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A STUDY OF THE HISTORICAL REGISTER,
FOR THE YEAR 1736 WITH
NOTES TO THE TEXT

by

Katherine Margaret Marron

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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LIFE

Katherine Margaret Marron was born in Chicago, Illinois, January 5, 1937.

She was graduated from the Academy of Our Lady, Chicago, Illinois, June, 1955, and from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June, 1959, with the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

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PREFACE

The text of The Historical Register, for the Year 1736 is based upon a photographic reproduction of the first edition, provided by the Yale University Library. No changes have been made in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization. The modern s has been substituted for the older form.

The unpublished doctoral dissertations of Jack Richard Brown and Mabel Hessler are quoted with the permission of the Dean of the Graduate School, Northwestern University, and the Dean of the Graduate School, University of Chicago, respectively.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations indicate the various sections of the text of The Historical Register, for the Year 1736.

- P. PREFACE TO THE DEDICATION
- D. DEDICATION TO THE PUBLICK
- D. P. DRAMATIS PERSONAE
- I. ACT I
- II. ACT II
- III. ACT III

Arabic numerals--1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.--indicate specific footnotes within each of the six sections of the text.

INTRODUCTION: PART I

POLITICAL AND THEATRICAL BACKGROUND

Patterned upon entries in a non-dramatic Register which annually summarized the events of the previous twelve months, the episodes of Henry Fielding's The Historical Register, for the Year 1736 parodied noteworthy items supposedly featured in the current issue of the Historical Register, Containing An Impartial Relation of All Transactions, Foreign and Domestick. With A Chronological Diary of All The remarkable Occurrences, viz. Births, Marriages, Deaths, Removals, Promotions, etc. that happen'd in this Year: Together with the Characters and Parentage of Persons deceas'd, of eminent Rank¹

But between the journalistic and dramatic versions Fielding made a distinction. Through his mouthpiece, playwright Medley,

¹Wilbur L. Cross, The History of Henry Fielding (New Haven, 1918), I, 210.

he promised that the dramatic Historical Register was "not to be fill'd like those of vulgar News-Writers, with trash for want of News" and pointedly asked, "if I comprise the whole Actions of the Year in half an Hour, will you blame me, or those who have done so little in that time?"² Yet in that brief "half an Hour" Fielding so succinctly satirized the political, social, and theatrical aspects of the contemporary scene that, as Charles W. Nichols suggests, "[t]he play might well be called, in more modern theatrical parlance, The Follies of 1736."³

Though his social satire was no less abundant than the political and the theatrical, it was perhaps more obvious. Consequently, the notes to the text of the play should provide sufficient background in this area. On the other hand, although it is true that the playwright daringly "made the political allegory thin enough for the intelligence of the most stupid"⁴ in his

² [Henry Fielding], The Historical Register, for the Year 1736. As It Is Acted at the New Theatre in the Hay-Market. To Which Is Added a Very Merry Tragedy, Called Eurydice Hiss'd (London, [1737]), p.3.

³ Charles W. Nichols, "Fielding and the Cibbers," PQ, I (October 1922), 278.

⁴ Cross, I, 225.

eighteenth-century audience, it is also true that the passing of more than two centuries has somewhat obscured the sharp-edged significance of that anti-Walpolean allegory.

A brief study of those aspects of Sir Robert Walpole's ministry most closely related to Fielding's attacks in The Historical Register will uphold the statement of Jack Richard Brown that "[i]f the age of Anne was the age of literary and political controversy, that of the first two Georges was not far behind."⁵

Having gained power under George I, Walpole strengthened it under George II through a successful alliance with Queen Caroline. His supremacy continued for a period longer than that of any previous party leader and influenced all future party development.⁶ Stressing "the avoidance of war, the encouragement of trade, the reduction of taxation, and for the rest, status quo--no innovations,"⁷ his policy was surprisingly

⁵ Jack Richard Brown, "Four Plays by Henry Fielding," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation (Northwestern University, Evanston, 1937), p. 4.

⁶ Keith Grahame Feiling, The Second Tory Party: 1714-1832 (London, 1959), p. 24.

⁷ J[ohn] H[arold] Plumb, The First Four Georges (London, 1956), p. 75.

simple, yet it provided a springboard for public criticism of Walpole's private life as well as of his ministry.

For the pens of the Grub-Street journalists, Walpole proved an excellent subject. Since the South Sea Bubble of 1720 he had been "the best-hated man in England."⁸ "His broken marriage, his liaison with Maria Skerrett, the friendship of the Queen; his houses, pictures, clothes; his brothers, his sons, his cousins, nothing was too gross for the public; the French ambassador sent the cartoons and caricatures back to amuse Versailles, and many remain among the dispatches at the Quai d'Orsay."⁹

It was not until 1725, however, that Walpole met with any serious, organized opposition. In that year an Opposition party was formed chiefly by discontented Whigs. Removed from office or favor as a result of Walpole's jealousy of potential rivals and his impatience of criticism, these "Patriots" within the next fifteen years included in their ranks wits, men of fashion,

⁸ J [ohn] H [arold] Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole: The King's Minister (London, 1960), II, 248.

⁹ Ibid.

and, most importantly, many of the outstanding literary figures of the age. At a nominal center of the Opposition was Frederick, Prince of Wales, who shortly after his arrival in England in December, 1728, "began to hate his father very heartily and not very secretly."¹⁰

Naturally, the party was not without journalistic support. Originated on December 5, 1726, by Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke and William Pulteney, the Craftsman remained its leading organ for twenty years and the archetype of all anti-ministry periodicals which appeared during Walpole's regime. Experts in "ministry-baiting," Bolingbroke and Pulteney popularized political controversy with their relentless castigation of court and government. Inadvertently, Walpole encouraged continued criticism by taking abuse very badly and by attempting to retaliate with hired writers of negligible ability.¹¹

¹⁰ John Hervey, Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second: from His Accession to the Death of Queen Caroline, ed. John Wilson Croker (London, 1884), I, 125.

¹¹ Plumb, First Four Georges, pp. 76-77.

Walpolean corruption, of course, became the catchword of the Craftsman's Opposition journalists; however, it was from Lincoln's Inn Fields rather than from Grub Street that the most famous early attack upon the prime minister's integrity appeared. Bitterly disappointed in his expectations of a lucrative government post, John Gay on January 29, 1728, presented The Beggar's Opera, a remarkable ballad opera whose skillful political satire prepared the way for Fielding. "Gay's intention was perfectly obvious to his contemporaries, but so cleverly had he presented his attack that the ministry was powerless to suppress the play without seeming to recognize the parallel between the rogues of Newgate and those of St. James's"¹²

Following the pattern set by Gay, literary censure of Walpole during the 1730's continued to center about the minister's acquisition of power and his corrupt application of it. From 1733 to 1737 the four most significant charges against Walpole recurring in the writings of literary men revolved around (1) introduction of the Excise Bill in 1733, (2) dismissals from public office after its withdrawal, (3) corruption

¹² Brown, pp. 4-5.

in the 1734 elections, and (4) passage of the Licensing Act of 1737.¹³

Considered by Walpole to be the most constructive program of his life,¹⁴ the Excise Bill led ultimately to his downfall. A proposal to substitute an excise duty on wine and tobacco for the usual customs duties on the two commodities, the program aimed to decrease greatly the possibilities of fraud in the collection of duties. Because of the resultant increase in revenue, the government then could lower the land tax from two shillings to one shilling in the pound. Nevertheless, according to John Hervey, "this scheme, instead of procuring him the popularity he thought it would, caused more clamour and made him, even, whilst the project was only talked of and in embryo, more vilified and abused by the universal outcries of the people than

¹³ Mabel Hessler, "The Literary Opposition to Sir Robert Walpole: 1721-1742," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation (University of Chicago, Chicago, 1934), p. 60.

¹⁴ William Thomas Laprade, Public Opinion and Politics in Eighteenth Century England: to the Fall of Walpole (New York, 1936), p. 339.

any one act of his whole administration."¹⁵

Learning of his plan before he was prepared to reveal it, the Opposition was probably without any sincere antagonism toward the bill. However, in the traditionally despised and feared name of excise, it astutely recognized an excellent point of attack.

Collected and published under the title Arguments Against Excise,¹⁶ weekly essays encouraged the spread of an "epidemic madness."¹⁷ Rumors circulated that Walpole's scheme marked the beginning of a plot to impose an excise tax on every article of consumption. Thus, even the landowners who were to profit by the proposed bill preferred the existing situation to the threatening possibility of a general excise.

Unwilling to retreat despite displays of mob violence, Walpole introduced the Excise Bill on March 14, 1733, repudiated

¹⁵ Hervey, I. 162.

¹⁶ William Coxe, Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Oxford: with Original Correspondence and Authentic Papers, Never Before Published (London, 1798), I, 378.

¹⁷ Hervey, I, 162.

the rumor of a general excise, and heard the motion for a second reading of his bill passed. But after a month filled with public demonstrations against the excise, Walpole acknowledged defeat by postponing the second reading of his bill until June 12. Since Parliament would be adjourned by that date, the minister's motion indicated withdrawal of the project.

As Hervey recalls, "[f]or a fortnight after the rejection of this Bill, nothing was heard of but rejoicings in all the great towns, and various indications of the people's enmity to the scheme and its abettors, as well as their joy on its miscarriage and their gratitude to its opponents."¹⁸ William Coxe somewhat more graphically describes the celebration. "Bonfires were made, effigies burnt, cockades were generally worn, inscribed with the motto of Liberty, Property, and no EXCISE; the Monument was illuminated, and every demonstration given of exuberant triumph and excessive joy."¹⁹

By means of pamphlets, periodical essays, street ballads, broadsides, and plays, the Opposition struggled to keep interest

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 208.

¹⁹ Coxe, I, 404.

in the excise incident alive and anti-Walpolean feeling at a high pitch. In the reaction of the masses, its success was evident. On April 11, 1734, for example, city mobs smashed unlighted windows to celebrate the anniversary of the defeat of the excise.²⁰

Although the Opposition had scored an important victory and Robert Walpole had suffered his first serious defeat, the prime minister remained strong enough to survive the crisis. After the danger of forced resignation subsided, he was quick to demonstrate his insistence upon absolute subordination. On the second day after the withdrawal of the Excise Bill, he demanded the resignation of Philip, Earl of Chesterfield, a leading dissenter and patron of Henry Fielding, and immediately after the adjournment of Parliament, the dismissal of several others.

Not without value to the Opposition, these dismissals added important public figures to its numbers and provided fresh substantiation for its arguments against Walpole. They also prompted the active support of Fielding at a time when it was fashionable to poke fun at the prime minister, his ministry, and,

²⁰

Laprade, p. 354.

of course, the unfortunate excise scheme. As Jack Richard Brown indicates, "without seeming to make more of a mountain out of the excise bill than its opponents did in 1733, it is almost certain that the major factor in determining Fielding's changed point of view was the controversy and bitter feeling aroused by this much-discussed measure."²¹

Fielding's early literary efforts best illustrate his political position prior to 1733. In 1730, for example, the youthful author addressed a humorous "Epistle" in verse to Robert Walpole. With some sincerity, perhaps, he outspokenly expressed his eagerness for a sinecure. Having failed in his initial attempt to interest Walpole, Fielding composed a similar poem the following year. Like the first, it brought no response from a prime minister who seldom rewarded artistic endeavors of any sort.

Meanwhile, Fielding's stage presentations from 1730 to 1732 began to involve Walpole in somewhat different ways. Possibly the most widely known of his plays, Tom Thumb the Great offered eighteenth-century audiences a burlesque of contemporary tragedy. Yet most critics agree that it included a carefree

²¹Brown, p. 38.

caricature of Walpole, "the Great Man," whom Fielding reduced to an all-powerful pigmy.

However, it was The Grub-Street Opera which marked his first attempt at direct political satire. Primarily non-partisan, its political parallels were obvious. Robin, the dishonest servant, represented Sir Robert; other servants, envious of Robin's lucrative position, typified the Opposition. Aimed at corruption in general, the lighthearted piece revealed its author as nothing more than "an entertaining young man, bantering the politics and politicians of his time with little regard to 'sides' or governmental principles."²²

Finally, in 1732 Fielding, fearing, perhaps, that Walpole had been seriously offended by the light, impartial satire of The Grub-Street Opera, made a last and apparently unsuccessful attempt to secure the prime minister's patronage for himself and for his art. Addressed to Walpole, the dedication to The Modern Husband expressed hope that the controversial minister might "triumph over Your Enemies at Home" and described him as

²² Ibid., p. 29.

"the wise Statesman, the generous Patron, the steadfast Friend, and the true Patriot," who possessed "that humanity and sweetness of temper, which shine through all your actions."²³

Whatever Fielding's motives, it is nevertheless evident that at the writing of this somewhat coarse comedy he felt less than bitter opposition to the ministry.

But, like that of many of his countrymen, Fielding's point of view changed radically between 1732 and 1734. That this political shift probably was inspired as much by the public events of 1733 as by personal disappointment was apparent in the dedication to Don Quixote in England.

Published in 1734, this dedication was addressed to Lord Chesterfield, obviously one of Walpole's most powerful "enemies at home" and, as Fielding depicted him, "One who hath so gloriously distinguished Himself in the Cause of Liberty."²⁴ In it

²³ Henry Fielding, The Modern Husband. A Comedy. As It Is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane. By His Majesty's Servants (London, 1732), n.p.

²⁴ Henry Fielding, Don Quixote in England. A Comedy. As It Is Acted at the New Theatre in the Hay-Market (London, 1734), n.p.

Fielding displayed his real dissatisfaction with the ministry and discussed the power of the stage in publicizing corrupt politics. "I fancy a lively Representation of the Calamities brought on a Country by general Corruption, might have a very sensible and useful Effect on the Spectators."²⁵

Analyzing the ministry's failure to reward literary achievement, he continued, "There are among us who seem so sensible of the Danger of Wit and Humour, that they are resolved to have nothing to do with them: and indeed they are in the right on't; for Wit like Hunger, will be with great Difficulty restrained from falling on, where there is great Plenty and Variety of Food."²⁶ The comedy itself appropriately explored corruption and bribery in elections, a most timely subject, since the Elections of 1734 were at hand.

