

Recent Studies in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century

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I

IT IS instructive for any literary student, but especially for a contributor to a new scholarly journal, to browse in the early numbers of those journals that started a generation ago—to read Ronald Crane's ruthless dissections, in the early *PQ* annual bibliographies, of Continental theses ponderously chasing the elusive abstractions "neo-classicism" and "pre-romanticism" through jungles of logomachy; to encounter, in *RES*, such wise words of Ronald McKerrow's as (1928) "Our interest now lies, not in inventing neat phrases which will serve to label these periods [of literature] and emphasize the watertight nature of their divisions, but in showing how they are interlocked one with another," or these (1934) castigating "a time when an attitude of simple faith towards the dicta of the earlier literary histories was more customary than is the rule at present, and when the picturesqueness of an anecdote or the ingenuity of a theory seemed too often to have been accepted as evidence of its truth." *Expellas naturam furca, tamen usque recurrit*. In 1960 (this survey attempts to cover late 1959 and most of 1960), were we in eighteenth-century studies as far advanced as Crane's and McKerrow's readers toward the ideal for which they strove? The tendency to compartmentalize and isolate a period of literature—to "professionalize" it, in the worst sense of the term—seems innate in human mental sloth. To take one's notions of eighteenth-century history or philosophy or theology from the convenient summaries of Lecky or Leslie Stephen in Professor So-and-so's literary history is easier than to go to the original sources or to serious contemporary scholarship in those disciplines. "Gimmickism" sets in—a young scholar, anxious to get a book into print, picks up some obscure, half-understood term from another discipline, and proclaims it the key to the interpretation of some major writer. All this sort of thing has to be combatted by each new generation of students. I was glad to see William Walsh in the *New Statesman* (October 8, 1960)

protesting about it. Reviewing David Daiches's *A Critical History of English Literature* (Ronald—when not otherwise stated, the date is 1960), he remarks that great literature, which gives “a full rendering of the one essential theme, what it is to be a human being,” never had a more vital role to play than in the “dehumanized” world of today. But how is it to be made accessible? “Not, I am sure, by a limp and elongated diet of literary history Literary history seems to exist in an enclosed solipsistic world bounded by library shelves [only certain library shelves, I must add] Let the students get their history from real historians”—and their notions of theology from real theologians, and of philosophy from real philosophers: not from mid-Victorian vulgarizations transmitted at sixth-hand through a succession of literary histories.

Daiches' book need not detain us: it is smooth, mildly witty, eminently “safe.” A more important event was the appearance of Bonamy Dobrée's volume in the Oxford History of English Literature, *English Literature in the Early Eighteenth Century, 1700-1740* (Clarendon). It too gave rise to agonizing reappraisal of the function of literary history. For my part, I think Dobrée does very well the best thing a literary history *can* do—to provide an account, by a skilled and sensitive reader, of his responses to the writing of the time, in the hope of persuading others to read it. Dobrée quotes copiously and well. His analyses of the verse he deals with, if collected, would make a more substantial and rewarding treatise on eighteenth-century poetry than any we have. He dismisses “Background” in a bare 30 pages out of 700; and he does well to give so little space to the usual remarks about “the extreme Protestantism of trading dissent” (when will literary students learn of Trevor-Roper's manhandling of Tawney and Weber?). The bibliography has lacunae—but these bibliographies, neither compendious nor comprehensive, are a defect in the plan of the series. I cannot agree with those critics who are bothered because Dobrée does not attempt an “integration”—that is, a falsification—of the literature of the period. Patrick Cruttwell (*Hudson Review*, autumn) complains that Dobrée has not answered “the radical question,” “What does this age really mean to me? If I had to define its essence in one paragraph . . . what would I say in that paragraph?” and therefore “he has written a bad book.” If Cruttwell sets his students examination questions like “Define (in no more than one paragraph) the essence of (a) the ——— Age; (b) the ——— Age, etc.,” we have regressed a long way from McKerrow.

It escapes me why Cruttwell thinks the years 1700-1740 necessarily constitute an "age" and have an "essence" at all. Much as I generally admire F. R. Leavis's work, his postulate of an entity called "Augustanism," the detection of which in Pope, Swift, and Johnson is the main job of the critic of their writings, has done no one any service. The defining of "essences" of "ages" is not literary criticism, but some kind of hedge sociology.

Some other general works. *Eighteenth Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. J. L. Clifford (Oxford [Galaxy Books], 1959) is a reprint of a number of articles, published 5 to 15 years ago, by well-known scholars. Most of them "broke new ground" when they appeared, and deserved their acclaim. Yet the disturbing thing about a number of them is how quickly an ingenious and stimulating, but unsubstantiated, hypothesis has hardened into orthodoxy. S. H. Monk's "The Pride of Lemuel Gulliver," for instance, has been one of the most influential vehicles of the "revisionist" interpretation of Book Four, which makes the Houyhnhnms as well as the Yahoos villains of the piece (who invented this? A. E. Case?). "Does Swift intend us to accept this [the Houyhnhnms's] as his ideal way of life? . . . I think not. The Houyhnhnms resemble Cartesians and are clearly stoics." A moment's reflection will convince us that they are neither; but I have heard that a distinguished older scholar, speaking recently at an important university, was very severely handled by an audience of graduate students for his abominable heresy in expressing some doubt about it. Or consider Louis Bredvold's "The Gloom of the Tory Satirists"—one of those lucky mnemonic titles that save students days of laborious reading and quarter-hours of laborious thinking. Understandably, the essay does not mention the pioneer of gloomy verse satire in the century—Edward Young, most reliable of party-lining Walpolian Whigs. How is the *saeva indignatio* of *A Tale of a Tub* to be reconciled with the fact that Swift was indubitably a Whig when he wrote it? "The leaders of the Opposition to Walpole and the Court were veteran Tories"—they were in fact sturdy Whigs: Pulteney, Carteret, Pitt, Sandys; the Tories on occasion *supported* Walpole against them.

Two pleasant books, F. P. Wilson's *Seventeenth Century Prose* (California) and C. V. Wedgwood's *Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts* (Cambridge) suffer from the usual faults of the short series of public lectures: they emphasize "appeal" rather than cogency,

and they treat too large subjects in too little space. This is not to say that they are not good: they are. Wilson's chapters on "Biography" and "The Sermon" are to be particularly recommended as lucid, unexceptionable presentations of the main facts about these important but somewhat neglected genres. I don't mind Wilson's conferring a bishopric on Robert South (p. 105): certainly South *should* have been a bishop. Miss Wedgwood's book is craggier, and perhaps for that reason more stimulating, if less uniformly satisfying. Miss Wedgwood is a historian of a somewhat old-fashioned, Whiggish but not unengaging cast: she brings a good deal of Victorian liberal moral emotion to her task; and since much of the poetry she deals with is not very good (by Wither, Cleveland, and even feebler practitioners), this helps. Her attack on *Hudibras* is worth noting. She thinks it has been badly overrated. Quoting the famous lines "When civil fury first grew high, / And men fell out, they knew not why," she remarks, "In 1662, these lines could be and were joyfully hailed as a trenchant and brilliantly satirical account of what happened twenty years before. Would they have made any sense at all to the men and minds of 1642?" And she has no trouble in proving that the men of 1642 knew very well why they fell out. "I find something ugly in *Hudibras*," she concludes, and she may be right. I don't know a better short appreciation of *Absalom and Achitophel*: I recommend it to those students, chiefly American, who cannot quite see what all the fuss is about; together with Miss Wedgwood's delightful apothegm, "Not to be familiar with *Absalom and Achitophel* is not to be educated."

