The Moral Art of Dickens* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 100-121.

[3]P. 39. All references to the novel are to the excellent and widely available Penguin paperback (1968), edited by P. N. Furbank.

[4]*The Moral Art of Dickens*, p. 108.

[5]*Dickens: From Pickwick to Dombey*, p. 232.

[6]See Marcus, pp. 232-233.

[7]*Charles Dickens*, p. 123. Miller's discussion of the whole issue of reciprocity is extensive and excellent.

[8]Steig suggests that what is involved here is a "detailed parody of the oedipal conflict: the child [Tom], feeling inadequate in the face of his father's [Pecksniff's] virtue and power . . . suddenly discovers that his father's desires and deeds are no purer than his own" — whereupon he is cast out of his father's house ("*Martin Chuzzlewit*: Pinch and Pecksniff," pp. 184-185). I think Steig is right in the main, but I would argue that it is primarily because Tom recognizes Pecksniff's desires as *less* pure than his own that he finally sees the arch-hypocrite for what he is. Heretofore, Pinch has always chosen to regard Pecksniff as a man surpassing even himself in honesty and purity of motive.

[9]*Charles Dickens*, p. 122.

TWO POEMS BY WILLIAM BEDFORD

The Visionaries

Taking your hand
I am beyond stars and planets,
in a place where the flowers talk
and the grass bends in love,
wild with a strange music.

And if we fall
from the high trees,
our vision broken by the sudden end of love,
in taking your hand
I remember the touch of leaves.

Departures

The garden understands your going,
a bareness of earth and trees
that darkens in the cold air,

a reflection like the leaves in water.
By the gate, an empty nest lets rain.
A mist soddens to October.

Book Reviews

A. S. P. Woodhouse, *The Heavenly Muse: A Preface to Milton*, edited by Hugh MacCallum. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972. pp. 373. $20.00.

Soon after his retirement in 1964, A. S. P. Woodhouse began his third attempt since 1943 to put together a compendious study of Milton: but by a Miltonic irony, the "thin-spun thread" of his life was cut after only a few months at the task. Woodhouse's opening statement of "the nature of his effort and its aim," is an outline of the historical scholarly method which he intended to follow in the book. The statement is so lucid and so entirely right that it should be memorized as the literary scholar's Hippocratic oath (pp. 3-4, 99). Professor MacCallum, in trying to present a compendium of Woodhouse's writing, has included "four kinds of source for the material gathered in this volume: published articles; manuscript revisions of published articles; unpublished chapters in manuscript; public lectures." These sources cover a period of some twenty years, and the editor has elected to "weave together passages from two or more versions" of similar material. Deeply as Milton scholars are indebted to MacCallum's thorough effort, they must regret that Professor Woodhouse had not the time to carry out his own magnificent plan.

Another irony is the fact that the book's cost makes it unavailable to most students and to many teachers who would profit from Woodhouse's Milton criticism, both the considerable portion that has been published before and essays and lectures here offered for the first time.

The soundness of Woodhouse's Milton scholarship and his eminence as a teacher have been generally recognized far beyond Canada's borders for more than three decades. In reading through the material previously published, one becomes once more aware of how pervasive his criticism now is and of how many of his students (J. Max Patrick, Ernest Sirluck, and Arthur E. Barker among them) have become eminent Miltonists. This collection also reminds us that Woodhouse had a way of illuminating even Milton's major ideas with what seems little more than an incidental phrase. In introducing Milton's early sonnet *How Soon Hath Time*, for example, he comments: "All that is in a poet's power, and all that matters, is that by grace he may use his talent in God's service and with submission to his will" (p. 52). This paraphrase of Milton's concluding couplet causes the reader's mind to spring immediately to another sonnet, *When I Consider How My Light is Spent* and to the Invocation to Light at the beginning of Book III of *Paradise Lost*. Inherent in Woodhouse's phrase is Milton's idea of the function and process of grace itself. Thus Woodhouse illustrates in his own writing the manner in

which Milton himself makes language illustrate the processes which the words in themselves only label or describe. Further along in his discussion of the same sonnet are two very important points about the relationship of Milton's early poetry to the later epics and to *Samson Agonistes*: "Here in *How Soon Hath Time*, one encounters at last, though in simple and rudimentary form, the full Miltonic pattern and function (the resolutions of conflict by the imposition of aesthetic pattern)" (p. 52). This brief statement points to the consistency of Milton's moral and poetic vision and to the process through which Milton exercises his mind and art so that "grace" may function. This idea pervades Woodhouse's exegesis of the major poems.