Naturally, corruption once more became the battlecry of the Craftsman, and Liberty, Property, and No Excise, the campaign slogan of the Opposition.²⁷ Although it generally was satisfied

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Hessler, p. 63.

with its moderate gains in the elections, the Opposition lost no opportunity to criticize the ministry's unorthodox methods of securing votes. Its case was not wholly unfounded. For example, because fear of an excise was still fairly widespread, ministry agents in order to insure the success of one simple country election were forced to provide a double portion of beer for all, double fees for bell-ringers, and a half-guinea for every voter.²⁸

Fielding's next important political production was Pasquin. An immensely popular play, it again hit general corruption and aimed much of its attack at the Walpole party. Pointing up the prime minister's supposed creed that every man has his price, its satire presented corrupt politics "as not merely laughable but contemptible, and even vicious."²⁹

Finally, in The Historical Register, for the Year 1736 Fielding shot his satire directly at Walpole and his ministry.

²⁸ Basil Williams, "The Duke of Newcastle and the Election of 1734," EHR, XII (July 1897), 464.

²⁹ Hessler, p. 130.

Of the play's six satirical scenes, two dealt specifically with politics. The first was set, like the second, on "the island of Corsica." It introduced five politicians in conference around a table. Their nonsensical chatter concerned money and the most practical means of obtaining it, taxation. "Fielding's most audacious attack on Walpole"³⁰ and possibly the most daring ever presented on the eighteenth-century stage, the second scene featured the dance of the "Patriots." In it the playwright ridiculed those renegade members of the Opposition who were induced by the bribes of the prime minister, characterized as Quidam, to abandon the principles of their party and to parrot the slogans of the government.

Performed by a troupe of players organized by Fielding in 1735, The Historical Register was first produced on or about March 21, 1737, at the lively Little Theatre in the Haymarket. On April 13, 1737, Fielding's Eurydice Hiss'd; Or, a Word to the Wise replaced George Lillo's three-act domestic tragedy, Fatal Curiosity, as its afterpiece. Originally entitled The Damnation

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P. J. Crean, "The Stage Licensing Act of 1737," MP, XXXV (February 1938), 251.

of Eurydice, this brief presentation was in some respects a one-act continuation of The Historical Register.

The mock-tragedy cleverly represented the condemnation in the previous February of Fielding's Eurydice; or, The Devil Henpeck'd. As an account of the rise and fall of playwright Pillage, the piece was filled with playful personal passages, sometimes true, sometimes false. On the surface little more than a humorous satire on the contemporary stage, it contained, as amused audiences were quick to catch, uncomplimentary allusions to Walpole and his party. So insulting were these allusions that it was unlikely that they would be allowed to pass without government censure. For instance, there was the analogy to Walpole's ill-fated excise. Like Pillage, the prime minister had had a pet project damned.³¹

Understandably, The Historical Register, along with its afterpiece, Eurydice Hiss'd, earned for their author's theatre, according to actress Eliza Haywood, "the name of F-----g's scandal-shop, because he frequently exhibited there certain drolls or,

³¹ Brown, p. 74.

more properly, invectives against the Ministry."³² In the May 7, 1737 issue of the Daily Gazetteer, "An Adventurer in Politicks," apparently speaking from a position close to the prime minister, castigated the playwright for his stinging satire. Fielding's first reply came in his "Dedication to the Publick" published on May 12 with the texts of The Historical Register and Eurydice Hiss'd. This publication proved largely responsible for the Licensing Act of June 21, 1737.

Apparently angered by Fielding's offensive productions and his publication of The Historical Register, Walpole strove to silence dramatic satire of the government. Although he surely recognized in Fielding one of his most dangerous foes, he chose to press his case against the theatre with the mysterious work of an anonymous author.

First published in March, 1737, in an Opposition periodical, Common Sense, The Vision of the Golden Rump was rewritten in dramatic form and offered to theatre manager Henry Giffard. Whatever his intentions, Giffard presented the scurrilous piece to

³² [Eliza Haywood], The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless (Dublin, 1752), I, 50.

the prime minister, who read excerpts from it in the House of Commons.³³ Although "An Adventurer in Politicks" in his criticism of Fielding had expressed hope and confidence that the ministry would never resort to the legal silencing of satire,³⁴ Walpole next proposed an amendment to the Vagrancy Act of Queen Anne's time. This measure permitted only licensed theatres to produce plays and empowered the Lord Chamberlain to prohibit the performance of any theatrical entertainment. Under penalty of fine and suppression of license, new plays, additions, prologues, and epilogues had to be submitted for approval two weeks before presentation.³⁵

Walpole's measure was not the first of its kind. Two years earlier John Barnard had proposed a bill to limit the number of houses presenting interludes and to regulate their performers. His purpose was to prevent London theatres from further corrupting youth and encouraging vice. But Barnard withdrew his

³³Crean, p. 252.

³⁴Brown, p. 91

³⁵Crean, p. 254.

bill because he opposed an additional clause which allowed the Lord Chamberlain to license plays.³⁶

Walpole's bill, however, passed with only slight opposition. As might be expected, Pulteney fought it in the House of Commons, and Lord Chesterfield, in the House of Lords. Though to no avail, the latter's speech, which expressed fear for the continued freedom of the press, was, according to Hervey, "one of the most lively and ingenious speeches against it I ever heard in Parliament, full of wit, of the genteelest satire, and in the most polished, classical style that the Petronius of any time ever wrote: it was extremely studied, seemingly easy, well delivered, and universally admired."³⁷

Thus, his satires of 1737 were instrumental in forcing Fielding from the stage, where he had won fame and some degree of financial success. With much prejudice but with, perhaps, a measure of truth, Colley Cibber wrote of Fielding in his

³⁶Ibid., pp.243, 247.

³⁷Hervey, III, 143.

Apology:

He knew, too, that as he was in haste to get Money, it would take up less time to be intrepidly abusive than decently entertaining; that to draw the Mob after him he must rake the Channel and pelt their Superiors; . . . Such, then, was the mettlesome Modesty he set out with; upon his Principle he produc'd several frank and free Farces that seem'd to knock all Distinctions of Mankind on the Head: Religion, Laws, Government, Priests, Judges, and Ministers were all laid flat at the Feet of this Herculean Satyrist! This Drawcansir in Wit, that spared neither Friend nor Foe! who to make his Poetical Fame immortal, like another Erostratus, set Fire to his Stage by writing up to an Act of Parliament to demolish it.³⁸

Because Henry Fielding in The Historical Register ridiculed contemporary theatrical conditions as well as political, a discussion of the early eighteenth-century theatre may provoke greater appreciation of his satire. As already illustrated, the affairs of politics and the theatre were closely interwoven. Aware of their dependence upon public favor, the theatres were highly sensitive to political trends. As organs of propaganda, their influence was great.

When in 1714 George I ascended the English throne and the Whigs scored a decisive victory, Drury Lane was quick to

³⁸ Colley Cibber, An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Written by Himself, ed. Robert W. Lowe (London, 1889), I, 287.

associate itself with the triumphant cause. As a result, the Hanoverian years proved profitable ones for the patent theatre.³⁹ For two decades its managers, the famous triumvirate of Barton Booth, Robert Wilks, and Colley Cibber, headed the theatrical world. Of the three, Cibber undoubtedly was the most active and the least liked.⁴⁰

The many-sided adventures of Colley Cibber and his family unflinchingly provided literary men with entertaining copy. Opposed to Cibber's political leanings and to many of his theatrical views, Henry Fielding did not hesitate to encourage a laugh at Colley's expense. Covering a period of twenty-six years, Fielding's criticism of Cibber extended from The Author's Farce of 1730 to The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon of 1755. Although his ridicule became basically more personal after Cibber's long-awaited retaliation in his Apology of 1740, Fielding during his brief career as playwright found numerous

³⁹ John Loftis, "The London Theatres in Early Eighteenth-Century Politics," HLQ, XVIII (August 1955), 375, 388.

⁴⁰ F [rancesca] Dorothy Senior, The Life and Times of Colley Cibber (London, 1928), p. 78.

opportunities for timely hits.⁴¹

On December 3, 1730, a short time before illness and death dissolved the Drury Lane triumvirate, Cibber was appointed poet laureate. The post, vacated by the death of Laurence Eusden, apparently rewarded him for loyal service to the House of Hanover and Walpole's ministry.⁴² That Cibber, though competent in many fields, was a terrible poet seemed of no concern--except to Fielding and his fellow satirists.

Another much-publicized incident, the theatre war of 1733-34, involved not only Colley but also his actor son, Theophilus. At the dissolution of the Drury Lane triumvirate, Mrs. Booth sold her husband's holdings to John Highmore, "a gentleman who seems to have been a typical amateur manager, being possessed of some money, no judgment, and unbounded vanity."⁴³ She also relinquished a one-half share of the patent to Henry Giffard, who regarded his purchase only as an investment and played no active part in management. Meanwhile, Mrs. Wilks appointed John Ellis, a painter, as her deputy.

⁴¹Houghton W. Taylor, "Fielding Upon Cibber," MP, XXIX (August 1931), 73-74.

⁴²Loftis, p. 393.

⁴³Lowe, ed. An Apology, II, 258.

Representing his father, Theophilus quickly alienated his colleagues. To rid himself of the younger Cibber, Highmore bought Colley's shares. But Theophilus continued to interfere, eventually enticing most of Highmore's acting company to abandon Drury Lane for the Haymarket. Colley, of course, took his son's side and supposedly applied to the Duke of Grafton for a patent for Theophilus. Disgusted with the conduct of both Cibbers, the Duke denied Colley's request.⁴⁴

In serious financial difficulty Highmore took legal action against the revolting actors but failed to accomplish their return. Since only Kitty Clive and one or two other major talents remained loyal, Highmore had to import undistinguished actors from the country.⁴⁵ The situation became so desperate that, if Giffard had not supplied some performers from Goodman's Fields, he could not have reopened his theatre in autumn, 1733.⁴⁶ Finally, faced with empty pit and boxes, Highmore was forced to sell out to Charles Fleetwood, another amateur. Fortunately

⁴⁴Senior, p. 113.

⁴⁵Lowe, II, 260-261.

⁴⁶Cross, I, 148.

Fleetwood managed to regain the services of the deserters. On March 9, 1734, they presented their final performance at the Haymarket and three days later returned to the Drury Lane stage.⁴⁷

Fielding, naturally, turned public interest in the theatre rebellion to his advantage. On January 15, 1734, he presented at Drury Lane a revision of The Author's Farce, which this time exposed both Cibbers to his audience's laughter as Marplay Senior and Marplay Junior. Three years later in The Historical Register he followed a similar pattern, characterizing Colley as Ground-Ivy and Theophilus as Pistol.

The next newsworthy controversy of the Cibber clan featured Theophilus and his wife, Susannah Maria. In the outstanding theatrical incident of 1736, Mrs. Cibber contended with Kitty Clive for the part of Polly Peachum in The Beggar's Opera. Mrs. Clive, who successfully had played Polly as early as 1732, gained the support of most of the press and ultimately won the quarrel and the role from the inexperienced Susannah.

Throwing himself into the midst of the battle, Theophilus had campaigned extensively for his wife and had contributed to

⁴⁷ Lowe, II, 261.

her cause at least one letter in the Grub-Street Journal. As a result of his interference, he drew fresh criticism. For example, The Beggar's Pantomime, or the Contending Columbines, first performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields on December 3, 1736, satirized the quarrel and cleverly included Theophilus. Probably portrayed by the author of the farce, Henry Woodward, the unhappy Pistol was the butt of much banter.⁴⁸ Though the argument had ended by mid-January, 1737, Fielding played briefly upon it in The Historical Register.

In addition to his customary teasing of the Cibbers, Fielding in The Historical Register struck out at what he considered three general theatrical abuses. Of the trio, alteration of Shakespeare's plays, opera, and pantomime, the first again involved Colley Cibber.

According to Lucyle Hook, the traditional view that David Garrick chiefly was responsible for the renewed popularity of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century is not wholly accurate. Instead, the revival can be attributed to a variety of

⁴⁸William Eben Schultz, Gay's Beggar's Opera: Its Content, History, and Influence (New Haven, 1923), pp. 56, 59-62.

influences.⁴⁹ Read by only the scholarly, who perhaps had never viewed any of his plays, Shakespeare at the Restoration had been almost forgotten. But through the efforts of men like William Davenant, John Dryden, and Thomas Betterton, he was re-discovered during the next fifty years.⁵⁰

Unfortunately, with rediscovery came "refining." Well-meaning Georgian dramatists, like their Restoration predecessors, tampered with his texts in order to add "art" to Shakespeare's natural genius. If Shakespearean plays were to conform to current theories of dramatic art, they first must be altered. Adapters attempted numerous improvements. They revised histories to point up a popular philosophy, political doctrine, or religious prejudice; they polished Shakespeare's diction, inserted passages from his other plays or from those of various authors, and enlarged women's roles to emphasize love and intrigue. To win the applause of the common people, they added

⁴⁹ Lucyle Hook, "Shakespeare Improv'd, or a Case for the Affirmative," SQ, IV (July 1953), 291.

⁵⁰ F[rank] E[rnest] Halliday, The Cult of Shakespeare (London, [1957]), pp. 40, 43.

scenes of violence, music, and spectacle. To win the approval of the theorists, they followed the rule of poetical justice, confined tragedy solely to persons of high position, and made all heroes and heroines virtuous.⁵¹

Among the greatest offenders was Colley Cibber. A racy melodrama and patchwork of half a dozen histories, his Richard III is perhaps the most famous eighteenth-century Shakespearean alteration.⁵² Penned in 1700 and often staged after that time, the play contained a few frequently quoted lines of Cibber which sometimes are attributed to Shakespeare.⁵³ While attacking the contemporary trend toward alteration, Fielding made special mention of Cibber and another of his adaptations, the unsuccessful Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John.

At the close of his Register, Fielding also makes a more complimentary allusion to another influence in Shakespearean revival, the Shakespeare Ladies Club. Organized late in 1736,

⁵¹ Frederick Wilkinson Kilbourne, Alterations and Adaptations of Shakespeare (Boston, 1906), pp. 12-13, 16-19, 21.

⁵² Halliday, p. 39.