I mention Fredson Bowers' *Textual and Literary Criticism* (Cambridge, 1959) not because it has much to do specifically with the eighteenth century, but because if any student still feels that "bibliography" is merely a set of dry-as-dust technicalities which the "literary" critic can dispense with, he should allow Bowers to set him right. Bowers' chamber of critical horrors, stemming from the critic's casual acceptance of whatever text chance puts before him, is grim enough to make the eighteenth-century student resolve to stay out of it. "It should matter to us," as Bowers says, "that in modern reprints of *Tristram Shandy* . . . 'errors destroying Sterne's sense and meaning have been perpetuated, like *area* for *aera*, *clause* for *cause*' . . . As a principle, if we respect our authors we should have a passionate concern to see that their words are

recovered and currently transmitted in as close a form to their intentions as we can contrive" (8-9).

A modest little book, Paul Kaufman's *Borrowings from the Bristol Library, 1773-1784* (Virginia) should be of value to the student of literary taste. It reproduces one of the few concrete records we have of what educated people were actually reading in the eighteenth century, and is worth half a dozen windy treatises attempting to elucidate "the spirit of the age" by *a priori* methods. It would be interesting to ask a group of eighteenth-century students to set down what they think would have been the ten books most likely to have been borrowed from a library in the second largest town in England in the 1770's, and then to compare their guesses with Kaufman's tabulation. The more of this kind of thing we can get, the better.

II

If students of English literature are going to deal in their writings with questions of English political and social history—as they do, and cannot help doing—it behooves them to keep up with contemporary historical scholarship. One important event of 1960 for the student of eighteenth-century Britain was a sad one—the death of the greatest historian that period has had. The obituaries of Sir Lewis Namier recognized the "Copernican revolution" he wrought in the historiography of the eighteenth century. But how many American students are really aware of that revolution would be hard to guess. The *Times Literary Supplement* (August 26), reviewing my *Politics of Samuel Johnson* (Yale), scolded me for wasting time attacking the pre-Namierian mythology, "lobbing hand-grenades into a position which has long been evacuated." Alas, there are still occupied foxholes in this country. I must send the *TLS* this, from Louis Bredvold and Ralph Ross's *The Philosophy of Edmund Burke* (Michigan): "In 1770, when the English Constitution was menaced by attempts of George III to increase the prerogatives of the Crown by means of servile ministers and the corruption of the Commons . . ." (139). All this was long ago disproved: George III did not menace the constitution; he made no attempts to increase the prerogatives of the Crown; his ministers were not particularly servile; there was no widespread corruption of the Commons. The astonishment provoked by the following remarks in M. A. Goldberg's *Smollett and the Scottish School* (New Mexico, 1959) is mitigated only by the suspicion that they have

some sort of ironic purpose, which one wishes had been made clearer: "This was an age when individuals were rabidly partisan in their affiliations Political historians interpret the struggle as one between declining Toryism and ascendant Whiggism In eighteenth-century England one was either Whig or Tory." *What political historians?*

Fortunately, literary students no longer have any excuse for this sort of thing: the first chapter, nine lucid pages, of J. Steven Watson's *The Reign of George III, 1760-1815*, will give them the essential facts. This long-awaited volume of the Oxford History of England should be at the side of every literary student, to be consulted when he feels impelled to make some sweeping pronouncement on political history (though he should be warned that it is full of misprints of proper names—it is startling to learn that the action at Detroit, in the War of 1812, was fought between an American General Hall and a British Colonel Brook). Students who still take Lecky's history seriously should note the comment in the bibliography, "crude and mechanical in judgment." It may be worth adding that the preceding volume in the series, Basil Williams' *The Whig Supremacy*, was, for all Watson's polite references to it, obsolescent even when it was published in 1939 (see Namier's and Richard Pares' reviews of it at the time). In its place the student can consult Wolfgang Michael's *Englische Geschichte im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*. I have not yet seen an American review of the fifth and concluding volume of this massive work (Basel: Verlag für Recht und Gesellschaft, 1955), which brings it up to the end of George II's reign. Apart from anything else, the literary student should look at its perceptive chapters on the artistic achievement of the time, especially the sections on Handel and Hogarth.

Namier's last publication was a slight one, a lecture outlining the career of the politician Charles Townshend (Cambridge, 1959). It is good to learn that his work as editor of the *History of Parliament, 1753-1790* is to be continued, *From Sheldon to Secker* (Cambridge, 1959), by Norman Sykes (now Dean of Winchester), surely the best historian of the religious life of the century, is a tying up of loose ends left over from his earlier work on Gibson and Wake. It would certainly help to raise the standards of literary studies involving religious questions if his *Church and State in Eighteenth Century England* were back in print.

One really fine piece of historical writing appeared in 1960—

John Carswell's *The South Sea Bubble* (Stanford). I know few books that make a historical incident live so vividly or provide so much new insight into the past. It is quite indispensable reading for the student of the time of Addison, Defoe, Swift, and Pope, all of whom appear frequently in it. Like most others I had thought of the Bubble, to quote Carswell, as "a grotesque incident, a kind of fantastic outcrop on the smiling landscape of the Age of Reason." Carswell shows that the Bubble was for England in the eighteenth century the equivalent of what the Great Crash of 1929 was for America in the twentieth—an immensely traumatic episode, whose emotional effects lingered on for at least a generation. Conceivably, this fact may be as relevant to the gloom of the Tory—and Whig—satirists of the 1730's as the impact of neo-skepticism on Shaftesburianism, or whatever. Carswell also provides the clearest account since Macaulay of the development of the financial life of Britain from 1689 on, and sets it in its context of social, intellectual, and even what may be called moral history. A brilliant, even seminal, book.

The second volume of J. H. Plumb's much-needed life of Sir Robert Walpole (Cresset) is most welcome. It was to have been the concluding volume; but it brings Walpole only up to the great battle over excise, in 1733; the story of his downfall will occupy the third volume. I am delighted to see Plumb taking up the challenge of the "Augustan" writers' lampoons against Walpole, and giving them back as good as Walpole got from them. His view here is perfectly sound: fine as the satire of Swift and Pope against Walpolian "corruption" is, regarded as art, it would be very naive to think that the members of the Twickenham-Dawley set were in the flesh the incorruptible devotees of the good, the true, and the beautiful the *personae* of their writings are. Plumb gleefully records their quiet attempts to cadge favors from the Great Man they were busy satirizing; and he shows (what readers of Horace Walpole's letters already knew) that their image of Walpole as the brutal scorner of the arts is so preposterous that one wonders whether it took in anyone at the time, however many literary students it takes in now. Walpole was in fact one of the greatest of connoisseurs: the nuclei of the national collections of the two greatest nations in the world today, the Hermitage at Leningrad and the National Art Gallery in Washington, were once at Houghton.