Not every Milton scholar will entirely agree with all Woodhouse's conclusions: he warns on the first page, "It is arrogant of any critic, whatever his school, to imagine that he has said the last word on a subject, and naive of a reader to expect him to do so." The reader needs to remember this caveat when he comes to Woodhouse on the nature of Milton's idea of liberty. After quoting from *Of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes*, one of Milton's magnificent statements on the obligation of the Christian to exercise the freedom that Christ has "bought" for mankind, he concludes: "The argument is applicable, of course, only to those whom Milton regards as true Christians, in whom alone he is interested. It assumes and perpetuates inequality by distinguishing between them and other men. The tendency of the argument is seen in Milton's denial of its benefits to Roman Catholics, to anyone indeed who will not acquiesce in his extreme reading of Christian liberty or grant to others in all circumstances the liberty of conscience which it prescribes. The failure resolutely to add equality to liberty makes Milton definitely inferior to Roger Williams as a theorist of liberty, and in other spheres besides the religious" (p. 105). No doubt in the light of twentieth-century political and religious principles, Woodhouse's conclusion is correct; but in a seventeenth-century context Milton's "distinction" seems more probably to have been a corollary of the now well-recognized necessity of guaranteeing the basic rights of freedom to minorities. The kind of "distinction" that Milton makes must have seemed to him, and to many of his English contemporaries, a minimum precaution against a coercive intolerance, much as twentieth-century liberals deny the right of Nazis and Communists to engage in activities that would eliminate all effective opposition.

There are a few other matters which might well have been clarified had Woodhouse been able to complete his work. For example, on page 285, he says that in the later books of *Paradise Lost* Satan becomes "less human and individualized." Surely the meaning is that the dramatic treatment which Milton accords him shows that Satan has become less angelic rather than less "human"; and when Adam behaves badly after the fall, he is in fact less human because he now partakes of the "pattern" established by Satan's perverse acts. This important dimension of the idea of "patterns" in Milton's epics is one that the book in its present form largely ignores, though Woodhouse insists upon "patterns" as the proper means of understanding and appreciating both Milton's literary art and his ideas.

In the same way in the very witty but too quick transition from *Of Education* to *Of Divorce* Woodhouse seems, probably inadvertently, to ignore this same dimension of pattern: "If we cannot get a teacher's college out of *Of Education* we are not likely to get a Reno out of the *Doctrine . . . of Divorce*," he says (p. 111). True, of course; but in the context of Milton's writing and his time, *Of Education* proposes not a Utopia but the means by which a man may make of himself a "true poem," and therefore capable of writing true poems, which are reflections of religious and ethical patterns — "The resolutions of conflict by the imposition of aesthetic pattern."

It is indeed unfortunate that Professor Woodhouse was unable to complete his study of Milton's theology, especially in the light of some of the recent work by Patrides, Hunter, and others, and to take cognizance of the controversy over whether or not *Christian Doctrine* is in fact entirely consistent with *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained.* As it stands, the massive synthesis of much of the theological material that is included in the book seems now tangential to the major issues that have been raised since Woodhouse wrote.

These regrets are elegiac reminders that the historical literary scholar inevitably is limited by his own time and place in the history of perception and knowledge; but Woodhouse has few equals in the long history of Milton scholarship.

DON E. RAY.

Peter Dixon, *The World of Pope's Satires*: *An Introduction to the Epistles and Imitations of Horace.* London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1970. Paperback, pp. xiv + 218. £1.20.