⁵³ Kilbourne, pp. 107-108.

the club recognized the tasteless preference of people of fashion for plots and intrigues. Thus, it aimed to join fashion with reason by persuading London theatre managers to increase the number of Shakespeare's works in their repertories.⁵⁴

Largely responsible during the 1736-37 season for a 3 per cent rise over the previous year in Shakespearean performances, the club "restored many of Shakespeare's neglected plays to the boards, increased the frequency with which many of the familiar ones were presented, brought his works a great deal of publicity in an exceedingly short time, and became a model to later groups which similarly wished to improve the stage."⁵⁵

For its worthwhile achievement the club was saluted in poems, prologues, and periodical articles. Presented at Drury Lane on February 28, 1737, the following, a prologue to James Miller's alteration of Much Ado About Nothing, renamed The Universal Passion, is typical:

⁵⁴ Emmett L. Avery, "The Shakespeare Ladies Club," SQ, VII (Spring 1956), 153-154.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 153, 156.

Britannia thus, with Folly's Gloom o'ercast,
Has slumb'ring lain near half a Cent'ry past,
But now what Joy! to find the Night is o'er!
To see the Lamp of Science shine once more;
To see the Reign of Farce and Dulness end,
And Albion's noble Fair to Shakespear's Sense attend.

'Twas this gave Birth to our Attempt to-night,
Fond to bring more of his rich Scenes to light:
But conscious how unequal to the Task,
Our Bard scarce dares your Clemency to ask:

.....
To You, ye Fair, for Refuge now he flies,
And as you smile or frown, he lives or dies:
You are the ablest Judges of this Play,
Since LOVE'S almighty Pow'r's his Theme to-day:
To your Protection Shakespear's Offspring take,
And save the Orphan for the Father's Sake.⁵⁶

In attacking opera, the second theatrical abuse, Fielding surprisingly seemed to share the opinion of Colley Cibber. Both were highly suspicious of that Italian entertainment which had come "stealing into England, but in as rude a disguise as possible, in a lame, hobbling translation, with false qualities, sung by unskilled voices, with graces misapplied to almost every sentiment, and with action lifeless and unmeaning through every character."⁵⁷

⁵⁶ [James Miller], The Universal Passion. A Comedy. As It Is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane; by His Majesty's Servants (London, 1737), n.p.

⁵⁷ Cibber, I, 324.

As playwrights and theatre managers, they opposed a form which overpowered legitimate drama and native music and, at the same time, endangered the financial security of their playhouses. Furthermore, as a satirist and public-spirited citizen, Fielding took issue with a supposedly effeminate production which made foreigners wealthy at the expense of Englishmen. As a supporter of the Opposition, he was hostile to the patronage of a foreign innovation by the British court.

The origin of Italian opera in England traces to the first decade of the eighteenth century. Arsince, the first production, was introduced in 1705, followed by the equally successful Camilla. Five years later, the arrival of George Frederick Handel stimulated interest in the opera, but, after seven years of costly experimentation and feeble support, performances temporarily were halted. In 1720 Handel with the financial aid of royalty and nobility founded the Royal Academy of Music, and in less than a decade Italian opera firmly was established as a popular fashion.⁵⁸ Located in the Haymarket, the Opera House, or King's Theater became the favorite place of diversion for nobility and gentry.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Schultz, pp. 133-134.

⁵⁹F [rederick] Homes Dudden, Henry Fielding: His Life, Works, and Times (Oxford, 1952), I, 34.

With the rise of opera came the introduction of such performers as Ajugari, Cuzzoni, La Faustina, and Senesino to the eighteenth-century English stage.⁶⁰ In The Historical Register Fielding selected Carlo Broschi Farinelli, the current favorite, as the subject of his satire. Idolized by the English public, Farinelli performed in London for three years and in 1737 retired to Spain with a fortune amassed, as he admitted, from "England's Folly."⁶¹ The following excerpt from a poem printed in the Grub-Street Journal, June 5, 1735, illustrates the tone of opposition to Farinelli.

⁶⁰ Edwin Beresford Chancellor, The Eighteenth Century in London: an Account of Its Social Life and Arts (London, [1921]), p. 39.

⁶¹ Henry Hadow, "Music," Johnson's England: an Account of the Life and Manners of the Age, ed. A[rthur] S[tanley] Turberville (Oxford, 1933), II, 192.

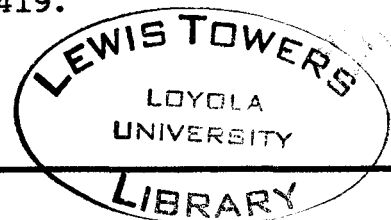
Whilst Britain, destitute of aid,
 Weeps taxes and decaying trade;
 Sees want approach with nimble pace,
 And ruin stare her in the face;
 Charm'd by the sweet Italian's tongue,
 In show'rs of gold she pays each song.
 Say, politicians, how agree
 Such bounty, and such poverty?
 Each Cit for thee, dear FARINELLI,
 To feed the ear, neglects the belly.
 The wondrous magick of thy voice,
 Still parties' ever-jarring noise:
 For thee together they combine,
 And in harmonious discord join.

.
 For him the Cits, to please their spouses,
 Cut down their trees, and sell their houses:
 Whilst he departing, (and what worse is)
 Leaving behind him empty purses,
 Melodious chymist! counts his gains.⁶²
 Extracting gold from leaden brains.

Pantomime, the third abuse, "was to many the greatest menace to the dignity and welfare of the stage."⁶³ Undoubtedly, it was the most influential in a list of eighteenth-century theatrical entertainments which included "such diverse elements as songs, dialogues, interludes of vocal and instrumental music,

⁶² The Grub-Street Journal (London), June 5, 1735, quoted in Charles W. Nichols, "Social Satire in Fielding's Pasquin and The Historical Register," PQ, III (October 1924), 310-311.

⁶³ Emmett L. Avery, "Dancing and Pantomime on the English Stage: 1700-1737," SP, XXXI (July 1934), 419.



acrobatic acts, imitations, exhibitions of strange human beings or animals, [and] individual and group dances."⁶⁴ Like the other presentations, it was in some respects a return to the Elizabethan tradition of the masque, which had incorporated elaborate scenery and mechanical effects.⁶⁵

Two men dominated its history. The first was John Weaver, a Drury Lane dancing master, who published books on the history and theory of dance and pantomime. In The History of the Mimes and Pantomimes, he attributed to himself the creation of the first English pantomime.⁶⁶ The second and more famous was John Rich, performer and theater manager. Having failed as a regular actor because of his poor education and unpleasant voice, the eccentric "Lun" introduced the silent Harlequin in 1717 and from that year until 1760 annually produced a pantomime. Extremely successful, his unartistic entertainments often ran consecutively for forty or fifty nights.⁶⁷ But "his excursions from legitimate

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 417.

⁶⁵ Senior, p. 93.

⁶⁶ Avery, SP, XXXI, 430.

⁶⁷ Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, eds., DNB (London, 1885-1901), XVI, 1001.

drama were less the result of bad taste than of no taste at all."⁶⁸

By late in 1723 Rich's pantomimes were turning thousands from the once supreme Drury Lane to Lincoln's Inn Fields. Uncomfortably on the defensive, Drury Lane found itself forced to provide similar productions. Naturally, rivalry inspired Rich to even more energetic undertakings, and, thus, with the increased competition came the increased popularity of pantomime.

But, if John Rich was without artistic conscience, Colley Cibber of Drury Lane was not. Recognizing his participation in the degradation of the stage, Cibber attempted to justify his position. Like Barton Booth, who feared the evils of an empty house more than those of pantomime,⁶⁹ he preferred compliance with the popular tastes to financial disaster. In his Apology he excused himself and the theater.

It is not to the Actor, therefore, but to the vitiated and low Taste of the Spectator, that the Corruptions of the Stage (of what kind soever) have been owing. If the Publick, by whom they must live, had Spirit enough to discountenance and declare against all the Trash and Fopperies they have been so frequently fond of, both the Actors and the Authors, to the best of their Power, must naturally have serv'd their daily Table with sound and wholesome Diet.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Senior, p. 92.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 95.

⁷⁰ Cibber, I, 112-113.

Though Rich vacated Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1732, the old criticisms followed him to his new theatre in Bow Street, Covent Garden. Of course, one of those criticisms was the failure of pantomime and its related entertainments to appeal to the higher faculties of man. As physical properties grew in importance, "to the disgust of the intellectual, the work of the carpenter became as essential as that of the poet."⁷¹ Dullness attacked the dignity of the stage.

Another of the criticisms was the increase in theatre prices when pantomimes followed a play. While management doubled its weekly turnover,⁷² the play itself was often drastically shortened to allow for the following entertainment.⁷³ To pacify objectors, playbills promised the return of advance money to those leaving before the overture to the entertainments.⁷⁴ Yet, the majority remained to see regular drama overshadowed by pantomime.

⁷¹Dane Farnsworth Smith, Plays about the Theatre in England from The Rehearsal in 1671 to the Licensing Act or, the Self-Conscious Stage and Its Burlesque and Satirical Reflections in the Age of Criticism (London, 1936), p. x.

⁷²Senior, p. 96.

⁷³Dudden, I, 36.

⁷⁴Senior, p. 96.

Thus, it is evident that in contemporary London life with its arguments, abuses, and intrigues, Henry Fielding found a surplus of subject matter for The Historical Register. An evaluation of Fielding's artistic success in satirizing this material next will be presented.

INTRODUCTION: PART II

THE HISTORICAL REGISTER, A "DRAMATICK SATIRE"

That mediocrity marked the English drama in the first half of the eighteenth century is a theory seldom disputed by even the most avid defenders of that age. Until the emergence of Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Sheridan, the period was one of "poor plays and clever acting."¹ Certainly its comedy "was never more than second rate."² No longer the intellectual and sophisticated amusement of the court, it catered to the city crowds and substituted topical allusions, farce, and sentiment for true wit.

Two strangely dissimilar yet equally powerful types of

¹ John Calvin Metcalf, "Henry Fielding, Critic," SR, XIX (April 1911), 140.

² F[rederick] W[ilse] Bateson, English Comic Drama: 1700-1750 (Oxford, 1929), p. 144.

rivals sapped its strength. On the one hand, the freak forms of Italian opera, pantomime, burlesque, ballad opera, and spectacle weakened the regular stage from within; on the other, the English novel, a newer and more subtle foe, fought for and finally won literary dominance from without.

More closely associated than most of his contemporaries with both of these areas of rivalry was Henry Fielding. As a popular playwright in the 1730's, he attacked various objectionable features of the contemporary theatre. As a major novelist in the next two and a half decades, he joined the ranks of the stage's second, more artistic rival and achieved an excellence which merited him the title, "Father of the English novel."

But like the comedy of his period, Henry Fielding the playwright was perhaps second rate. Though his qualified success on the London stage would have secured him a place in the history of English literature had he written nothing else,³ his dramatic works pale in comparison to his novels. In an effort to account for the inferior quality of his plays, some early editors and

³L. P. Goggin, "Development of Techniques in Fielding's Comedies," PMLA, LXVII (September 1952), 770.

biographers pointed to the amazing total of twenty-six pieces which he composed or adapted between 1728 and 1737 and attributed this inferiority to careless haste. As "the most prominent and the most productive playwright in England"⁴ during this nine-year period, Fielding obviously wrote with remarkable rapidity. Yet he evidenced a similar speed in the composition of his novels. Moreover, many of his dramatic works were the products of considerable thought and careful revision.

Other critics dismissed even more summarily his stage presentations by applying to Fielding the rather unsatisfactory generalization that a good novelist never can be a good dramatist. However, in viewing his stage career merely as a period of literary apprenticeship, Fielding himself provided possibly the most plausible explanation. Discussing his presentation of Love in Several Masques at the age of twenty, he claimed somewhat inaccurately in the preface to that play that "none ever appeared so early on the stage."⁵ Silenced at the age of thirty

⁴Ibid., p. 769.

⁵ [Henry] Fielding, Love in Several Masques. A Comedy. As It Is Acted at the Theatre-Royal, by His Majesty's Servants (London, 1728), n.p.

by the Licensing Act of 1737, he believed that he "left off writing for the stage, when he ought to have begun."⁶

Just as early critics suggested various causes for the mediocrity of Fielding's plays, literary students of later years present divergent views of his over-all ability as a playwright. At one extreme, George Bernard Shaw in a "curiosity of criticism"⁷ characterizes Fielding as "the greatest dramatist, with the single exception of Shakespear, produced by England between the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century."⁸ At the other, Austin Dobson with equal exaggeration claims: "As a dramatist he has no eminence; and though his plays do not deserve the sweeping condemnation with which Macaulay once spoke of them in the House of Commons, they are not likely to attract any critics but those for whom the inferior efforts of a great genius possess a morbid fascination."⁹

⁶Henry Fielding, The Works of Henry Fielding, Esq., ed. James P. Browne (London, 1871), I, 40.

⁷Dudden, Henry Fielding, I, 223.

⁸[George] Bernard Shaw, Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant (Chicago, 1904), I, xvii.

⁹Austin Dobson, Fielding, English Men of Letters (London, 1889), p. 188.

Avoiding the overstatement of Shaw and Dobson, most scholars, nevertheless, agree that Fielding "cannot be placed higher than among playwrights of the second rank."¹⁰ Middle-of-the-road both in praise and in condemnation, they second the statement of biographer F. Homes Dudden: "He was a moderately competent constructor of plays who understood well enough how to interest and amuse his audience, by the briskness and unexpectedness of stage movement, by the piquancy of topical and personal allusions, and by humorously cynical apophthegms; but there is nothing in his rather superficial performances which warrants the conjecture that he might, with more practice, have developed into a dramatist of the first order."¹¹

While differences of opinion make more difficult an estimate of Fielding as a writer of the drama, his widely-varying degrees of success in several areas of comedy complicate a general evaluation of his dramatic endeavors.

According to Emmett L. Avery, "Something lively and vigorous went out of London theaters when Fielding was forced from

¹⁰ Dudden, I, 223.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 224.

the Haymarket in the spring of 1737."¹² Unfortunately little of the liveliness and vigor of which Avery speaks was apparent in the playwright's early stage productions. Although he never attempted tragedy, Fielding experimented in almost every other type of drama popular in his time.