Caroline Robbins' *The Eighteenth Century Commonwealthman* (Harvard, 1959) is a valuable work. Its subtitle gives a better clue

to its contents: "Studies in the transmission, development and circumstance of English liberal thought from the Restoration . . . until the war with the Thirteen Colonies." Actually it turns out to be a large, loosely organized biographical dictionary of almost every writer in late-seventeenth and eighteenth century Britain who ever expressed any sentiments that might be described as "liberal." And there turn out to be very many of them. The "liberalism" of such "Tories" as Swift and Berkeley is emphasized; indeed almost the only important fish that Miss Robbins tosses back into the water out of her capacious net is Burke. I can imagine reviewers having fun at the expense of Miss Robbins' enthusiastic comprehensiveness. I think they would be wrong: if the impression left by the book is that "liberal" thought (very broadly defined, of course) permeated almost the whole of British intellectual life during the century, there is a good chance that it may be quite accurate. Robert R. Palmer's *The Age of the Democratic Revolution* (Princeton, 1959) seems to have as its central thesis the notion that modern history is essentially a struggle between "aristocracy" and "democracy" (the latter being the good guys, of course). This is fairly incredible, at least for eighteenth-century Britain; no one who has read even Boswell's *Life of Johnson* will believe that possession of a title of nobility entailed the "privileges" the average American probably still ascribes to it; we encounter little evidence of wicked "lords" oppressing virtuous commoners. However, Palmer's thesis puts him in the position of reacting violently against the current adulation of Burke, and providing a most trenchant and salutary critique of the "neo-Burkean" view of the American Revolution as a mild, "conservative" affair, merely a laudable protest against the "innovations" of George III; which it certainly was not, as Canadian descendants of refugees from the violence of that Revolution can testify.

III

In that nebulous area, the history of ideas, or sensibility, or intellectual life, the first work to be mentioned is the Royal Society's excellent volume, commemorative of its tercentenary, *The Royal Society: Its Origins and Founders*, a composite work edited by Sir Harold Hartley. Written with the Society's traditional cool sobriety of phrase and attention to factual accuracy (and beautifully illustrated), it is an indispensable reference work for future studies involving the place of science in seventeenth-century Britain. Its

method might be called Namierian: it contains individual short biographies of twenty-two of the most important early Fellows (including Charles II, *Fundator et Patronus*). There is also a most valuable essay, by Douglas McKie, on the growth and dissemination of the "new philosophy" up to 1660. Older histories of the Society should be used only in conjunction with this volume.

Four books may be conveniently grouped together—Marjorie Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (Cornell, 1959); Francis C. Haber, *The Age of the World: Moses to Darwin* (Johns Hopkins, 1959); Frank E. Manuel, *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods* (Harvard, 1959); Ernest L. Tuveson, *The Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism* (California). Miss Nicolson's excellent book (perhaps her best, with the possible exception of the first, her extraordinarily brilliant edition of Lady Conway's letters) is an attempt to show when and how the "modern" ability to appreciate the rugged aspects of nature developed. She dates it farther back than used to be done: "Well down into the seventeenth century . . . men who wrote of mountains described them in conventional, generic, or allegorical terms, inherited from the classics or the Bible. In the eighteenth century, poets have been drawing their mountain imagery less from books, more from actual observation. They are looking at mountains and seeing them, attempting to describe them with the eye on the object. *Sight* has become important to an extent not recognized before" (368). The working out of this thesis has occupied Miss Nicolson for many years, and some of her earlier, shorter studies have been offshoots of this project (one is pleased to see a revised edition published of *The Breaking of the Circle* [Columbia]). As with some of the earlier books, I am not completely convinced that the central thesis here has been proved beyond question. I wish Miss Nicolson had found room to comment on Lady Louisa Stuart's remarks on the subject at hand: writing in the 1830's, pondering her grandmother Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's insensitivity to mountains, and noting (as Miss Nicolson does) Thomas Burnet's view of these unsightly protuberances as tokens of Divine wrath, she asks, "Can it be that the tastes and pleasures which we now esteem most peculiarly natural are in fact artificial? what we have merely read, and talked, and rhymed, and sketched ourselves into?" The development of the aesthetics of the infinite, the hard-headed Lady Louisa is suggesting, was little more than the work

of a firm of motivation engineers (Gray, Wordsworth, and Co.), who could as easily have made it a taste for *chinoiserie* instead. Miss Nicolson, who is a Romantic at heart, prefers to class it as "one of the most profound revolutions in thought that has ever occurred."

What makes the book, like Miss Nicolson's others, most valuable is the example of *technique* she sets—the breadth, the catholicity of her reading, and the sure tact with which she uses it; her skill in elucidation and persuasion; the fineness of her taste; the freedom from any trace of the "solipsism," the intellectual provinciality, of so much of this kind of writing. Similar praise is due to Haber's book, which records the centuries-long rearguard action fought by orthodox cosmic chronologies, pagan and Christian, until their overthrow in the nineteenth century by the infinite rectilinear "time" of classical physics. It is not the least of Haber's merits that he recognizes the metaphysical nature of the question—there is really no particular reason why we *should* think of time as a straight line rather than a circle, and if as a line, why infinite—and that he notes Wyndham Lewis's attack on rectilinear time as one of the causes of our present discontents. Manuel's book, an account of the various theories and sentiments current between the times of Bayle and Herder about the nature and origin of pagan theology (and often by clear implication of Christian), is not so engaging. It gives the impression of having been written in haste: it sprawls and digresses; often an irritatingly journalistic rhetoric does duty for careful thought and lends an unpleasantly patronizing tone to the work. Still, there is much in it that would be useful for students of the century to know.

Perhaps the most potentially valuable of these inquiries is Tuveson's. It is also the most exasperating: it suffers from the classic faults of the "history of ideas" monograph—woolly and portentous language, unsureness of purpose, feebleness of organization, and what seems like capriciousness in the choice of the sources it draws on. Since its point of departure is Locke's epistemology, one would expect it to go on and discuss the fundamentally important critiques and modifications of that epistemology made in the eighteenth century by Berkeley and Hume. Instead, we are told about John Livingston Lowes and Walter Pater, who, though affording useful illustrations of Locke, seem hardly as pertinent as Berkeley. Still, Tuveson is to be congratulated on being aware of epistemology at all (and its far-reaching ramifications, especial-

ly in psychology). There can be little question that by far the most important fact in eighteenth-century aesthetics was the Lockean epistemological tradition, which means not only Locke but his predecessors Bacon and Hobbes (whom Tuveson does mention) and his successors, Berkeley, Hume, Hartley, Condillac, and others. An acquaintance with contemporary British philosophy, which represents a return to Locke and Hume, would also help the student—a work like Gilbert Ryle's *The Concept of Mind*, for instance. Lockean "imagination," as Tuveson tells us, has to do with the recall of discrete sense impressions, usually visual—Locke's "simple ideas." Where Tuveson gets into trouble is with his account of the assumed foil to this theory—the Aristotelian doctrine of "reason." I do not think he has sufficiently investigated the eighteenth-century attitude toward it: pretty clearly, anyone who had read Bacon and Locke was inclined to discount its high pretensions. He also gets into trouble by trying to expound his thesis within the framework of a presupposed "classical-romantic" dichotomy in the eighteenth century, "classicism" adhering to "reason," and "romanticism" to (Lockean) "imagination." This postulate is as unnecessary as it was a century ago, and Tuveson's adopting it leads to the dubious assertion found on his first page—"On one side, in the later eighteenth century, is Samuel Johnson, reiterating the classical definition of the imaginative faculty, which had been repeated for centuries: the practice of poetry is 'an art of uniting pleasure with truth by calling imagination to the help of reason.'" In the first place, this is obviously *not* a "definition of the imaginative faculty." In the second, whichever of the eleven senses of "reason" Johnson gives in his *Dictionary* he is using here—I have no doubt that he is referring to empirical, inductive, Baconian "reasoning"—no one could have been a stauncher Lockean in his epistemology and aesthetics than Johnson (as Jean Hagstrum suggests, though too tentatively, in his *Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism*). I present a counter-quotation, also from *The Lives of the Poets*: "Few books have been perused by me with greater pleasure than Dr. Watts' *Improvement of the Mind*, of which the radical principles may . . . be found in Locke's *Conduct of the Understanding*."