Mr. Dixon's title is accurately ambiguous for he examines both the world out of which Pope's later poems emerged and the microcosm which they create. Organising by topic ("Mammon," "the Stoic's pride"), Dixon moves freely between poems and background material. His examination of Pope's various tones — raillery, sociable urbanity, the passionate plain-speaking of *Epilogue to the Satires* — connects each with the eighteenth-century theories of satire and of human behaviour. Similarly, the conflict between "rival virtue" and "courtly pride" is supported by Roman theories and English economic or political realities.

The difficulties of this method of organisation and approach occasionally appear. Milieu may overwhelm the central material. Dixon demonstrates, for example, that Isaac Barrow made a distinction between the easy generosity of a rich man and genuine charity, but Barrow's having made that distinction neither strengthens nor weakens his argument that Pope made the same distinction between Bathurst's generosity and the Man of Ross' charity (pp. 149-52). Occasionally, too, his discussion does not consider all the available information. Associating Pope early in the book with conventional neo-classical attitudes towards decency and decorum (pp. 44-8), he later includes (p. 199), without comment, in a long quotation from *Epistle to A Lady,* the lines:

Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,
Content to dwell in Decencies for ever.

However, such weaknesses are rare; more importantly, Dixon avoids the major pitfall of his method, that of losing sight of the poet as an individual because he is shown so clearly to be a man of his time. Repeatedly Pope is shown modifying or rejecting tenets of neo-classical convention (see for example, Pope and Horace's *Epistle* I, 1, pp. 157-60), and in the closing chapters Dixon defines Pope's particular positions towards two of the major philosophic problems of the eighteenth century — the conflict between Stoic and Epicurean and the spectrum between discord and harmony. Dixon asserts that, in Pope's poems, Stoic attitudes ". . . are subsumed under the more strenuous discipline of Christian fortitude" (p. 166). Further, Pope rejects both the flaccid cheerfulness of Epicurean disengagement and the rigid *Schema* of second-rate Augustan minds because of his awareness that Order is a precarious balance, "a flexible and dynamic state" (p. 196). A second danger in the Lovejovian method, that of wandering endlessly in well-trodden mazes, Dixon also handles skillfully. Commonplace ideas such as the contrast between raillery and railing (pp. 23-4) or the dispute between the Addisonian theory that merchant and landholder are mutually dependent and Tory mistrust of "the trading interest" are clearly but very concisely presented, while the emphasis of the book is upon less familiar material. Dixon's use of Castell's 1728 book on types of Roman villas is an excellent example of such material, useful to an analysis of Pope's ideas and simultaneously interesting in itself (pp. 70-5). Thus, the book is an introduction to the epistles and imitations in several senses: it describes the ideas and some techniques of the poems, fits these into the contexts of the age and of Pope's own ideas, and suggests several areas in which further and profitable research might be done.

Mr. Dixon ends his "Notes on Texts and Titles" with the statement that "words supplied by the happy conjectures of editors have . . . been assimilated without benefit of square brackets . . ." (p. xiv). In a world so filled with discord that one man's happy conjecture may be another's mad eclecticism, I prefer square brackets to silent assimilations. But this flaw, though irritating, is minor.

The one general criticism which may be made of *The World of Pope's Satires* is that it lacks a strong sense of chronological development in poems written between 1731 and 1738. In 1969, a year after Dixon's book first appeared in hard cover, Maynard Mack made, in *The Garden and The City*, a very intelligent but very rigorous demand that we see a specific pattern of development in these poems. Thus, what may seem a weakness in Dixon becomes, in fact, a strength, for his treatment of background and poems, flexible and varied in topic and approach, provides an alternative to Mack. As Dixon says, "order and energy co-exist," and his book serves to remind us of the energy which underlies and vitalises Mack's vision of order.

HELEN O. MOLITOR

Stuart Curran and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr., eds. *Blake's Sublime Allegory: Essays on The Four Zoas, Milton & Jerusalem.* University of Wisconsin Press, 1973. pp. 384. $17.50.

A commendable variety of critical approaches to Blake's prophecies is offered in the fourteen essays comprising this work. Most heartening to Blake students is that the collection, in total, gives a decided emphasis to structural matters and presentational methods as related to themes rather than favouring expositions of Blakean concepts divorced from artistic contexts.