Because, as Leo Hughes emphasizes, the common practice of lumping together most of Fielding's dramatic works as farces "obliterates a distinction between the plays that the most superficial glance at their impact on the theatrical history will disclose,"¹³ some further distinctions must be made. Though their often irregular nature defies clear-cut classification, the playwright's pieces may be placed in four categories: (1) the regular comedies and adaptations from the French, (2) the farcical ballad operas, (3) the burlesques, and (4) the dramatic satires.

His initial efforts were in regular comedy. L. P. Goggin

¹² Emmett L. Avery, "Fielding's Last Season with the Haymarket Theatre," MP, XXXVI (February 1939), 292.

¹³ Leo Hughes, A Century of English Farce (Princeton, 1956) p. 20.

regards Fielding's eight comedies as his major work as a dramatist. However, Goggin finds the chief value of these plays in their relationship to Fielding's novels rather than in their own excellence. He notes in them, for example, the development of those techniques of plotting, characterization, and verisimilitude necessary to the novelist.¹⁴

Nevertheless, Goggin is virtually alone in his praise. Generally considered the least successful of his stage presentations, these comedies were patterned upon the works of several Restoration writers, especially William Congreve, and seemed to be executed to a formula. The failure of this formula perhaps may be assigned both to the personality of the playwright and to the weakness of the form itself. Unlike Congreve, Fielding was an excellent observer but not an analyst. While Congreve confined himself to an analysis of the gestures and eccentricities which he depicted, Fielding preferred an ethical approach to the mechanism and motivation behind these affectations. Furthermore, his interest lay in the world of the real, the common, the everyday middle-class; it did not lie in that of Congreve's highly artificial and sophisticated society.¹⁵

¹⁴Goggin, pp. 769-770.

¹⁵Bateson, pp. 117-119.

As he struggled to imitate an outlook dissimilar to his own, Fielding also adopted a genre which had lost its vitality. The artificial subtleties of the comedy of manners held little appeal for a new middle-class audience which demanded more realistic forms abounding in sentimental, ethical, and didactic elements.¹⁶

Although the author was apparently too original to be successfully imitative in formal comedy, his adaptations from the French were somewhat more skillfully composed. Superior to his regular comedies were Fielding's farcical ballad operas, which in freshness of prose dialogue and poetical quality of verse still fell far short of the perfection of John Gay's Beggar's Opera. But it was in his attempts at burlesque that the playwright began to treat the direct censure of contemporary folly, the field in which his most brilliant theatrical successes were to be won.

Finally, in his last plays Fielding developed the genre in which he made his most significant contributions to English drama. A fluid form which he designated "Dramatick Satire," it

¹⁶ Metcalf, p. 139.

might have been suggested originally by The Rehearsal of the second Duke of Buckingham. But unlike Buckingham's work, it was more than a witty literary parody dealing in pretense satire or make-believe exposure.¹⁷

In an age of heightened social consciousness, Fielding struck out satirically at affectation of all kinds and proved himself an adept as well as entertaining censor and critic. Eager to return English criticism to nature and common sense, he employed dramatic realism to expose offenses and reform offenders. Through satire which was for the most part vigorous if not always original, he displayed the profound knowledge of human nature which was his most valuable characteristic as a critic.¹⁸ Because he understood London and the eighteenth-century Englishman, Fielding "seemed to belong to the very life which he described; not merely to know it, but to be it."¹⁹

An integral part of the life upon which he commented, the

¹⁷ Bateson, p. 121.

¹⁸ Metcalf, pp. 153-154.

¹⁹ Cross, History of Henry Fielding, III, 135.

playwright was imprisoned in the concrete. Since he lived in a world of particulars, the only meaning he could extract from these particulars was in their immediate effect upon him. An egocentric by nature, Fielding won success in dramatic satire because its form allowed intrusions by the author.²⁰ As Leslie Stephen comments, "Fielding seems to be quite incapable of hiding his broad shoulders and lofty structure behind his little puppet-show."²¹ The puppeteer "is always present as chorus; he tells us what morals we ought to draw; he overflows with shrewd remarks, given in their most downright shape . . ."²²

Yet Fielding was more than an ordinary realist, for he delved beneath appearance or surface reality to employ words as satiric or ethical symbols. By cultivating an analogical way of looking at life, he was able to select a popular idea and by constant application, re-definition, and emphasis transform it into an effective symbol. Understandably, it was within the loose framework of his dramatic satires that he was most suc-

²⁰ Bateson, p. 142.

²¹ Leslie Stephen, Hours in a Library (London, 1892), II, 183.

²² Ibid.

cessful in drawing these analogies between dissimilar people and phenomena.²³ As a result, "one feels, the brilliance of the plays is in part due to Fielding's ability to make one symbol stand for several things or persons--to satirize in the same lines, the mismanagement of the theatre, and the maladministration of government; Theophilus Cibber, and Sir Robert Walpole."²⁴

As an exponent of dramatic realism, an ever-present social commentator, and a skilled analogist, Fielding advocated wisdom and virtue by the rollicking ridicule of folly and vice. To some degree he was in sympathy with the aims of sentimental comedy. Although opposed to excessively moralized drama, he indirectly assisted the new sentimental school by supporting the moral and educative function of comedy. In dramatic satire the playwright "saw that he could moralize and preach provided there was humour for the leaven; that he could waylay the vicious but that it must be from ambush; the blow must be struck from the side or from behind, not full in the face after the manner of a Juvenal."²⁵

²³Winfield Rogers, "Fielding's Early Aesthetic and Technique" SP, XL (October 1943), 530, 541, 543.

²⁴Hessler, "Literary Opposition," p. 140.

²⁵Cross, III, 278.

To most effectively stage his satirical attacks, Fielding frequently abandoned the traditional five-act formula of formal drama. By presenting three-act and one-act pieces, he fostered the practice of including a brief afterpiece and consequently encouraged the writing of short theatrical pieces to round out an evening's entertainment.

Thus, besides rendering service negatively by ridiculing such stage peculiarities as the pomposity of heroic tragedy, the pedantry of pseudo-classicism, and the awkwardness of the conventional prologue and epilogue, Fielding proved himself to be a positive theatrical force. Through his advocacy of dramatic realism, his indirect support of sentimental comedy, and his popularization of shorter plays, he exerted an influence upon English drama which cannot be overlooked.

During his final season at the Haymarket, Fielding developed to the highest degree his skill in dramatic satire. An outstanding example of his endeavors in this form is his last important play. In the opening scene of The Historical Register for the Year 1736, its author enumerates the characteristics of the new genre: (1) It was "avowedly irregular,"²⁶ lacking a

26

Fielding, The Historical Register, p. 3.

logical and connected plot; (2) its "main Design" was to "divert the Town, and bring full Houses"²⁷ through an element of surprise contained in whimsical, imaginative conceits; and (3) its moral was in its ability "to ridicule the vicious and foolish Customs of the Age, and that in a fair manner, without Fear, Favour, or Ill-nature, and without Scurrility, ill-Manners, or common-Place...to expose the reigning Follies in such a manner, that Men shall laugh themselves out of them before they feel that they are touch'd."²⁸

As dramatic satire, The Historical Register may be numbered among those works which Dudden considers, partially because of "their facetious but stinging criticism of the political, social, and theatrical life of the period," "the most original of Fielding's contributions to the literature of the stage."²⁹ A theatrical hit in its own day, the Register likewise has won the praise of several twentieth-century critics. Regarding it as "comparable to the satires of Rabelais and Aristophanes,"³⁰

²⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Dudden, I, 227.

³⁰ Bateson, p. 121.

F. W. Bateson asserts, "The Historical Register, For the Year 1736 is certainly Fielding's dramatic masterpiece. The satire is more trenchant, the dialogue is more incisive, the fantasy is more effective, than in the earlier plays."³¹ In a similar vein, Dane Farnsworth Smith states, "Of all political attacks in play form, it is perhaps one of the best. Its sheer satirical force is unimpaired by dullness and untainted by scurrility. The piece has not so much dramatic objectivity as the earlier Pasquin, yet neither does it have so many tedious lines. Pasquin, irregular as it is, has more unity of plot but not of purpose, for the disconnected elements in The Historical Register, like skirmishers, combine beautifully in attack."³²

In directing thrusts at society and theatre as well as at politics, the playwright utilized two of his favorite techniques. To admit the personal factor, he set the three-act satire in popular rehearsal form. As essentials in a device which allowed the author to indulge in interpolations like those he later was to include in his novels, author Medley and critic Sowrwit

³¹
Ibid., p. 136.

³²
Smith, Plays about the Theatre, p. 220.

served as Fielding's mouthpieces throughout the Register.

To exhibit most advantageously his skill in symbolism, he played upon commonplaces of the period. Employing, for example, the tradition of the "great man," he applied it to Robert Walpole. An age which daily was witnessing the widening breach between selfless leadership and unprincipled despotism was quick to discern Fielding's distinction between goodness and greatness.³³

Because of the comprehensive sweep of its satirical attacks, The Historical Register may be called "an inclusive, almost bewildering, kaleidoscopic satire."³⁴ As such, it represented the maturation of Fielding's mind to the point of seeing life as a whole.³⁵ But because of the sharpness of those attacks, it prevented any further dramatic development on the part of the playwright. With The Historical Register Henry Fielding unwittingly brought to a close the theatrical period which he had dominated for nine years. As the Licensing Act of 1737

³³ Rogers, pp. 543-544.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 549.

³⁵ Ibid.

shuttered London's unlicensed theatres, he turned his literary talents from the drama to the novel.

THE
HISTORICAL REGISTER,
For the YEAR 1736.

As it is Acted at the
NEW THEATRE
In the HAY-MARKET.

To which is added a very Merry Tragedy, called
EURYDICE HISS'D,
OR,
A WORD to the WISE.

Both written by the Author of Pasquin.

To these are prefixed a long Dedication to the
Publick, and a Preface to that Dedication.

LONDON,

Printed: And sold by J. Roberts near the Oxford-
Arms-Inn in Warwick-Lane.

[Price 1s. 6 d.]

To The
DEDICATION.

As no Man hath a more stern and inflexible Hatred to Flattery¹ than myself, it hath been usual with me to send most of my Performances into the World without the Ornament of those Epistolary Prefaces, commonly called Dedications;² a Custom however highly censured by my Bookseller,³ who affirms it a most unchristian Practice: A Patron⁴ is, says he, a kind of God-father to a Book, and a good Author ought as carefully to provide a Patron to his Works, as a good Parent should a God-father to his Children: He carries this very far and draws several Resemblances between those two Offices (for having, in the Course of his Trade with Dramatick Writers, purchased, at a moderate Computation, the Fee-simple⁵ of one hundred thousand Similes, he is perhaps the most expert in their Application, and most capable of shewing Likenesses, in things utterly unlike, of any Man living) What, says he, does more Service to a Book, or raises Curiosity in the Reader, equal with--dedicated to his Grace the Duke of --or the Right Honourable the Earl of --in an Advertisement? I think the Patron here may properly be said to give a Name to the Book --and if he gives a Present also; what

doth he less than a Godfather? which Present if the Author applies to his own Use, what doth he other than the Parent? He proceeds to shew how a Bookseller is a kind of dry Nurse to our Works, with other Instances which I shall omit, having already said enough to prove the exact Analogy between Children and Books, and of the Method of providing for each; which I think affords a sufficient Precedent for throwing the following Piece on the Publick, it having been usual for several very prudent Parents to act by their Children in the same Manner.

To The
PUBLICK.

I HOPE you will pardon the Presumption of this Dedication, since I really did not know in what manner to apply for your Leave; and since I expect no Present in return: (the Reason I conceive, which first introduc'd the Ceremony of asking Leave among Dedicators:) For surely it is somewhat absurd to ask a Man Leave to flatter him; and he must be a very impudent or simple Fellow, or both, who will give it. Asking Leave to dedicate, therefore, is asking whether you will pay for your Dedication, and in that Sense I believe it understood by both Authors and Patrons.¹

But farther, the very candid Reception which you have given these Pieces, pleads my Excuse. The least Civility to an Author or his Works, hath been held, Time immemorial, a just Title to a Dedication, which is perhaps no more than an honest Return of Flattery, and in this Light I am certain no one ever had so great (I may call it) an Obligation as my self, seeing that you have honour'd this my Performance with your Presence every Night of its Exhibition, where you have never failed shewing the greatest Delight and Approbation;² nor am I less oblig'd to you for those Elogiums which you have been heard in all Places to--

but hold, I am afraid this is an ingenious way which Authors have discovered to convey inward Flattery to themselves, while outwardly they address it to their Patron: Wherefore I shall be silent on this Head, having more Reasons to give why I chose you to patronize these Pieces: And

First, The Design with which they are writ; for tho' all Dramatick Entertainments are properly calculated for the Publick, yet these, I may affirm, more particularly belong to you; as your Diversion is not merely intended by them, their Design being to convey some Hints, which may, if you please, be of infinite Service in the present State of that Theatrical World whereof they treat, and which is, I think, at present so far from flourishing as one cou'd wish, that I have with Concern observed some Steps lately taken, and others too justly apprehended, that may much endanger the Constitution of the British Theatre: For tho' Mr.-- be a very worthy Man, and my very good Friend, I cannot help thinking his Manner of proceeding somewhat too arbitrary, and his Method of buying Actors at exorbitant Prices to be of very ill Consequence: For the Town must reimburse him these Expenses, on which Account those advanced Prices so much complained of must be always continued; which tho' the People in their present flourishing State of Trade and Riches

may very well pay, yet in worse Times (if such can be supposed) I am afraid they may fall too heavy, the Consequence of which I need not mention. Moreover, should any great Genius produce a Piece of most exquisite Contrivance, and which would be highly relished by the Publick, tho' perhaps not agreeable to his own Taste or private Interest; if he should buy off the chief Actors, such Play, however excellent, be unavoidably sunk, and the Publick lost all the Benefit thereof. Not to trouble the Reader with more Inconveniencies arising from this Argumentum

³
Argentarium, many of which are obvious enough--I shall only observe, that Corruption hath the same Influence on all Societies, all Bodies, which it hath on Corporeal Bodies, where we see it always produce an entire Destruction and total Change: For which Reason, whoever attempteth to introduce Corruption into any Community, doth much the same thing, and ought to be treated in much the same manner with him who poisoneth a Fountain in order to disperse a Contagion, which he is sure every one will drink of.⁴

The last Excuse I shall make for this Presumption, is the Necessity I have of so potent a Patron to defend me from the iniquitous Surmises of a certain anonymous dialogous Author, who in The Gazeteer of the 17th Instant⁵ has represented The

Historical Register, as aiming, in Conjunction with The Miller of Mansfield,⁶ the Overthrow of the M--y. If this Suggestion had been inserted in The Craftsman⁷ or Common-Sense,⁸ or any of those Papers which no Body reads, it might have past unanswered; but as it appears in a Paper of so general a Reception as The Gazeteer,⁹ which lies in the Window of almost every Posthouse¹⁰ in England, it behoves me, I think, in the most serious Manner, to vindicate myself from Aspersion of so evil a Tendency to my future Prospects. And here I must observe, that had not Mankind been either very blind or very dishonest, I need not have publicly informed them that The Register is a Ministerial Pamphlet, calculated to infuse into the Minds of the People a great Opinion of their Ministry, and thereby procure an Employment for the Author, who has been often promised one, whenever he would write on that Side.¹¹

And first,

Can any thing be plainer than the first Stanza of the Ode?