Harry M. Bracken (*The Early Reception of Berkeley's Immaterialism, 1710-1733* [The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959]), is, as his title indicates, a follower of A. A. Luce's reinterpretation of Berkeley—or perhaps the first real interpretation of him. Bracken has no difficulty in showing, from contemporary reviews, that

Berkeley was as little understood in his own time as he has generally been up to our own. It is interesting that one of the most nearly satisfactory accounts of Berkeley, particularly of his critique of Locke's "abstract ideas," was given in Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopaedia* (1728), a work which greatly influenced Johnson, among others. The article, which Bracken reprints as an appendix, could be usefully read in connection with Tuveson's book.

I mention Sir Harold Nicolson's large, glossy volume, *The Age of Reason, 1700-1789* (Doubleday), only by way of warning. The forebodings aroused by its title are amply justified—it is a worthless piece of hack journalism, a rehash of clichés stale a century ago. Nicolson heads his chapter on Swift "Savage Pessimism"—Thackeray, thou shouldst be living at this hour—and that on Johnson "Solid Sense." Of Johnson as critic he says, "His aesthetic judgement was so enslaved by the heroic couplet, by the tomtom tune of Dryden and Pope, that he was actually deaf to the variety and strength of blank verse." I don't know what business anyone who thinks Pope and Dryden sound like a tomtom has calling someone else deaf. The book is surely the nadir of the higher dilettantism.

IV

Apart from a handful of smallish articles, it was not a productive year for Dryden studies. For Defoe, it was marked by the publication of J. R. Moore's *Checklist of the Writings of Daniel Defoe* (Indiana), a most valuable short work, though only a preliminary sketch for the "literary biography" of Defoe that will have some day to be written. Swift continues to attract as many commentators as ever. Volume XIII of his prose works, edited by Herbert Davis, appeared in 1959 (*Directions to Servants and Miscellaneous Pieces, 1733-1742* [Blackwell]), enhanced by Davis's usual careful attention to text and sensible commentary. Volumes V (*Undated Pieces*) and XIV (Index) will complete this fine work. What seems to me the best of the numerous paper-bound anthologies of Swift has been edited by Louis Landa (*Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings* [Houghton-Mifflin, Riverside Editions]); it is fully and usefully annotated, and Landa's introduction is most competent: Landa seems to be the contemporary Swift scholar most clearly aware that the "secret" of Swift is to be found in the Christianity he professed, and he is certainly better informed than some other recent commentators of just what that Christianity consists in. Yet

sometimes even Landa's statements concerning theological matters make me uneasy. He says (xxii) that "a moderated Pelagianism was current" in Swift's time. If "Pelagianism" is used in its strict sense, the assertion could not, I think, be sustained by citations from the writings of reputable Anglican and Nonconformist divines of the period; if it is used in some other sense, that sense should be most carefully defined. And "If Swift sounds like those whose emphasis on man's depravity derives from Augustinian and Calvinistic roots, this is a result of the intensity of his attack and his extreme rhetoric and not, it must be firmly stated, the result of his agreement with the doctrines which buttressed the Augustinian view or the Calvinistic restatement of it. He felt too keenly man's moral responsibility . . ." Is a keen feeling of man's moral responsibility incompatible with adherence to Calvinist doctrine? Surely the possessors of "the New England conscience"—or the conscience of Geneva, Scotland, or Puritan England—have seldom been seen as taking a light view of man's moral responsibility. Ronald Paulson (*Theme and Structure in Swift's Tale of a Tub* [Yale]) is considerably less at home in theology. It turns out that *A Tale of a Tub* is an attack on Gnosticism: there is a piece of alleged Gnostic gibberish quoted from Irenaeus on the title page; Irenaeus wrote a treatise attacking the Gnostics: "The reference to Irenaeus implicitly connects Swift with orthodoxy and those he attacks with heresy. Moreover, it is not strange that an Anglican divine should have made a reference to Irenaeus, who represented both a source of the primitive church to which the Church of England attributed its roots, and a defender of this institution against the chief enemy of institutionalism, the Gnostic heresy" (100). I find it hard to believe that the author of the story of Peter, Martin, and Jack was concerned to defend religious institutionalism. There is also a quotation from Lucretius on the title page, but Paulson explains why this fact is not to be taken to mean that Swift is connected with Lucretius's militant atheism. It not this such exegesis as Peter, Martin, and Jack applied to their father's will? I find it hard to take the book seriously.

Edward Honig's *Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory* (Northwestern, 1959) and Robert C. Elliott's *The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art* (Princeton) are serious, if labored, studies, whose scope is pretty well indicated by their titles. Swift is considered in both, and I should not disagree with the points that seem to emerge: that Swift's satiric intent and allegorical technique

can usefully be compared with Kafka's (cf. *The Metamorphosis*); and that a consideration of the place occupied by satire in primitive ritual may be useful in appreciating certain overtones in Swift (though Elliott, I regret to say, believes with other recent students that the Houyhnhnms are Stoics, and that their ideals—which for some reason he insists on calling their "positives"—"are largely discredited as unavailable to man"). Denis Johnston's *In Search of Swift* (Barnes and Noble, 1959) is the culmination of a long campaign on his part to get people to believe that Swift was a nephew of Sir William Temple and Stella was Temple's daughter. I can only say that, like others, I am not convinced. To be sure, Johnston has no difficulty in demonstrating, as he goes along, that a great deal of "orthodox" Swiftian biographical research has been atrociously sloppy: the student might be advised to read the book in order to develop a healthy scholarly skepticism toward "authorities." The thesis of James A. Preu's *The Dean and the Anarchist* (Florida State, 1959) is that William Godwin's thinking was much influenced by Swift's, and that *Political Justice* derives almost directly from Book Four of *Gulliver*. Without prejudice to criticism by better Godwin scholars than I, Preu's argument for the derivation seems convincing. But Preu thinks that Godwin, in regarding the Houyhnhnms's way of life as ideal, *misread* Book Four, and he carefully dissociates himself from this grievous error of Godwin's. Citing Kathleen Williams, Irvin Ehrenpreis, and Ricardo Quintana as his authorities, he remarks, "It is interesting to note the manner in which Godwin's perfectibiliarian ideas led him to mistake Swift's meaning. The Houyhnhnms are not completely perfect It may even be that Swift meant them as a satire on man's utopian dreams. If this is indeed the case, Godwin's interpretation of the Houyhnhnms is one of the greatest ironies in the history of ideas" (63-64), and in a footnote, "There are obviously many possibilities, including the very intriguing one (which the present writer cannot take seriously) that Godwin was right." This is more than irony; this is high comedy! For of course Godwin was right, and Miss Williams and the rest wrong: as George Sherburn has already hinted, and as will be demonstrated in other forthcoming publications.