The editors themselves contribute structural analyses, with Wittreich discussing "Blake's Epics and the Milton Tradition" and Curran "The Structures of *Jerusalem.*"

In his article, "Opening the Seals," Wittreich does justice to both Milton and Blake as he reveals their kinship in the fusion of epic mode and prophetic impulse. The dependence of both writers upon structural elements of the Book of Revelation is discussed and numerous critical stances of Milton's (many of them linked to David Pareus) are shown to be relevant to an appreciation of both traditional and innovative features in Blake's work.

In his discussion of *Jerusalem,* Curran concludes that what Blake achieved was ". . . a literary form of true Gothic dimensions." The essayist's method is to focus on complex inter-relations of often-repeated structures in order to illustrate that the poem is really shaped into a single archetypal pattern.

W. J. T. Mitchell's substantial "Dramatic Structure as Meaning in *Milton*" describes the tripartite phases of the poem and relates them to its fundamental meaning. Initially, Mitchell lucidly discusses the Bard's Song, with which James Rieger struggles in his article "The Hem of their Garments." Fundamentally, Mitchell demonstrates how *Milton* "calls the reader, not to contemplation, but to action;" incidentally he draws a number of valid, spontaneous analogies between Blake and Coleridge.

Two articles in the collection are expressly centered on Blake's pictures. Though often highly conjectural, John E. Grant's discussion of the "Night Thoughts" engravings in relation to the *Vala* manuscript is characterized by close scrutiny and alert commentary. Irene Tayler is less flexible as she studies the designs of Comus and their influence upon *Milton.*

Somewhat experimental in approach is "On Reading *The Four Zoas,*" by Mary Lynn Johnson and Brian Wilke. It is an attempt to waken personal response, often by attaching contemporary relevance to materials of the poem. More successful at expanding reader response is the traditional approach of Roger R. Easson in his discussion of "William Blake and His Reader in *Jerusalem.*" He considers a variety of authorial stances in clarifying reader-writer relationships and especially underlines the faith which Blake "vested in a hypothetical audience of the future."

Two articles on time and space by Ronald Grimes and Edward Rose, respectively, really add little to past critical considerations

of this topic. Grimes does contribute a somewhat helpful differentiation between eschatology and prophecy applicable to the Blake canon; but Rose simply casts the oft-discussed "eternal now" concept into Paul Tillich's language and rather self-consciously dedicates himself to finding parallels to Blakean thought in American writers.

"The Figure of the Garment," by Morton D. Paley, is another work too narrowly centered on concepts. Supposing critical ignorance because of limited discussion, the writer proceeds to attach the "old truths" to a rather formidable catalogue of references.

"Babylon Revisited," by Jean Hagstrum, explores the Luvah-Vala love relationship in its ideal and fallen manifestations. The article remarks categories of sexual perversions treated by Blake which inevitably lead to abominations in church and state. Hagstrum's impulse to make biographical applications sometimes deprives Blake of a deserved measure of projectivity.

Editorial irony may have been at work in the placing of articles at the beginning and end of the collection which decry criticism but do not desist from it. Nonetheless, Jerome McGann, in his "Uses of Blake Criticism," partially succeeds in explaining away the "apparent paradox" implicit in Blake's aim of creating a system without imposing himself upon his audience; and Karl Kroeber, in "Delivering *Jerusalem*," does some solid comparative commentary on Joyce and Blake.

STANLEY K. FREIBERG

Books Received

BARR, ROBERT, *The Measure of the Rule.* L. K. Mackendrick, ed. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973. pp. 308. $4.95.

BROADBENT, JOHN, ed., *John Milton: Introductions.* Toronto: Macmillan; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973. pp. 344. $15.75 (hardbound) $5.25 (paperback).

DE GELDER, WILLEM, *A Dutch Homesteader on the Prairies,* trans. H. Ganzevoort. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973. pp. 92. $2.95.

DENNY, NEVILLE, ed., *Medieval Drama.* Stratford-upon-Avon Studies No. 16. London: Edward Arnold, 1973. pp. 254. $13.95.