This is a *Day, in Days of Yore,

Our Fathers never saw before;

This is a Day, 'tis one to ten,

Our Sons will never see again.

plainly intimating that such Times as these never were seen before, nor will ever be seen again; for which the present Age are certainly obliged to their Ministry.

What can be meant by the Scene of Politicians, but to ridicule the absurd and inadequate Notions Persons among us, who have not the Honour to know 'em, have of the Ministry and their Measures: Nay I have put some Sentiments into the Mouths of these Characters, which I was a little apprehensive were too low even for a Conversation at an Alehouse¹²--I hope The Gazeteer will not find any Resemblance here, as I hope he will not make such a Compliment to any M--y, as to suppose that such Persons have been ever capable of the Assurance of aiming at being at the Head of a great People or to any Nation, as to suspect 'em contentedly living under such an Administration.

* For Day in the first and third Line, you may read Man, if you please.

The Eagerness which these Gentlemen express at applying all Manner of evil Characters to their Patrons, brings to my Mind a story I have somewhere read; as two Gentlemen were walking the street together, the one said to the other, upon spying the Figure of an Ass hung out--Bob, Bob,¹³ look yonder, some impudent Rascal has hung out your Picture on a Sign-post: The grave Companion, who had the Misfortune to be extremely short-sighted, fell into a violent Rage, and calling for the Master of the House threatened to prosecute him for exposing his Features in that publick manner: The poor Landlord, as you may well conceive, was extremely astonished, and denied the Fact; upon which the witty Spark,¹⁴ who had just mentioned the Resemblance, appeals to the Mob now assembled together, who soon smoked¹⁵ the Jest, and agreed with him that the Sign was the exact Picture of the Gentleman: At last a good-natur'd Man, taking Compassion of the poor Figure, whom he saw the Jest of the Multitude, whispered in his Ear; Sir, I see your Eyes are bad, and that your Friend is a Rascal and imposes on you; the Sign hung out is the Sign of an Ass, nor will your Picture be here unless you draw it yourself.

But I ask Pardon for troubling the Reader with an impertinent Story, which can be apply'd only in the above-mentioned Instance to my present Subject.

I proceed in my Defence to the Scene of the Patriots; a scene which I thought would have made my Fortune, seeing that the favourite Scheme of turning Patriotism into a Jest¹⁶ is so industriously pursued, and I will challenge all the Ministerial Advocates to shew me, in the whole Bundle of their Writings, one Passage where false Patriotism (for I suppose they have not the Impudence to mean any other) is set in a more contemptible and odious Light than in the aforesaid Scene. I hope too it will be remarked that the Politicians are represented as a Set of blundering Blockheads rather deserving Pity than Abhorrence, whereas the others are represented as a Set of cunning self-interested Fellows, who for a little paltry Bribe would give up the Liberties and Properties of their Country. Here is the Danger, here is the Rock on which our Constitution must, if ever it does, split. The Liberties of a People have been subdued by the Conquest of Valour and Force, and have been betrayed by the subtle and dexterous Arts of refined Policy, but these are rare Instances; for Genius's of this kind are not the Growth of every Age, whereas, if a general Corruption be once introduced, and those, who should be the Guardians and Bulwarks of our Liberty, once find, or think they find an Interest in giving it up, no great Capacity will be required to destroy it: On the contrary

the meanest, lowest, dirtiest Fellow, if such a one should have ever the Assurance in future Ages to mimic Power, and brow-beat his Betters, will be as able, as Machiavel¹⁷ himself could have been, to root out the Liberties of the bravest People.

But I am aware I shall be asked, who is this Quidam, that turns the Patriots into Ridicule, and bribes them out of their Honesty? Who but the Devil could act such a Part? Is not this the Light wherein he is everywhere described in Scripture, and the Writings of our best Divines? Gold hath been always his favourite Bait wherewith he fisheth for Sinners; and his laughing at the poor Wretches he seduceth, is as diabolical an Attribute as any. Indeed it is so plain who is meant by this Quidam, that he who maketh any wrong Application thereof might as well mistake the Name of Thomas for John, or old Nick for old Bob.¹⁸

I think I have said enough to assure every impartial Person of my Innocence, against all malicious Insinuations; and farther to convince them that I am a Ministerial Writer, (an Honour I am highly ambitious of attaining) I shall proceed now to obviate an Opinion entertain'd by too many, that a certain Person is sometimes the Author, often the Corrector of the Press, and always the Patron of the Gazetteer.¹⁹ To shew the Folly of this

supposition I shall only insist, that all Persons, tho' they should not afford him any extraordinary Genius, nor any (the least) Taste in polite Literature, will grant me this Datum that the said certain Person is a Man of an ordinary Capacity, and a moderate Share of Common-Sense: Which if allowed, I think it will follow that it is impossible he should either write or countenance a Paper written, not only without the least glimmering of Genius, the least Pretension to Taste, but in direct Opposition to all Common-Sense²⁰ whatever. If any one should ask me, How then is it carried on? I shall only answer with my Politicians, I cannot tell, unless by the Assistance of the old Gentleman, just before mentioned,²¹ who would, I think, alone protect or patronize; as I think, indeed, he is the only Person who could invent some of the Schemes avowed in that Paper, which if it does not immediately disappear, I do intend shortly to attempt conjuring it down, intending to publish a Paper in Defence of the M--y against the wicked, malicious, and sly Insinuations conveyed in the said Paper.²²

You will excuse a Digression so necessary to take off Surmises, which may prove so prejudicial to my Fortune; which, however, if I should not be able to accomplish, I hope you will make me some amends for what I suffer by endeavouring your

Entertainment. The very great Indulgence you have shewn my Performances at the little Theatre, these two last Years, have encouraged me to the Proposal of a Subscription for carrying on that Theatre, for beautifying and enlarging it, and procuring a better Company of Actors. If you think proper to subscribe to these Proposals, I assure you no Labour shall be spared, on my Side, to entertain you in a cheaper and better Manner than seems to be the Intention of any other. If Nature hath given me any Talents at ridiculing Vice and Imposture, I shall not be indolent, nor afraid of exerting them, while the Liberty of the Press and Stage subsists, that is to say, while we have any Liberty left among us.²³ I am, to the Publick,

a most sincere Friend,

and most devoted

Servant.

MEN.

Medley,		Mr. <u>Roberts</u> .
Sowrwit,		Mr. <u>Lacey</u> .
<u>Lord Dapper</u> ,		Mr. <u>Ward</u> .
Ground-Ivy,		Mr. <u>Jones</u> .
Hen, <u>the Auctioneer</u> ,		Mrs. <u>Charke</u> . ¹
Apollo's <u>Bastard Son</u> ,		Mr. <u>Blakes</u> .
Pistol,		Mr. <u>Davis</u> .
Quidam,		Mr. <u>Smith</u> .
		Mr. <u>Jones</u> .
		Mr. <u>Topping</u> .
Politicians,	} } }	Mr. <u>Woodburn</u> .
		Mr. <u>Smith</u> .
		Mr. <u>Machen</u> .
		Mr. <u>Topping</u> .
		Mr. <u>Machen</u> .
Patriots,	} } }	Mr. <u>Fullen</u> .
		Mr. <u>Woodburn</u> .
Banter,		Mr. <u>Smith</u> .
Dangle,		Mr. <u>Lowther</u> .

WOMEN.

Mrs. Screen,

Mrs. Barter,

Ladies,



Mrs. Haywood.

Miss Kawer.

Mrs. Charke.

Mrs. Haywood.

Mrs. Lacey.

Miss Jones.

Prompter, Actors, etc.

HISTORICAL REGISTER,

For the YEAR 1736.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE the Play-House.Enter several Players.

1 Player.

Mr. Emphasis, good-morrow, you are early at the Rehearsal¹ this morning.

Emph. Why, Faith, Jack, our Beer and Beer sat but ill on my Stomach, so I got up to try if I could not walk it off.

1 Play. I wish I had any thing in my Stomach to walk off; if Matters do not go better with us shortly, my Teeth will forget their Office.

2 Play. These are poor Times, indeed, not like the Days of Pasquin.²

1 Play. Oh! name 'em not! those were glorious Days indeed, the Days of Beef and Punch; my Friends, when come there such again?

2 Play. Who knows what this new Author, may produce? Faith I like my Part very well.

1 Play. Nay, if Variety will please the Town, I am sure

there is enough of it, but I could wish, methinks, the Satire had been a little stronger, a little plainer.

2 Play. Now I think it is plain enough.

1 Play. Hum! Ay, it is intelligible; but I wou'd have it downright; 'gad, I fancy I cou'd write a thing to succeed, my self.

2 Play. Ay, prithee, what Subject wou'dst thou write on?

1 Play. Why, no Subject at all, Sir, but I would have a humming deal of Satyr, and I would repeat in every Page, that Courtiers are Cheats and don't pay their Debts, that Lawyers are Rogues, Physicians Blockheads, Soldiers Cowards, and Ministers--

2 Play. What, what, Sir?

1 Play. Nay, I'll only name 'em, that's enough to set the Audience a hooting.³

2 Play. Zounds, Sir, here is Wit enough for a whole Play in one Speech.

1 Play. For one Play, why, Sir, it's all I have extracted out of above a Dozen.

2 Play. Who have we here?

1 Play. Some Gentlemen, I suppose, come to hear the Rehearsal.

Enter Sowrwit⁴ and Lord Dapper.⁵

L. Dap. Pray, Gentlemen, don't you rehearse the Historical Register this Morning?

I Play. Sir, we expect the Author every Minute.

Sowr. What is this Historical Register, is it a Tragedy, or a Comedy?

I Play. Upon my Word, Sir, I can't tell.⁶

Sowr. Then I suppose you have no Part in it.

I Play. Yes, Sir, I have several, but--Oh, here is the Author himself, I suppose he can tell, Sir.

Sowr. Faith, Sir, that's more than I suppose.

Enter Medley.⁷

Med. My Lord, your most obedient Servant; this is a very great, and unexpected Favour indeed, my Lord. Mr. Sowrwit, I kiss your Hands; I am very glad to see you here.

Sowr. That's more than you may be by-and-by, perhaps.

Dap. We are come to attend your Rehearsal, Sir; Pray when will it begin?

Med. This very Instant, my Lord: Gentlemen, I beg you would be all ready, and let the Prompter bring me some Copies for these Gentlemen.

Sowr. Mr. Medley, you know I am a plain Speaker, so you

will excuse any Liberties I take.

Med. Dear Sir, you can't oblige me more.

Sowr. Then I must tell you, Sir, I am a little stagger'd at the Name of your Piece; doubtless, Sir, you know the Rules of Writing, and I can't guess how you can bring the Actions of a whole Year into the Circumference of four and twenty Hours.⁸

Med. Sir, I have several Answers to make to your Objection; in the first Place, my Piece is not of a Nature confin'd to any Rules, as being avowedly irregular,⁹ but if it was otherwise I think I could quote you Precedents of Plays that neglect them; besides, Sir, if I comprise the whole Actions of the Year in half an Hour, will you blame me, or those who have done so little in that time? My Register¹⁰ is not to be fill'd like those of vulgar News-Writers¹¹ with Trash for want of News, and therefore if I say little or nothing, you may thank those who have done little or nothing.

Enter Prompter with Books.

Oh! here are my Books.

Sowr. In Print already, Mr. Medley?

Med. Yes, Sir, it is the safest way, for if a Man stays till he is damn'd, it is possible he never may get into print at all; the Town is capricious, for which Reason always print as

fast as you write, that if they damn your Play,¹² they may not damn your Copy too.

Sowr. Well, Sir, and pray what is your Design, your Plot?

Med. Why, Sir, I have several Plots, some pretty deep, and some but shallow.

Sowr. I hope, Sir, they all conduce to the main Design.

Med. Yes, Sir, they do.

Sowr. Pray, Sir, what is that?

Med. To divert the Town, and bring full Houses.

Sowr. Pshaw! you misunderstand me, I mean what is your Moral, your, your, your--

Med. Oh! Sir, I comprehend you-- Why, Sir, my Design is to ridicule the vicious and foolish Customs of the Age, and that in a fair manner, without Fear, Favour, or Ill-nature, and without Scurrility, ill Manners, or common Place; I hope to expose the reigning Follies in such a manner, that Men shall laugh themselves out of them before they feel that they are touch'd.¹³

Sowr. But what Thread or Connexion can you have in this History? For instance, how is your Political connected with your Theatrical?

Med. O very easily--When my Politicks come to a Farce,

they very naturally lead me to the Play-House, where, let me tell you, there are some Politicians too, where there is Lying, Flattering, Dissembling, Promising, Deceiving, and Undermining, as well as in any Court in Christendom.

Enter a Player.

Play. Won't you begin your Rehearsal, Sir?

Med. Ay, ay, with all my Heart, is the Musick ready for the Prologue?

Sowr. Musick for the Prologue!