Norman O. Brown's *Life Against Death* (Modern Library Paperbacks, 1959)—a strange but interesting attempt to provide a rigorously Freudian interpretation of human history—gives in its chapter on Swift (inevitably entitled "The Excremental Vision") an

object lesson in how to misread Swift's plain words. The sad thing is that Brown has read Swift well enough to see how badly Aldous Huxley (apparently the originator of the legend of Swift's "anality") and Middleton Murry have misread him: "Murry," Brown says aptly enough, "like Strephon and the other unfortunate men in the poems, loses his wits when he discovers that Caelia —." But even Brown cannot quite bring himself to look at what Swift is actually saying in the Caelia poems: "In *Strephon and Chloe* (1731) sublimation and awareness of the excremental function are presented as mutually exclusive, and the conclusion is drawn that sublimation must be cultivated at all costs, even at the cost of repression: 'Authorities both old and recent/ Direct that women must be decent:/ And, from the Spouse each Blemish hide/ More than from all the World beside . . . [Brown's ellipsis]/ On Sense and Wit your Passion found,/ By Decency cemented round.'" The fifty lines Brown omits between the first four and the last two of his quotation make perfectly clear to any reader but one blinded by an *idée reçue* the transition from Swift's satire of what "Authorities direct" to Swift's own answer, "Sense and Wit," which would certainly preclude a program of systematic deceit between husband and wife; and one imagines that the "authorities'" concept of decency is a very different one from Swift's own. "In *Cassinus and Peter*," Brown sadly concludes, "even this solution is exploded. . . . The excremental vision cannot be repressed Cassinus explains the trauma which is killing him: 'No wonder how I lost my wits,/ Oh! Caelia, Caelia, Caelia —.'" Calmly to take Cassinus's point of view as Swift's is staggering. Is it possible to read the poem and not be aware that it is a devastating attack on the neurotic vanity of the "excremental vision" of Cassinus (as of Strephon in the other two poems)? Brown then goes on to subject Book Four of *Gulliver* to similar treatment. As usual, in such "psychoanalytic" exegesis, it is not the psychological theory that is at fault; it is the exegete's inability to grasp the plain sense of the text that is in front of his eyes. But this failure is not exclusive to psychoanalytic expounders of Swift.

One of the most hopeful of recent studies of Swift is an essay by Charles Peake, "Swift and the Passions" (*MLR*, April). Peake's point is the simple and important one: it is not necessary when dealing with Swift's writings (or, one might add, with Johnson's) to equate the term "passion" with "emotion"; because Swift, like other Christian moralists before him, condemns "the passions," this

does not mean that Swift (or Christian morality) condemns *emotion*, and “repression,” “sublimation,” and “Stoicism” are really beside the point when discussing Swift. I’m afraid, though, that after this very promising beginning, the essay rather trails away, and I confess I have considerable difficulty in finding out just what Peake is trying to say in the second half of it.

Pope studies have been enriched by a most valuable book—Reuben A. Brower’s *Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion* (Clarendon, 1959). It may be useful to warn against making the mistake I did when I first encountered it—that of thinking it a book designed to prove a thesis (that Pope made much use of classical allusion), and wondering why a lengthy book was needed to prove it. It is far more than this: it is a superb *reading* of the bulk of Pope’s poetry by one of the finest readers of poetry we have. That Brower also demonstrates how magnificently Pope learned his trade from the great poets of the past—Theocritus, Virgil, Horace, Spenser, Milton, the Metaphysicals, Dryden, even Dante—is incidental, though it may provide a hint for the modern reader to adjust his antennae to the wave lengths of great classical European poetry if he wants to be able to say that he has read Pope. But the virtue of the book is not its source-tracing: it is the sustained brilliance of its reading. A sample, taken at random: the text Brower is expounding is the latter part of *The Dunciad*, Book I, beginning “O Thou! of Bus’ness the directing soul!” “Dryden’s toughness comes again to the fore, but the crowning lines in each conceit are in Pope’s best Metaphysical style. We can feel the gaucherie of that ‘mind’ in its rolling ducklike progress, and the perverse bounce of its ineptitudes. The prayer ends with a hushed, lulling strophe of a kind Pope uses with beautifully soporific effects at other points in the *Dunciad* The description of [Venus’s] works is a blurred fantastic dance A prophetic prayer gently modulates into a true lullaby, heroically grand and yet grotesque The book ends with rolling echoes of ‘God save king Cibber!’ that degenerate into burlesque Jovian thunder and the croaking of frogs. The Queen’s lullaby and its batrachian echo bring to a close an appropriate first book for a poem that will conclude with the apocalypse of Book IV. We see everything as epically grand and yet in cloudy confusion, with ‘momentary monsters rising and falling’ in mazy dances and songs” I hope the book will presently be reissued in paperback form, retitled *A Reader’s Guide*

to *Pope*, and made compulsory reading for all graduate students.

R. L. Brett's *Reason and Imagination* (Oxford, for the University of Hull) does seem designed primarily to prove a thesis, through a reading of four poems, one of which is the *Essay on Man*. It is perhaps a little hard to say just what that thesis is. It seems to have to do with the suggestion that "philosophic" poetry *can* be good poetry, not in spite of but because of its being philosophic; and that "the fashionable theory of poetic meaning between the two wars . . . popularized by I. A. Richards," which "rested upon the distinction . . . between statements which were referential and those which were emotive," is wrong. This theory, of course, goes back a long way before Richards—it is clearly implied in Joseph Warton's *Essay on Pope*, for instance—and surely only people tone-deaf to poetry were ever taken in by it (I cannot believe that Richards himself was). But it is well to have the converse reaffirmed from time to time. I don't know, though, that Brett's reading of the *Essay* contributes a great deal either to theory or to our insight into Pope's poem. He agrees with Johnson and differs from Maynard Mack in thinking its "philosophy" not very consistent or convincing, and he may be right. It is surprising to find Bolingbroke again being taken even partly seriously as a source—e.g., "Pope's chief debt to Bolingbroke is for something dear to many of the Augustans, the doctrine that limited severely the scope of the human reason." No one acquainted with Bacon and Locke or their numerous popularizers, as every "Augustan" was, would have had to feel indebted to Bolingbroke for this notion.

Earl R. Wasserman's edition of the *Epistle to Bathurst* (Johns Hopkins) makes handsomely available printed variants and facsimiles of the much-corrected MSS of the poem—striking and valuable evidence of Pope's methods of composition. But it seems to me his "critical reading" suffers (I always seem to be making this complaint) from over-simple and over-dogmatic preconceptions about the theology and political history of the time. For instance we are told (35) of "the essential Christian dilemma" that Pope finds himself in. Whatever the details, one is taken aback to be informed so casually, by a literary critic, that Christianity contains an "essential dilemma." As for politics, it is disturbing to encounter Walpole four times as "Lord Treasurer" and once as "First Lord of the Treasury" (54-55), as though the two offices were the same. (Walpole was of course never Lord Treasurer, and there is considerable significance in the fact, as Plumb points out.) I do not

know whether phrases like "a hypocritical Calvinistic capitalist with only the ethics of Cheapside" and "[Satan's] devilishly Hobbesian philosophy" (53) are supposed to represent Pope's or Wasserman's views, but they are surely somewhat oversimplified representations of very complex questions.