FRYE, NORTHROP, *Fools of Time: Studies in Shakespearean Tragedy.* Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973. pp. 121. $2.95.

JOHNSON, LEE M., *Wordsworth and the Sonnet. Anglistica* XIX, 1973. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1973. pp. 183. d.cr. 72.00.

KIDD, WALTER E., ed., *British Winners of the Nobel Literary Prize.* Don Mills: Burns & MacEachern Limited; Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973. pp. 280. $10.25.

KILGALLIN, Tony, *Lowry.* Erin, Ontario: Press Porcepic, 1973. pp. 211.

LEGGATT, ALEXANDER, *Citizen Comedy in the Age of Shakespeare.* Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973. pp. 167. $10.00.

MCALINDON, T., *Shakespeare and Decorum.* Toronto, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973. pp. 227. $16.25, £4.95.

JOHN MILTON, *A Maske: The Earlier Versions,* S. E. Sprott, ed. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973. pp. 230. $25.00.

NOVIK, MARY, *Robert Creeley: An Inventory, 1945-1970.* Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1973. pp. 210. $6.00.

PEARSALL, DEREK and SALTER, ELIZABETH, *Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World.* Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973. pp. 252. $25.00.

SWINDEN, PATRICK, *An Introduction to Shakespeare's Comedies.* Toronto, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973. pp. 188. $9.75.

Notes on Contributors

BERT ALMON teaches creative writing and modern literature at the University of Alberta. His first book, *The Return and Other Poems*, appeared in 1968, and he has published poems and translations in a number of North American periodicals.

JERRY C. BEASLEY is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Delaware, Newark. His scholarly publications include *A Check List of Prose Fiction Published in England, 1740-1749* (University of Virginia Press, 1972), as well as articles on eighteenth-century fiction.

WILLIAM BEDFORD was born in 1943 in Grantham, Lincolnshire and is now reading English at Sheffield University. He has published poetry, stories and criticism in British magazines, including *The Critical Quarterly Workshop, Poetry Review, Priapus, Cornish Review* and *Agenda.*

ROBERT FOLKENFLIK, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Rochester, has published articles on Johnson, Gibbon, Richardson, Smollett, Fielding and others. While in London this year on a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, he has finished *Samuel Johnson, Biographer* and is continuing work on a book to be called *Self and Society in the Eighteenth-Century Novel.*

ALAN G. HILL, Senior Lecturer in English at Dundee University, is currently Visiting Professor at St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan. He collaborated with Mary Moorman in Vol. III of the new edition of *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth* (Clarendon Press: Oxford), and is now completing the remaining four volumes of the series.

LORN M. MACINTYRE was born in Argyllshire and is a graduate of Stirling University. At present he is researching Sir Walter Scott's highland themes at Glasgow University. He has had poems and short stories published and a novel is to appear shortly.

WILLIAM MCLAUGHLIN lives and teaches public high school in Cleveland. A recent extended visit to Ireland has provided material for a book-length collection of poems about that island. In 1972 The Cleveland State University Press published a booklet of his poems titled *Ourselves At One Remove.*

JULIET MCMASTER took her bachelor's degree at Oxford and her graduate degrees at the University of Alberta, where she is now an associate professor. She is the author of *Thackeray: the Major Novels* (1971), and of articles on Ford, Defoe, Sterne, Austen, Trollope and James. She is currently working on a study of Trollope's Palliser novels.

DAVID PARKER is a graduate of the Universities of Nottingham and Sheffield (where he taught for two years before taking up his present post in the University of Malaya). He is the author of a number of articles.

BARBARA TAYLOR PAUL-EMILE was born in Jamaica W.I. and has lived in the United States since 1956. Her B.A. and M.A. are from New York University and Ph.D. from the University of Colorado where she teaches English and Black Studies. She recently was awarded a faculty research fellowship to work on William Hazlitt.

FRASER SUTHERLAND was born in Nova Scotia, lives in Montreal and has published two books: *Strange Ironies* (Fiddlehead Poetry Books) and *The Style of Innocence* (Clarke, Irwin), a comparative study of Ernest Hemingway and Morley Callaghan.

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Dr. W. H. Coons, Chairman,
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