Med. Ay, Sir, I intend to have everything new, I had rather be the Author of my own Dulness than the Publisher of other Mens Wit, and really, Mr. Sowrwit, the Subjects for Prologues are utterly exhausted: I think the general Method has been either to frighten the Audience with the Author's Reputation, or to flatter them to give their Applause, or to beseech them to it, and that in a manner that will serve for every Play alike: Now, Sir, my Prologue will serve for no Play but my own, and to that I think nothing can be better adapted, for as mine is the History of the Year, what can be a properer Prologue than an Ode to the New Year?¹⁴

Sowr. An Ode to the New Year?

Med. Yes, Sir, an Ode to the New Year--Come, begin, begin.

Enter Prompter.

Prompt. Sir, the Prologue is ready.

Sowr. Dear Medley, let me hear you read it, possibly it may be sung so fine I may not understand a Word of it.¹⁵

Med. Sir, you can't oblige me more.

ODE to the New Year.

This is a Day¹⁶ in Days of Yore,

Our Fathers never saw before:

This is a Day, 'tis one to ten,

Our Sons will never see again.

Then sing the Day,

And sing the Song,

And thus be merry

All Day long.

This is the Day,

And that's the Night.

When the Sun shall be gay,

And the Moon shall be bright.

The Sun shall rise,

All in the Skies;

The Moon shall go,

All down below.

Then sing the Day,

And sing the Song;

And thus be merry

All Day long.

Ay, ay, come on, and sing it away.

Enter Singers, who sing the Ode.

Med. There, Sir, there's the very Quintessence and Cream of all the Odes I have seen for several Years last past.

Sowr. Ay, Sir, I thought you wou'd not be the Publisher of another Man's Wit?

Med. No more I an't, Sir, for the Devil of any Wit did I ever see in any of them.

Sowr. Oh! your most humble Servant, Sir.

Med. Yours, Sir, yours; now for my Play, Prompter, are the Politicians all ready at the Table?

Prompt. I'll go and see, Sir.

[Exit.

Med. My first Scene, Mr. Sowrwit, lies in the island of Corsica, being at present the chief Scene of Politicks of all Europe.¹⁷

Enter Prompter.

Prompt. Sir, they are ready.

Med. Then draw the Scene, and discover them.

SCENE draws, and discovers Five Politicians sitting at a Table.

Sowr. Here's a Mistake in the Print, Mr. Medley, I observe the second Politician is the first Person who speaks.

Med. Sir, my first and greatest Politician never speaks at all, he's a very deep Man, by which, you will observe I convey this Moral, that the chief Art of a Politician is to keep a Secret.¹⁸

Sowr. To keep his Politicks a Secret, I suppose you mean.

Med. Come, Sir, begin.

2 Polit. Is King Theodore return'd yet?¹⁹

3 Polit. No.

2 Polit. When will he return?

3 Polit. I cannot tell.

Sowr. This Politician seems to me to know very little of the matter.

Med. Zounds, Sir, would you have him a Prophet as well as a Politician? You see, Sir, he knows what's past and that's all he ought to know; 'Sblood, Sir, would it be in the Character of a Politician to make him a Conjuror? Go on, Gentlemen: Pray, Sir, don't interrupt their Debates, for they are of great Consequence.

2 Polit. These mighty Preparations of the Turks²⁰ are certainly design'd against some Place or other; now, the Question is, What Place they are design'd against? And that is a Question which I cannot answer.

3 Polit. But it behoves us to be upon our Guard.

4 Polit. It does, and the Reason is, because we know nothing of the matter.

2 Polit. You say right, it is easy for a Man to guard against Dangers which he knows of, but to guard against Dangers which no Body knows of, requires a very great Politician.

Med. Now, Sir I suppose you think that no Body knows any thing.

Sowr. Faith, Sir, it appears so.

Med. Ay, Sir, but there is one who knows, that little Gentleman, yonder in the Chair, who says nothing, knows it all.

Sowr. But how do you intend to convey this Knowledge to the Audience?

Med. Sir, they can read it in his Looks; 'Sblood, Sir, must not a Politician be thought a wise Man without his giving Instances of his Wisdom?

5 Polit. Hang foreign Affairs, let us apply ourselves to Money.²¹

Omnes. Ay, ay, ay.

Med. Gentlemen, that over again-- and be sure to snatch hastily at the Money; you're pretty Politicians truly.

5 Polit. Hang foreign Affairs, let us apply ourselves to money.

Omnes. Ay, ay, ay.

2 Polit. All we have to consider relating to Money is how we shall get it.

3 Polit. I think we ought first to consider whether there is any to be got, which if there be, I do readily agree that the next Question is how to come at it.

Omnes. Hum.

Sowr. Pray, Sir, what are these Gentlemen in Corsica?

Med. Why, Sir, they are the ablest Heads²² in the Kingdom, and consequently the greatest Men, for you may be sure all well-regulated Governments, as I represent this of Corsica to be, will employ in their greatest Posts Men of the greatest Capacity.

2 Polit. I have consider'd the Matter, and I find it must be by a Tax.

3 Polit. I thought of that, and was considering what was not tax'd already.

2 Polit. Learning; suppose we put a Tax upon Learning.

3 Polit. Learning, it is true, is a useless Commodity, but I think we had better lay it on Ignorance, for Learning being the property but of a very few, and those poor ones too, I am afraid we can get little among them; whereas Ignorance will take in most of the great Fortunes in the Kingdom.

Omnes. Ay, ay, ay.

Exeunt Politicians.

Sowr. Faith, it's very generous in these Gentlemen to tax themselves so readily.

Med. Ay and very wise too to prevent the People's grumbling, and they will have it all among themselves.

Sowr. But what is become of the Politicians?

Med. They are gone, Sir, they're gone; they have finish'd the Business they met about, which was to agree on a Tax, that being done--they are gone to raise it; and this, Sir, is the full Account of the whole History of Europe, as far as we know of it, compriz'd in one Scene.

Sowr. The Devil it is! Why, you have not mention'd one Word of France, or Spain, or the Emperor.²³

Med. No, Sir, I turn those over to the next Year, by which time we may possibly know something what they are about; at present our Advices are so very uncertain, I know not what to depend on; but come, Sir, now you shall have a Council of Ladies.

Sowr. Does this Scene lie in Corsica too?

Med. No, no this lies in London--You know, Sir, it would not have been quite so proper to have brought English Politicians (of the male Kind I mean) on the Stage, because our Politicks are not quite so famous; but in Female Politicians, to the Honour of my Countrywomen I say it, I believe no Country can excel us; come, draw the Scene, and discover the Ladies.

Prompt. Sir, they are not here; one of them is practicing above Stairs with a Dancing-master,²⁴ and I can't get her down.

Med. I'll fetch 'em, I warrant you. [Exit.

Sowr. Well, my Lord, what does your Lordship think of what you have seen?

L. Dap. Faith, Sir, I did not observe it; but it's damn'd Stuff, I am sure.

Sowr. I think so, and I hope your Lordship will not encourage it. They are such Men as your Lordship, who must reform the Age; if Persons of your exquisite and refin'd Taste will give a Sanction to politer Entertainments, the Town will soon be asham'd of laughing at what they do now.

L. Dap. Really, this is a very bad House.

Sowr. It is not indeed so large as the others, but I think one hears better in it.

L. Dap. Pox of hearing, one can't see--one's self, I mean; here are no Looking-glasses, I love Lincoln's-Inn-Fields for that Reason better than any House in Town.²⁵

Sowr. Very true, my Lord, but I wish your Lordship would think it worth your Consideration, as the Morals of a People depend, as has been so often and well prov'd, entirely on their publick Diversions, it would be of great Consequence that those of the sublimest Kind should meet with your Lordship's and the rest of the Nobility's Countenance.

L. Dap. Mr. Sowrwit, I am always ready to give my Countenance to any thing of that kind, which might bring the best Company together, for as one does not go to see the Play but the Company, I think that's chiefly to be consider'd and therefore I am always ready to countenance good Plays.

Sowr. No one is a better Judge what is so than your Lordship.

L. Dap. Not I, indeed, Mr. Sowrwit-- but as I am one half of the Play in the Green-Room talking to the Actresses,²⁶ and the other half in the Boxes talking to the Women of Quality,²⁷ I have an Opportunity of seeing something of the Play, and perhaps may be as good a Judge as another.

Enter Medley.

Med. My Lord, the Ladies cannot begin yet, if your Lordship

will honour me in the Green-Room where you will find it
pleasanter than upon this cold Stage.

L. Dap. With all my Heart--Come, Mr. Sowrwit.

Sowrwit. I attend your Lordship. [Exeunt.

Prompt. Thou art a sweet Judge of Plays, indeed, and yet it
is in the Power of such Sparks as these to damn an honest Fellow,
both in his Profit and Reputation. [Exit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Medley, Lord Dapper, Sowrwit and Prompter.

Med. COME, draw the Scene, and discover the Ladies in Council; pray, my Lord, sit.

[The Scene draws and discovers four Ladies.

Sowr. What are these Ladies assembled about?

Med. Affairs of great Importance, as you will see--Please to begin all of you.

[The Ladies all speak together.

All Ladies. Was you at the Opera,¹ Madam, last Night?

2 Lady. Who can miss an Opera while Farinello² stays?

3 Lady. Sure he is the charmingest Creature.

4 Lady. He's every thing in the World one could wish.

1 Lady. Almost every thing one could wish.

2 Lady. They say there's a Lady in the City has a Child by him.

All Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!³

1 Lady. Well it must be charming to have a Child by him.

3 Lady. Madam, I met a Lady in a Visit the other Day with three.

All Ladies. All Farinello's

3 Lady. All Farinello's, all in Wax.⁴

1 Lady. Oh Gemini!⁵ Who makes them, I'll send and bespeak half a dozen to-morrow Morning.

2 Lady. I'll have as many as I can cram into a Coach with me.

Sowr. Mr. Medley, Sir, is this History? this must be Invention.

Med. Upon my Word, Sir, it's Fact, and I take it to be the most extraordinary Accident that has happen'd in the whole Year, and as well worth recording. Faith, Sir, let me tell you, I take it to be ominous, for if we go on to improve in Luxury, Effeminacy and Debauchery, as we have done lately, the next Age, for ought I know, may be more like the Children of squeaking Italians than hardy Britons.⁶

All Ladies. Don't interrupt us, dear Sir.

1 Lady. What mighty pretty Company they must be?

2 Lady. Oh, the prettiest Company in the World.

3 Lady. If one could but teach them to sing like their Father.

4 Lady. I am afraid my Husband won't let me keep them, for he hates I shou'd be fond of any thing but himself.

All Ladies. O the unreasonable Creature!

1 Lady. If my Husband was to make any Objection to my

having 'em, I'd run away from him, and take the dear Babies with me.

Med. Come, enter Beau Dangle.

Enter Dangle.⁷

Dang. Fy upon it, Ladies, what are you doing here? Why are not you at the Auction, Mr. Hen⁸ has been in the Pulpit⁹ this half Hour?

1 Lady. Oh, dear Mr. Hen, I ask his Pardon, I never miss him.

2 Lady. What's to be sold to-day?

1 Lady. Oh, I never mind that; there will be all the World there.¹⁰

Dang. You'll find it almost impossible to get in.

All Ladies. Oh! I shall be quite miserable if I don't get in.

Dang. Then you must not lose a Moment.

All Ladies. O! Not a Moment for the World.

[Exeunt Ladies.

Med. There they are gone.

Sowr. I am glad on't with all my Heart.

L. Dap. Upon my Word, Mr. Medley, that last is an exceeding good Scene, and full of a great deal of Politeness,¹¹ good Sense, and Philosophy.

Med. It's Nature, my Lord, it's Nature.

Sowr. Faith, Sir, the Ladies are much oblig'd to you.

Med. Faith, Sir, it's more than I desire such Ladies, as I represent here, shou'd be; as for the nobler Part of the Sex for whom I have the greatest Honour, their Characters can be no better set off, than by ridiculing that light, trifling, giddy-headed Crew, who are a Scandal to their own Sex, and a Curse on ours.

Prompt. Gentlemen, you must make room, for the Curtain must be let down, to prepare the Auction-Room.

Med. My Lord, I believe you will be best before the Curtain, for we have but little Room behind, and a great deal to do.

Sowr. Upon my Word, Mr. Medley, I must ask you the same Question which one of your Ladies did just now; what do you intend to sell at this Auction, the whole Stock in Trade of some Milliner or Mercer who has left off Business?

Med. Sir, I intend to sell such things as was never sold in any Auction before, nor ever will again; I can assure you, Mr. Sowrwit, this Scene which I look on as the best in the whole Performance,¹² will require a very deep Attention; Sir, if you should take one Pinch of Snuff¹³ during the whole Scene, you will lose a Joke by it, and yet they lie pretty deep too, and may escape

Observation from a moderate Understanding, unless very closely attended to.

Sowr. I hope, however, they don't lie as deep as the dumb Gentleman's Politicks did in the first Act; if so, nothing but an inspir'd Understanding can come at 'em.

Med. Sir, this Scene is writ in Allegory, and tho' I have endeavour'd to make it as plain as possible; yet all Allegory will require a strict Attention to be understood, Sir.

Prompt. Sir, every thing is ready.

Med. Then draw up the Curtain--Come, enter Mrs. Screen, and Mrs. Barter.

THE AUCTION.

SCENE an Auction-Room, a Pulpit and Forms¹⁴ plac'd, and several People walking about, some seated near the Pulpit.

Enter Mrs. Screen and Mrs. Barter.

Mrs. Screen. Dear Mrs. Barter.

Mrs. Bart. Dear Madam, you are early to-day?

Mrs. Screen. Oh, if one does not get near the Pulpit, one does nothing, and I intend to buy a great deal to-day; I believe I shall buy the whole Auction, at least if things go cheap; you won't bid against me?

Mrs. Bart. You know I never bid for any thing?

Enter Banter and Dangle.

Bant. That's true, Mrs. Barter, I'll be your Evidence.

Mrs. Screen. Are you come? now I suppose we shall have fine bidding; I don't expect to buy cheaper than at a Shop.

Bant. That's unkind, Mrs. Screen, you know I never bid against you; it would be cruel to bid against a Lady who frequents Auctions, only with a Design one Day or other to make one great Auction of her own: No, no, I will not prevent the filling your Warehouse; I assure you, I bid against No Haberdashers of all Wares.