Patrick Cruttwell's "Pope and His Church" (*Hudson Review*, autumn) performs a useful service in suggesting that Pope's Catholicism is best described as "liberal," that he is not to be viewed in the light of that ultramontaniam which some modern students seem mistakenly to think coextensive with Catholicism itself. They would profit by a stiff course of reading in the works of Lord Acton.

The 250th anniversary of Samuel Johnson's birth and the 200th of the publication of *Rasselas* were commemorated by two volumes. *New Light on Dr. Johnson* (ed. F. W. Hilles; Yale, 1959) contains some two dozen essays (many of them revisions of earlier publications) by old Johnson hands. They are of varying importance; but certainly at least two are of permanent value: Hilles's excellent analysis, from a study of the manuscript material, of how Johnson composed the *Life of Pope*; and Donald and Mary Hyde's "Dr. Johnson's Second Wife," the importance of which is not so much biographical as that it sheds new (and it seems to me, damning) light on Boswell's unscrupulous methods of composing "biography." *Bicentenary Essays on Rasselas* (ed. Magdi Wahba) is a pleasant tribute, emanating from an appropriate place—it is published as a supplement to *University of Cairo Studies in English*, 1959. Its dozen essays canvass such matters as "*Rasselas* and *Vathek*," "*Zadig* and *Rasselas*," and *Rasselas* as a tract in the *institutio principis* tradition. Bertram Davis's *Johnson Before Boswell* (Yale) is a charmingly written and eminently sound rehabilitation of Sir John Hawkins as biographer of Johnson. Hawkins was by no means the fool that Boswell, for professional reasons, and Macaulay, for the sake of a clever epigram, made him out to be. Davis shows that as a *biographer* of Johnson there is every reason to rank Hawkins at least as high as Boswell, however superior Boswell may be as an entertainer, or, if one insists, artist. A most competent critical survey of Johnson scholarship over the past decade is provided by Bernhard Fabian ("Samuel Johnson: Ein Forschungsbericht") in *Die Neueren Sprachen*, September and October, 1959. Two articles by Katharine Balderston, on the influence of William Law on John-

son—one on Law in the *Dictionary* (PQ, July), the other on his influence on Johnson's religion (PMLA, September)—are rather disappointing; Miss Balderston seems so far to have only skimmed the surface of a very large and important subject. New attributions of works to Johnson continue to be made—Dr. Laurence McHenry, Jr., in the *Journal of the History of Medicine*, XIV (1959), proposes the article on Oribasius in James's *Medicinal Dictionary*; F. W. Gibbs, in *Ambix* [Royal Institute of Chemistry], February, suggests a translation of Boerhaave's *Elements of Chemistry*, 1732 (both these attributions are made very tentatively, however); and Jacob Leed (PBSA, 2nd quarter) continues his excellently reasoned analyses of probable Johnsonian contributions to the early *Gentleman's Magazine*. John Middendorf (*JHI*, January-March) presents a competent and useful exposition of Johnson's "mercantilist" views on economics, views highly relevant to his political and social thinking. Middendorf, an admirer of Adam Smith, wonders a little at Johnson's adherence to so immoral a system as mercantilism—a surprising point of view in 1960, after so many decades of condemnation of the immorality of free enterprise.

The second volume of *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (Chicago), edited by Lucy S. Sutherland, has appeared; the plan and execution continue to please. The period covered is 1768 to 1774; Burke is now in the full stride of his political career; the volume contains the notorious letter in which Burke compares Richmond and his fellow dukes and marquesses to "the great oaks"—"we creep on the ground, we belly into melons that are exquisite for size and flavour." With some other recent Burkean volumes—Francis Canavan, S. J., *The Political Reason of Edmund Burke* (Duke); W. J. Bate, ed., *Selected Writings of Edmund Burke* (Modern Library); Louis I. Bredvold and Ralph G. Ross, eds., *The Philosophy of Edmund Burke* (Michigan)—the critic is on tricky ground: that of so-called "neo-Burkeanism," a movement connected with very live issues in current American politics. I can only say that, though Bate's is a useful anthology of the pieces usually read in American schools, and Bredvold and Ross's an interesting topical arrangement of extracts from Burke's writings, the introductions to both anthologies seem to me uncritically adulatory. "Neo-Burkeanism" is, indeed, very old-fashioned Burkeanism: the version of eighteenth-century political history that Burke invented to justify the actions of his party has been completely discredited by recent historical scholarship; it follows that if one is to preserve one's

image of Burke as "the politician as hero," one must ignore that scholarship; and these books do so. It is not my business here to adjudicate the question, but younger students should at least be aware that there are two sides to it, and that such contrary judgments have been passed as this of Robert Palmer's (p. 122 above): "The views of Pares, Guttridge, and Ritcheson [one British and two American historians] coincide in this estimate . . . of Burke as a spokesman for the British aristocracy; this estimate is indeed a well-established one, from which only 'new conservatives' and other neo-Burkeans in the United States seem to diverge" (173n.). How profound a divergence is involved may be judged from the fact that Father Canavan can cite with complete approbation (6) Burke's dictum "Political problems do not primarily concern truth or falsehood. They relate to good or evil," whereas G. M. Young, in his British Academy lecture on Burke, 1943, said of the same passage (quoting Johnson), "No wonder that native virtue, scholastic virtue, grew uneasy when it heard Burke talking like this." Thomas H. D. Mahoney's *Edmund Burke and Ireland* (Harvard) is not quite in this class: Mahoney is aware of recent historiography and provides a detailed and closely documented account of Burke's involvements with the question of Irish Catholic relief. Yet in his summing up Mahoney indulges in the same sort of uncritical and irrelevant adulation, more usually found in polemic tracts than in scholarly studies: "Possessed of a mind which instinctively loved and fully appreciated truth . . . Burke tolerated in the true sense of the word, that is to say, he respected justice," and so on. At one point, however, retribution overtakes him: Mahoney might ponder the ambiguity in this remark, "Burke was deeply religious as a youth, and the passing years merely served to strengthen his religiosity" (316).

V

The most valuable contribution to the study of the eighteenth-century novel during this period was, in my opinion, Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (Criterion). Controversial as Fiedler's view of the history of the American novel may be, students must be grateful to him for his treatment of Richardson, Fielding, and the Gothic novel—for taking them seriously, for reading them as living works of literature of great and continuing importance, for rescuing them from the "solipsism" in which they are usually immured. Fiedler's thesis is by now well known:

roughly, that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Gothicism eventually triumphed in America; its offspring are the works of such writers as Faulkner and Hemingway, which suffer from the radical fault of their progenitor—a neurotically limited view of life, one in which women are objects of fear and hostility, excluded from the novelist's serious concern. And what seems to be advocated is a return to Richardson, whose central point is that women *must* be taken seriously, as full members of the human race—a less narrow, less distorted picture of the realities of the human situation, and therefore one whose acceptance should produce better novels. Other reviewers have amply stated the charges of extravagance, oversimplification, and misinterpretation against Fiedler; I content myself with suggesting that there is nevertheless an important element of truth in his thesis—that the world of Richardson's novels *is* a realler, more serious world than that of Fielding and his many successors. Not that this is a new idea, of course: when Johnson said that Richardson picked the kernel of life, while Fielding was contented with its husk, he was perhaps saying essentially no more than Fiedler is now.

Fiedler is a critic, passionately convinced of the importance of literature, intensely involved with it; his book, whether sound or not, is unmistakably *criticism*. Two other books dealing with eighteenth-century novelists are what we have become more accustomed to in recent years, exercises in the history of ideas. Here is the beginning of the (accurate) synopsis found on the dust jacket of M. A. Goldberg's *Smollett and the Scottish School* (New Mexico, 1959): "The eighteenth century in England is generally understood as an age of contention over a series of seemingly antithetical concepts. Tories were quarreling with Whigs; 'neoclassicists' with 'romantics'; rationalists with empiricists and intuitionists; adherents of rules, of regularity and first principles, with those who favored spontaneity, wildness, and sublimity." If so, it is very badly understood. This presumably is what comes of living on an exclusive diet of secondary sources. The summary continues: "Smollett, however, held to neither side of this controversy. Like the forty-odd social and cultural historians, moral philosophers, estheticians, rhetoricians and essayists comprising the Scottish Common-sense School, Smollett maintained a middle ground" Frankly, I don't believe a word of it. I doubt that Goldberg's forty-odd Scottish writers form a "school"; I doubt that the work of any of them worth taking seriously—Adam Smith or Thomas Reid, say

—is adequately described by the phrase “taking a middle ground”; and I doubt that any of this has any real relevance to Smollett’s novels. Martin C. Battestin’s *The Moral Basis of Fielding’s Art* (Wesleyan, 1959) attempts “to view the ethics of [*Joseph Andrews*] in the related contexts of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century latitudinarian Christianity.” The “latitudinarianism” referred to seems to be another construct of literary historians, very different from the historical latitudinarianism that Macaulay, say, describes. Something called “Pelagianism” becomes for Battestin the maid-of-all-work that “Gnosticism” is in Paulson’s book on Swift. We are told of “The modified Pelagian doctrine of such latitudinarian churchmen as Isaac Barrow, John Tillotson Within the Church, the latitudinarians, though never expressly admitting to it [a pregnant qualification], were engaged in promulgating an extreme form of Arminianism, which after 1720 became scarcely distinguishable from Socinianism or Pelagianism This orthodoxy [of the Articles] was now giving way before a complacent moralism that made salvation universal” (15). That these bishops and archbishops of the Church of England were really Socinians, Pelagians, or universalists could not be seriously sustained for a moment; rather Battestin than I as promoter in a heresy trial. When I go on and find Battestin remarking, “These rational divines stood staunchly with St. James *against* [my italics] St. Paul; ‘Faith without works is dead’” (18), I find myself wondering whether he is equipped to “distinguish” orthodox Anglican doctrine from Socinianism and Pelagianism.

I mention Stuart Tave’s *The Amiable Humorist* (Chicago) here because, though it is a general “study in the comic theory and criticism of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,” and draws its illustrations from the drama and the essay as well, its insights into the novel are perhaps the most original and valuable. Tave discusses the rise of what may be called the orthopsychiatric concept of comedy—“the natural superiority of benevolent humor” to the older satiric, reforming kind—and its exemplification by Parson Adams, Uncle Toby, and the like. The study is competent and useful; but I don’t know that Tave (though he recognizes its existence; see p. ix) really comes to grips with the older criticism that regards his “amiable humor” as merely a manifestation of sentimentalism, and links the development of this “mode in which there flourished a close alliance of laughter with tears, of humor with melancholy and with pathos” with a concurrent degeneration

of artistic quality—from *The Way of the World* to *The Conscious Lovers* and so to the murky depths of the Hollywood family movie with nuns playing baseball. Bernard Kreissman's amusingly titled *Pamela-Shamela* (Nebraska) is a delightful little account of the numerous burlesques and imitations of Richardson's novel, ending with an uproarious summary of Upton Sinclair's *Another Pamela, or Virtue Still Rewarded*. Eugene White's *Fanny Burney, Novelist* (Shoe String Press) is a short appreciative essay that contributes little new; still it is pleasant to find someone in 1960 who has actually read *Camilla* and *The Wanderer* and apparently derived from them at least some of the pleasure they gave their first readers. I cannot judge the bibliographical competence of W. H. McBurney's *A Check List of English Prose Fiction, 1700-1739* (Harvard); if accurate, it should be invaluable to students of the genre.

The most imposing of the studies of the lesser poets of the age is Thomas Crawford's *Burns* (Stanford)—if I may be forgiven for classifying Burns as lesser than Dryden and Pope. This 400-page book, one imagines, says everything than can possibly be said about Burns's poetry: its origins, its language, its techniques, its subject matter, its "revelation of personality." We have sections entitled "Poet of Democracy," "Burns as World Poet," "Burns and Religion," "Burns, Schubert, Wolf." There are appendices on "Phonetic Values," "Parallels," a classification (25 classes) of the "love-songs," a large glossary, and an "explanatory index of proper names." I wish I could say that all this has converted me to a new conviction that Burns is a major poet. For all that the jacket proclaims that "No previous critic of Burns's poetry has made such full use of modern critical methods," it still seems to me a rather old-fashioned piece of work.

Patricia Meyer Spacks's *The Varied God: A Critical Study of Thomson's 'The Seasons'* (California, 1959) is a careful and intelligent study, chiefly of the ideas of Thomson's poem. This is useful, though Marjorie Nicolson earlier pointed out the main thing that seems to emerge, that Thomson's "thought" was consonant with that of most "advanced" intellectuals of his day. Mrs. Spacks dismisses Thomson's "style" rather abruptly (43-48) as a "blemish." I have a feeling that more could and should be said about Thomson's poetic technique; an approach to it like Brower's to Pope's might reveal the poem as more than a somewhat boring document in the history of ideas, which Thomson would have been better advised to write in prose.

In the confused state of Blake studies, it is a little hard to "place" Robert Gleckner's *The Piper and the Bard* (Wayne State, 1959). Though one is put off by the pretentious obscurity of the title and some of the chapter headings ("The Winter of Holiness" and "The Silent Pillow")—surely this silly fashion was long ago overtaken by the law of diminishing returns—it seems to be a serious attempt to expound what might be called the theology of Blake's poems, with more space than usual devoted to the lyrics. I won't try to judge the success of this endeavor: the book will clearly repay careful rereading. My only suggestion at the moment is that it will eventually be discovered that with Blake, as with others, "epistemology" is prior even to "theology." An indispensable companion to literary studies in Blake is Sir Anthony Blunt's *The Art of William Blake* (Columbia), a series of six lectures accompanied by over 60 pages of plates, in which Blunt gives a "reading," à la Panofsky, of Blake's art and closely relates it to his "thought."