Mrs. Bart. You are a mighty civil Person, truly.

Bant. You need not take up the Cudgels,¹⁵ Madam, who are of no more Consequence at an Auction, than a Mayor at a Sessions; you only come here where you have nothing to do, to shew People you have nothing to do any where else.

Mrs. Bart. I don't come to say rude things to all the World as you do.

Bant. No, the World may thank Heaven, that did not give you Wit enough to do that.

Mrs. Screen. Let him alone, he will have his Jest?

Mrs. Bart. You don't think I mind him, I hope; but pray, Sir, of what great Use is your Friend, Mr. Dangle, here?

Bant. Oh, he is of very great Use to all Women of Understanding.

Dang. Ay! of what Use am I, pray?

Bant. To keep 'em at home, that they may not hear the silly things you say to 'em.

Mrs. Screen. I hope, Mr. Banter, you will not banish all people from Places where they are of no Consequence; you will allow 'em to go to an Assembly, or a Masquerade,¹⁶ without either playing, Dancing or Intriguing; you will let People go to an Opera without any Ear, to a Play without any Taste, and to a Church without any Religion?

Enter Mr. Hen Auctioneer (bowing).

Mrs. Screen. Oh! dear Mr. Hen, I am glad you are come, you are horrible late to-day.

Hen. Madam, I am just mounting the Pulpit; I hope you like the Catalogue, Ladies?

Mrs. Screen. There are some good things here, if you are not too dilatory with your Hammer.

Bant. Boy, give me a Catalogue?

Hen. [in the Pulpit.] I dare swear, Gentlemen and Ladies, this Auction will give general Satisfaction; it is the first of its kind which I ever had the Honour to exhibit, and I believe I may challenge the World to produce some of the Curiosities which

this choice Cabinet contains: A Catalogue of Curiosities which were collected by the indefatigable Pains of that celebrated virtuoso, Peter Humdrum, Esq; which will be sold by Auction, by Christopher Hen on Monday the 21st Day of March, ¹⁷ beginning at Lot 1. Gentlemen and Ladies, this is Lot 1. A most curious Remnant of Political Honesty. Who puts it up, Gentlemen? It will make you a very good Cloke, you see its both Sides alike, so you may turn it as often as you will¹⁸--Come, five Pounds for this curious Remnant; I assure you, several great Men have made their Birth-day Suits¹⁹ out of the same Piece-- It will wear for ever, and never be the worse for wearing-- Five Pounds is bid-- no Body more than five Pounds for this curious Piece of Political Honesty, five Pound, no more-- [knocks.] Lord Both-Sides. Lot 2, a most delicate Piece of Patriotism, Gentlemen, who bids? ten Pounds for this Piece of Patriotism?

1 Court. I would not wear it for a thousand Pound.

Hen. Sir, I assure you, several Gentlemen at Court have worn the same; it's quite a different thing within to what it is without.

1 Court. Sir, it is prohibited Goods, I sha'nt run the risque of being brought into Westminster-hall²⁰ for wearing it.

Hen. You take it for the old Patriotism, whereas it is in-

deed like that in nothing but the Cut, but alas! Sir, there is a great Difference in the Stuff: But, Sir, I don't propose this for a Town-Suit, this is only proper for the Country;²¹ Consider, Gentlemen, what a Figure this will make at an Election--Come, five Pound--One Guinea--Put Patriotism by.

Bant. Ay, put it by, one Day or other it may be in Fashion.

Hen. Lot 3. Three Grains of Modesty: Come, Ladies, consider how scarce this valuable Commodity is.

Mrs. Screen. Yes, and out of Fashion too, Mr. Hen.

Hen. I ask your Pardon, Madam, it is true French²² I assure you, and never changes Colour on any Account--Half a Crown for all this Modesty--Is there not one Lady in the Room who wants any Modesty?

1 Lady. Pray Sir, what is it, for I can't see it at this Distance?

Hen. It cannot be seen at any Distance, Madam, but it is a beautiful Powder, which makes a fine Wash for the Complexion.²³

Mrs. Screen. I thought you said it was true French, and wou'd not change the Colour of the Skin?

Hen. No, it will not, Madam; but it serves mighty well to blush behind a Fan²⁴ with, or to wear under a Lady's Mask at a Masquerade--What, no Body bid--Well, Lay Modesty aside--Lot 4.

One Bottle of Courage, formerly in the Possession of Lieutenant

Colonel Ezekiel Pipkin, Citizen, Alderman and Tallowchandler--²⁵

What, is there no Officer of the Train'd-Bands²⁶ here? Or it will serve an Officer of the Army as well in Time of Peace, nay even in War, Gentlemen; it will serve all of you who sell out?²⁷

1 Offi. Is the Bottle whole? is there no Crack in it?

Hen. None, Sir, I assure you; tho' it has been in many Engagements in Tothill-Fields;²⁸ nay it has serv'd a Campaign or two in Hide-Park,²⁹ since the Alderman's Death--it will never waste while you stay at home, but it evaporates immediately if carried abroad.

1 Offi. Damn me, I don't want it; but a Man can't have too much Courage--Three Shillings for it.

Hen. Three Shillings are bid for this Bottle of Courage.

1 Beau. Four.

Bant. What do you bid for Courage for?

1 Beau. Not for my self, but I have a Commission to buy it for a Lady.

1 Offi. Five.

Hen. Five Shillings, five Shillings for all this Courage; no Body more than five Shillings? [knocks] your name, Sir?

1 Offi. Macdonald O Thunder.³⁰

Hen. Lot 5, and Lot 6. All the Wit lately belonging to Mr. Hugh Pantomime,³¹ Composer of Entertainments for the Play-houses,

and Mr. William Goosequill,³² Composer of political Papers in Defence of a Ministry; shall I put up these together?

Bant. Ay, it is a pity to part them, where are they?

Hen. Sir, in the next Room, where any Gentleman may see them, but they are too heavy to bring in; there are near three hundred Volumes in Folio.

Ban. Put them by, who the Devil would bid for them unless he was the Manager of some House or other?³³ The Town has paid enough for their Works already.

Hen. Lot 7. A very neat clear Conscience which has been worn by a Judge,³⁴ and a Bishop.³⁵

Mrs. Screen. It is as clean as if it was new.

Hen. Yes, no Dirt will stick to it, and pray observe how capacious it is; it has one particular Quality, put as much as you will into it, it is never full: Come, Gentlemen, don't be afraid to bid for this, for whoever has it will never be poor.

Beau. One-Shilling for it.

Hen. O fy, Sir, I am sure you want it, for if you had any Conscience, you would put it up at more than that; Come, fifty Pound for this Conscience.

Bant. I'll give fifty Pound to get rid of my Conscience with all my Heart.

Hen. Well, Gentlemen, I see you are resolv'd not to bid for it, so I'll lay it by: Come, Lot 8, a very considerable Quantity of Interest at Court;³⁶ Come, a Hundred Pound for this Interest at Court.

Omnes. For me, Mr. Hen?

Hen. A Hundred Pound is bid in a Hundred Places, Gentlemen.

Beau. Two Hundred-Pound.

Hen. Two Hundred Pound, two Hundred and Fifty, three Hundred Pound, three Hundred and Fifty, four Hundred, five Hundred, six Hundred, a Thousand; a Thousand Pound is bid, Gentlemen, no Body more than a Thousand Pounds for this Interest at Court; no Body more than one Thousand? [Knocks] Mr. Littlewit.

Ban. Damn me, I know a Shop where I can buy it for less.

L. Dap. Egad, you took me in, Mr. Medley, I could not help bidding for it.

Med. It's a sure Sign it's Nature, my Lord, and I should not be surpriz'd to see the whole Audience stand up and bid for it too.

Hen. All the Cardinal Virtues, Lot 9. Come, Gentlemen, put in these Cardinal Virtues?

Gent. Eighteen Pence.

Hen. Eighteen Pence is bid for These Cardinal Virtues; no

body more than Eighteen Pence? Eighteen Pence for all these Cardinal Virtues, no body more? All these Virtues, Gentlemen, are going for Eighteen Pence; perhaps there is not so much more Virtue in the World, as here is, and all going for Eighteen Pence

[Knocks.] Your Name, Sir?

Gent. Sir, here's a Mistake; I thought you had said a Cardinal's Virtues,³⁷ 'Sblood Sir, I thought to have bought a Pennyworth; here's Temperance and Chastity, and a Pack of Stuff that I wouldn't give three Farthings for?

Hen. Well, lay 'em by, Lot 10, and Lot 11, A great deal of Wit, and a little common Sense.

Bant. Why do you put up these together? They have no Relation to each other.³⁸

Hen. Well, the Sense by itself; then Lot 10, A little Common Sense--I assure you, Gentlemen, this is a very valuable Commodity; Come, who puts it in?

Med. You observe as valuable as it is, no body bids; I take this, if I may speak in the Stile of a great Writer, to be a most emphatical Silence;³⁹ you see, Mr. Sowrit, no one speaks against this Lot, and the reason no body bids for it, is because every one thinks he has it.

Hen. Lay it by, I'll keep it my self; Lot 12.

[Drum beats.

Sowr. Hey-day! What's to be done, now, Mr. Medley?

Med. Now, Sir, the Sport begins.

Enter a Gentleman laughing.

[Huzza within.

Bant. What's the Matter?

Gent. There's a Sight without would kill all Mankind with laughing; Pistol is run mad,⁴⁰ and thinks himself a great Man,⁴¹ and he's marching thro' the Streets with a Drum and Fiddles.

Bant. Please Heaven, I'll go and see this Sight.

[Exit.

Omnes. And so will I.

[Exeunt.

Hen. Nay, if every one else goes, I don't know why I shou'd stay behind.

[Exit.

L. Dap. Mr. Sowrwit, we'll go too.

Med. If your Lordship will have but a little Patience 'till the Scene be chang'd, you shall see him on the Stage.

Sowr. Is not this Jest a little over-acted?

Med. I warrant, we don't over-act him half so much as he does his Parts; tho' 'tis not so much his acting Capacity which I intend to exhibit as his ministerial.

Sowr. His ministerial!

Med. Yes, Sir, you may remember I told you before my Rehearsal, that there was a strict Resemblance between the States political and Theatrical; there is a Ministry in the latter as well as the former, and I believe as weak a Ministry as any poor Kingdom cou'd ever boast of; Parts are given in the latter to Actors, with much the same Regard to Capacity as Places in the former have sometimes been, in former Ages I mean; and tho' the Publick damn both, yet while they both receive their Pay, they laugh at the Publick behind the Scenes; and if one considers the Plays that come from one Part, and the Writings from the other, one would be apt to think the same Authors were retain'd in both: But, come, change the Scene into the Street, and then enter Pistol cum suis--Hitherto, Mr. Sowrwit, as we have had only to do with inferior Characters, such as Beaux and Tailors, and so forth, we have dealt in the Prosaick; now we are going to introduce a more considerable Person, our Muse will rise in her Stile: Now, Sir, for a Taste of the sublime; come, enter, Pistol.

[Drum beats and Fiddles play.

Enter Pistol and Mob.⁴³

Pist. Associates, Brethren, Countrymen and Friends,
Partakers with us in this glorious Enterprize,

Which for our Consort we have undertaken;
 It grieves us much, yes by the Gods it does!
 That we whose great Ability and Parts
 Have rais'd us to this Pinnacle of Power,
 Entitling us Prime Minister Theatrical;
 That we shou'd with an Upstart of the Stage
 Contend successless on our Consort's Side;
 But tho', by just hereditary Right
 We claim a lawless Power, yet for some Reasons,
 Which to our self we keep as yet conceal'd:
 Thus to the Publick, deign we to appeal;
 Behold how humbly the Great Pistol kneels.
 Say then, Oh Town, is it your Royal Will,
 That my Great Consort represent the Part
 Of Polly Peachum in the Beggar's Opera?

[Mob hiss.

Pist. Thanks to the Town, that Hiss speaks their Assent;
 Such was the Hiss that spoke the great Applause,
 Our mighty Father met with, when he brought
 His Riddle on the Stage; such was the Hiss,
 Welcom'd his Caesar to the Aegyptian Shore;
 Such was the Hiss, in which Great John⁴⁴ shou'd have expir'd:
 But, wherefore do I try in vain to number

Those glorious Hisses, which from Age to Age
Our Family has born triumphant from the Stage?⁴⁵

Med. Get thee gone for the prettiest Hero that ever was
shown on any Stage.

[Exit Pistol.

Sowr. Short and sweet, faith, what, are we to have no more
of him?

Med. Ay, ay, Sir; he's only gone to take a little Breath.

L. Dap. If you please, Sir, in the mean time, we'll go
take a little Fire, for 'tis confounded cold upon the Stage.

Med. I wait upon your Lordship: Stop the Rehearsal a few
Moments, we'll be back again instantly.

[Exeunt.

Enter Medley, Sowrwit and Lord Dapper.

Med. NOW, my Lord, for my modern Apollo: Come, make all things ready, and draw the Scene as soon as you can.

Sowr. Modern, why modern? You Common-Place Satirists are always endeavouring to persuade us, that the Age we live in, is worse than any other has been, whereas Mankind have differ'd very little since the World began; for one Age has been as bad as another.

Med. Mr. Sowrwit, I do not deny that Men have been always bad enough; Vice and Folly are not the Invention of our Age; but I will maintain, that what I intend to ridicule in the following Scene, is the whole and sole Production and Invention of some People now living; and faith, let me tell you, tho' perhaps the Publick may not be the better for it, it is an Invention exceeding all the Discoveries of every Philosopher or Mathematician, from the Beginning of the World to this Day.

Sowr. Ay, pray what is it?

Med. Why, Sir, it is a Discovery lately found out, that a Man of great Parts, Learning and Virtue, is fit for no Employment whatever; that an Estate renders a Man unfit to be trusted, that being a Blockhead is a Qualification for Business; that Honesty is the only Sort of Folly for which a Man ought to be utterly

neglected and contemn'd. And--But here is the Inventor himself.
 SCENE draws, and discovers Apollo in a great Chair, surrounded
by Attendants.