Charles Ryskamp's *William Cowper of the Inner Temple, Esquire* (Cambridge, 1959) takes Cowper up to his 37th year. It seems to me an excellent work—careful, responsible, mercifully free from the inept pseudo-psychological and pseudo-theological guessing that has been the staple of some other work on Cowper. When he does discuss Cowper's religious life, Ryskamp's attitude toward Evangelicalism is, as it should be, sympathetic and perceptive, untainted by modern partisan animus. He appends nearly 100 pages of newly attributed letters, poems, and essays. It is to be hoped that he will continue his study and produce the standard modern life of Cowper. Lodwick Hartley's *William Cowper: The Continuing Revaluation* (North Carolina) is an excellent example of the newer (and most valuable) type of annotated bibliography, with a useful and judicious "survey" of the Cowper studies he records, from 1895 to 1960. He acknowledges the inspiration afforded by James L. Clifford's *Johnsonian Studies*; one hopes that bibliographies of other eighteenth-century writers along similar lines will be forthcoming: we certainly need a guide like this through the jungles of recent Swift and Pope studies. (Hartley has one bad slip, that should be corrected. He calls Ryskamp's book "A study . . . to 1786." Read "1768.")

Apollo and the Nine, by Carol Maddison (Johns Hopkins) is a "history of the ode" from Pindar to Cowley: as Miss Maddison says, it leaves off where Shafer's and Shuster's previous studies began. It is nothing if not informative—the book runs to over 400

pages. Useful as it is to have the essential historical facts collected in one volume, we are still waiting for a good modern *critical* study of this great poetic form. Miss Maddison's approach may be judged by her remark on page 1—"The ode offered the eighteenth century a classical escape from its mechanical universe and the metronome tick of the heroic couplet . . ."

It is astonishing to be confronted in 1960 with some 125 pages of unpublished poetry by an important eighteenth-century poet (though, to be precise, these date from the early nineteenth century). *New Poems by George Crabbe* (Liverpool), excellently edited by Arthur Pollard, are printed for the first time from Crabbe's notebooks, owned by Sir John Murray. They are late pieces, most of them versified short stories, in Crabbe's usual manner; some seem to have been intended for *Tales of the Hall*. Clearly they will afford valuable material for the full critical study of Crabbe's poetry that has still to be written. Whether they add anything to Crabbe's reputation is hard to say. Those who like making fun of Crabbe will be happy to find such gems as "I married, and the very dregs/ Of misery drank, of care and pain,/ For though the man had handsome legs,/ He wanted breeding, wanted brain." Let us hope Crabbe intended it to be funny.

Excellent work continues to be done on the various genres of prose writing that the eighteenth century excelled in. Rae Blanchard has given us another in her series of meticulously edited volumes of Steele's writings (*Richard Steele's Periodical Journalism, 1714-1716* [Clarendon, 1959]). This one includes *The Lover, The Reader, Town Talk, and Chit-Chat*. Richmond P. Bond (*New Letters to the Tatler and Spectator* [Texas, 1959]) has edited a group of pieces intended for inclusion in those collections but, for whatever reason, not published until now. There are no masterpieces among them, but they give the modern reader an interesting glimpse of what potential contributors liked writing about, and of the raw material Steele and Addison had to work with. In the Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's *Correspondence*, the publication of Volumes 20, 21, and 22, part of the great correspondence with Sir Horace Mann, represents a sizable step on the road to the completion of this monumental work. E. S. De Beer's one-volume edition of John Evelyn's *Diary* (Clarendon, 1959) is a masterly job of condensing his six-volume edition for the general reader, who it is hoped will take advantage of it and learn what a fine diarist Evelyn after all was. The challenging task Harold L. Bond sets

himself in *The Literary Art of Edward Gibbon* (Clarendon), that of a full analysis of the *Decline and Fall* as a work of art, has been performed in a most satisfying manner. Robert L. Haig's *The Gazetteer, 1735-1797* (Southern Illinois) is the first full-dress "biography" of an important eighteenth-century newspaper we have had, and is of course an invaluable contribution to the history of journalism in that century when journalism as we know it was born. The study is most competently done, although one shares Haig's disappointment that more information about "the inside of a newspaper-office in those days" has not come to light. Haig declines to tackle the question of the *Gazetteer's* political significance in the early days when, as Walpole's mouthpiece, it was under continual fire from Pope, Johnson, and others, on the valid ground that to do so would occupy more space than his present book. The paper's later period of important political activity, in the 1780's, is treated in more detail, and the historical background is generally handled with laudable circumspection.

I shall merely mention what was no doubt the event of the year for students of the drama, the publication of the first two volumes (1700-29), by Emmett L. Avery, of *The London Stage, 1660-1800* (Southern Illinois). The virtues and faults of such an encyclopedic reference work can only be tested in the process of using it. William W. Appleton's *Charles Macklin* (Harvard) is a charmingly written life of that old war horse of the eighteenth-century theater. Appleton seems to have found out what can be found out about his hectic professional and domestic life and presented it against the background of an admirably vivid picture of the London theatrical world of the time. Sybil Rosenfeld's *The Theatre of the London Fairs in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge) gives a detailed history of this theatrical *demi-monde*, which interacted significantly with the more legitimate stage. John Loftis's *Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding* (Stanford, 1959) is a praiseworthy attempt to provide "precision and specific content" for the familiar "generalizations about the impact of the 'middle class' upon comedy" (vi). But there is no subject in existence more difficult to treat satisfactorily. Social and political historiography of the period is at present in a state of flux; all the old assumptions are being questioned, and what will eventually replace them is far from certain. Loftis copes gallantly with this unsatisfactory situation, and is to be congratulated for having read so conscientiously in recent historical scholarship. Certainly one point that emerges

is worth emphasizing as strongly as he does, that implied by his chapter heading "The Survival of Restoration Stereotypes" (of the "merchant" and the like)—that it is fatal to rely on drama, or any other form of imaginative literature, for accurate reporting of contemporary history. Yet historical scholarship continues to run ahead of Loftis. A whole new dimension has just been added to the story of the South Sea Bubble (p. 121 above), whose impact on contemporary drama Loftis tries to assess; R. H. Tawney's thesis about the relation of Puritanism and capitalism, on which Loftis, like other recent literary students, heavily relies, has been vigorously challenged by the Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford; the study on which he chiefly draws for his notions of Walpole's economic policy (by N. A. Brisco, 1907) is pronounced by Walpole's current biographer to be "almost valueless" (Plumb, II, 241n). It will be many years, I'm afraid, before the familiar generalizations Loftis speaks of can be accurately assessed.

Finally I must recommend a number of major, indeed "definitive," studies in "related arts" (what arts are not related to the work of the student of the literature of an age?): Robert R. Wark's fine edition (Clarendon, 1959) of Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Discourses*; Grose Evans, *Benjamin West and the Taste of His Times* (Southern Illinois); M. Dorothy George's *English Political Caricature* (Vol. I, to 1792; II, 1793-1832) (Clarendon, 1959); Kerry Downes, *Hawkmoor* (Zwemmer [London]); Miles Hadfield, *Gardening in Britain* (Hutchinson); and Winton Dean, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques* (Oxford, 1959). I cannot understand the general indifference of literary students to perhaps the greatest of all the monuments of artistic achievement raised in eighteenth-century England—the work of Handel (a brilliant exception is Bertrand Bronson's fine study of his setting of Dryden's *Ode on Saint Cecilia's Day*, published some years ago but too little known). It is distinctly something they *should* be aware of, if only because Handel's musical "readings" of the poetry of Dryden, Pope, Gay, Congreve, Milton, and the Authorized Version have never been surpassed. Dean's book is not merely excellent music criticism, but contributes some very competent scholarship to problems of the libretti, correcting, for instance, the inexact account of Gay's *Acis and Galatea* given in Vol. VI of the Twickenham *Pope*.