Come, bring him forward, that the Audience may see and hear
 him: You must know, Sir, this is a Bastard of Apollo,¹ begotten
 on that beautiful Nymph Moria,² who sold Oranges to Thespi's³
 Company, or rather Cart-load of Comedians; and being a great
 Favourite of his Father's, the old Gentleman settled upon him
 the entire Direction of all our Play-houses and poetical Per-
 formances whatever.

Apol. Prompter.

Prompt. Sir.

Apol. Is there any thing to be done?

Prompt. Yes, Sir, this Play to be cast.

Apol. Give it me. The Life and Death of King John, writ-
 ten by Shakespear: Who can act the King?

Prompt. Pistol, Sir, he loves to act it behind the Scenes.⁴

Apol. Here are a parcel of English Lords.

Prompt. Their Parts are but of Little Consequence, I will
 take care to cast them.

Apol. Do but be sure you give them to Actors who will
 mind their Cues--⁵ Faulconbridge⁶--What sort of a Character is he?

Prompt. Sir, he is a Warrior, my Cousin here will do him very well.

1 Play. I do a Warrior! I never learnt to fence.

Apol. No Matter, you will have no Occasion to fight; can you look fierce, and speak well?

1 Play. Boh!

Apol. I would not desire a better Warrior in the House than your self--Robert Faulconbridge--What, is this Robert?

Prompt. Really, Sir, I don't well know what he is, his chief Desire seems to be for Land, I think; he is no very considerable Character, any body may do him well enough; or if you leave him quite out, the Play will be little the worse for it.

Apol. Well, I'll leave it to you--Peter of Pomfret, a Prophet--Have you any Body that looks like a Prophet?

Prompt. I have one that looks like a Fool.

Apol. He'll do--Philip of France.

Prompt. I have cast all the French Parts, except the Ambassador.

Apol. Who shall do it? His Part is but short, have you never a good genteel Figure, and one that can dance? for as the English are the politest People in Europe, it will be mighty proper that the Ambassador should be able at his Arrival to

entertain them with a Jig or two.

Promp. Truly, Sir, here are Abundance of Dancing-masters⁷ in the House, who do little or nothing for their Money.

Apol. Give it to one of them; see that he has a little Drollery tho' in him, for Shakespear seems to have intended him as a ridiculous Character, and only to make the Audience laugh.

Sowr. What's that, Sir? Do you affirm that Shakespear intended the Ambassador Chatilion a ridiculous Character?

Med. No, Sir, I don't.

Sowr. Oh, Sir, your humble Servant, then I misunderstood you; I thought I had heard him say so.

Med. Yes, Sir, but I shall not stand to all he says.

Sowr. But, Sir, you shou'd not put a wrong Sentiment into the Mouth of the God of Wit.

Med. I tell you, he is the God only of modern Wit, and he has a very just Right to be God of most of the modern Wits that I know; of some who are lik'd for their Wit; of some who are preferr'd for their Wit; of some who live by their Wit; of those ingenious Gentlemen who damn Plays, and those who write them too perhaps. Here comes one of his Votaries; come, enter, enter,--
Enter Mr. Ground-Ivy.

Enter Ground-Ivy.⁸

Ground. What are you doing here?

Apol. I am casting the Parts in the Tragedy of King John.

Ground. Then you are casting the Parts in a Tragedy that won't do.⁹

Apol. How, Sir! Was it not written by Shakespear, and was not Shakespear one of the greatest Genius's that ever lived?

Ground. No, Sir, Shakespear was a pretty Fellow, and said some things which only want a little of my licking to do well enough; King John, as now writ, will not do--But a Word in your Ear, I will make him do.¹⁰

Apol. How?

Ground. By Alteration, Sir, it was a Maxim of mine, when I was at the Head of Theatrical Affairs,¹¹ that no Play, tho' ever so good, would do without Alteration-- For instance, in the Play before us, the Bastard Faulconbridge is a most effeminate Character, for which Reason I would cut him out, and put all his Sentiments in the Mouth of Constance, who is so much properer to speak them¹²--Let me tell you, Mr. Apollo, Propriety of Character, Dignity of Diction, and Emphasis of Sentiment are the things I chiefly consider on these Occasions.

Prompt. I am only afraid as Shakespear is so popular an Author, and you, asking your Pardon, so unpopular.

Ground. Damn me,¹³ I'll write to the Town¹⁴ and desire them to be civil, and that in so modest a manner, that an Army of Cossacks¹⁵ shall be melted: I'll tell them that no Actors are equal to me, and no Authors ever were superiors: And how do you think I can insinuate that in a modest manner?

Prompt. Nay, faith, I can't tell.

Ground. Why, I'll tell them that the former only tread on my Heels, and that the greatest among the latter have been damn'd as well as my self;¹⁶ and after that, what do you think of your Popularity? I can tell you, Mr. Prompter, I have seen things carried in the House against the Voice of the People before to Day.

Apol. Let them hiss, let them hiss, and grumble as much as they please as long as we get their Money.

Med. There, Sir, is the Sentiment of a great Man,¹⁷ and worthy to come from the great Apollo himself.

Sowr. He's worthy his Sire, indeed, to think of this Gentleman for altering Shakespear.

Med. Sir, I will maintain this Gentleman as proper as any Man in the Kingdom for the Business.

Sowr. Indeed!

Med. Ay, Sir, for as Shakespear is already good enough for

people of Taste, he must be alter'd to the Palates of those who have none; and if you will grant that, who can be properer to alter him for the worse? But if you are so zealous in old Shakespear's Cause, perhaps you may find by and by all this come to nothing--Now for Pistol.

Pistol enters, and overturns his Father.

Ground. Pox on't, the Boy treads close on my Heels in a literal Sense.

Pist. Your Pardon, Sir, why will you not obey
Your Son's Advice, and give him still his way;
For you, and all who will oppose his Force.
Must be o'erthrown in his triumphant Course.¹⁸

Sowr. I hope, Sir, your Pistol is not intended to burlesque Shakespear.

Med. No, Sir, I have too great an Honour for Shakespear to think of burlesquing him, and to be sure of not burlesquing him I will never attempt to alter him, for fear of burlesquing him by Accident, as perhaps some others have done.

Dap. Pistol is the young Captain.

Med. My Lord, Pistol is every insignificant Fellow in Town, who fancies himself of great Consequence, and is of none; he is my Lord Pistol, Captain Pistol, Counsellor Pistol, Alderman

pistol, Beau Pistol, and--and--Odso,¹⁹ what was I going to say?
Come, go on.

Apol. Prompter, take care that all things well go on; We will retire, my Friend, and read King John.

[Exeunt.]

Sowr. To what purpose, Sir, was Mr. Pistol introduced?

Med. To no purpose at all, Sir; it's all in Character, Sir, and plainly shews of what mighty Consequence he is--And there ends my Article from the Theatre.

Sowr. Hey-day! What's become of your two Pollys?

Med. Damn'd, Sir, damn'd; they were damn'd at my first Rehearsal, for which Reason I have cut them out;²⁰ and to tell you the Truth, I think the Town has honour'd 'em enough with talking of 'em for a whole Month; tho', faith, I believe it was owing to their having nothing else to talk of. Well, now for my Patriots --You will observe, Mr. Sowrhit, that I place my Politicians and my Patriots at opposite Ends of my Piece, which I do, Sir, to shew the wide Difference between them; I begin with my Politicians to signify that they will always have the Preference in the World to Patriots, and I end with Patriots to leave a good Relish in the Mouths of my Audience.

Sowr. Ay? by your Dance of Patriots, one would think you intended to turn Patriotism into a Jest.

Med. So I do--But don't you observe I conclude the whole with a Dance of Patriots? which plainly intimates that when patriotism is turn'd into a Jest, there is an End of the whole play.²¹ Come, enter four Patriots--You observe I have not so many Patriots as Politicians; you will collect from thence that they are not so plenty.

Sowr. Where does the Scene lie now, Sir?

Med. In Corsica, Sir, all in Corsica.

Enter four Patriots from different Doors, who meet in the Center and shake Hands.

Sowr. These Patriots seem to equal your greatest Politicians in their Silence.

Med. Sir, what they think now cannot well be spoke, but you may conjecture a great deal from their shaking their Heads; they will speak by-and-by--as soon as they are a little heated with Wine: You cannot, however, expect any great speaking in this Scene, for tho' I do not make my Patriots Politicians, I don't make them Fools.

Sowr. But, methinks, your Patriots are a Set of shabby Fellows.

Med. They are the cheaper dress'd; besides, no Man can be too low for a Patriot, tho' perhaps it is possible he may be too high.

1 Patr. Prosperity to Corsica.

2 Patr. Liberty and Property.

3 Patr. Success to Trade.

4 Patr. Ay, to Trade--to Trade-- particularly to my Shop.²²

Sowr. Why do you suffer that Actor to stand laughing behind the Scenes, and interrupt your Rehearsal?

Med. O, Sir, he ought to be there, he's a laughing in his sleeve at the Patriots; he's a very considerable Character--and has much to do by-and-by.

Sowr. Methinks the Audience shou'd know that, or perhaps they may mistake him as I did, and hiss him.

Med. If they shou'd, he's a pure²³ impudent Fellow, and can stand the Hisses of them all; I chose him particularly for the Part--Go on, Patriots.

1 Patr. Gentlemen, I think this our Island of Corsica is an ill State, I do not say we are actually in War, for that we are not; but however we are threaten'd with it daily,²⁴ and why may not the Apprehension of a War, like other Evils, be worse than the Evil itself; for my part, this I will say, this I will venture to say, That let what will happen I will drink a Health to Peace.

Med. This Gentleman is the Noisy-Patriot, who drinks and roars for his Country, and never does either Good or Harm in it

--The next is the Cautious-Patriot.

2 Patr. Sir, give me your Hand; there's Truth in what you say, and I will pledge you with all my Soul, but remember it is all under the Rose.

3 Patr. Look'ee, Gentlemen, my Shop is my Country, I always measure the Prosperity of the latter by that of the former. My Country is either richer or poorer, in my Opinion, as my Trade rises or falls; therefore, Sir, I cannot agree with you that a War wou'd be disserviceable: On the contrary I think it the only way to make my Country flourish; for as I am a Sword-Cutler,²⁵ it would make my Shop flourish, so here's to War.

Med. This is the Self-interested Patriot, and now you shall hear the fourth and last kind, which is the Indolent-Patriot, one who acts as I have seen a prudent Man in Company fall asleep at the beginning of a Fray, and never wake till the end on't.

4 Patr. [Waking.] Here's to Peace or War, I do not care which.

Sowr. So this Gentleman being neutral, Peace has it two to one.

Med. Perhaps neither shall have it, perhaps I have found a way to reconcile both Parties: But go on.

1 Patr. Can any one, who is a Friend to Corsica, wish for War, in our present Circumstances?--I desire to ask you all one

Question, Are we not a Set of miserable poor Dogs?

Omnes. Ay, ay.

3 Patr. That we are sure enough, that no body will deny.

Enter Quidam.²⁶

Quid. Yes, Sir, I deny it. [All start.] Nay, Gentlemen, let me not disturb you, I beg you will all sit down, I am come to drink a Glass with you--Can Corsica be poor while there is this in it? [Lays a Purse on the Table.] Nay, be not afraid of it, Gentlemen, it is honest Gold I assure you; you are a set of poor Dogs, you agree, I say you are not, for this is all yours, there, [Pours it on the Table.] take it among you.

1 Patr. And what are we to do for it?

Quid. Only say you are rich, that's all.

Omnes. Oh, if that be all! [They snatch up the Money.

Quid. Well, Sir, what is your Opinion now? tell me freely.

1 Patr. I will, a Man may be in the wrong through Ignorance,⁹¹ but he's a Rascal who speaks with open Eyes against his Conscience --I own I thought we were poor, but, Sir, you have convinc'd me that we are rich.

Omnes. We are all convinc'd.

Quid. Then you are all honest Fellows, and here is to your Healths, and since the Bottle is out, hang Sorrow, cast away Care, e'en take a Dance, and I will play you a Tune on the Fiddle.

Omnes. Agreed.

1 Patr. Strike up when you will, we are ready to attend your Motions.

[Dance here; Quidam dances out, and they all dance after him.

Med. Perhaps there may be something intended by this Dance which you don't take.

Sowr. Ay, what prithee?

Med. Sir, every one of these Patriots have a Hole in their Pockets, as Mr. Quidam the Fiddler there knows, so that he intends to make them dance till all the Money is fall'n through, which he will pick up again, and so not lose one Half-penny by his Generosity; so far from it, that he will get his Wine for nothing, and the poor People, alas! out of their own Pockets, pay the whole Reckoning. This, Sir, I think is a very pretty Pantomine Trick, and an ingenious Burlesque on all the Fourberies²⁷ which the great Lun²⁸ has exhibited in all his Entertainments: And so ends my Play, my Farce, or what you please to call it; may I hope it has your Lordship's Approbation?

L. Dap. Very pretty, indeed, it's very pretty.

Med. Then, my Lord, I hope I shall have your Encouragement; for things in this Town do not always succeed according to their Merit; there is a Vogue, my Lord, which if you will bring me into, you will lay a lasting Obligation on me: And you, Mr.

sowrwit. I hope, will serve me among the Criticks, that I may have no elaborate Treatise writ to prove that a Farce of three Acts is not a regular Play of Five. Lastly, to you Gentlemen, whom I have not the Honour to know, who have pleas'd to grace my Rehearsal; and you Ladies, whether you be Shakespear's Ladies, or Beaumont and Fletcher's Ladies,²⁹ I hope you will make Allowances for a Rehearsal;

And kindly all report us to the Town;

No borrow'd, nor no stol'n Goods we've shown,

If witty, or if dull, our Play's our own.

NOTES TO THE PREFACE TO THE DEDICATION

P. 1. Fielding's famous contemporary, Samuel Johnson, commented, "The known style of a dedication is flattery: it professes to flatter."

(James Boswell, Boswell's Life of Johnson: Including Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides and Johnson's Diary of a Journey into North Wales, ed. George Birkbeck Hill [Oxford, 1887], V, 285.)

P. 2. Previous to writing The Historical Register, Fielding had provided five of his plays with serious dedications and two with satirical dedications. As illustrations of Fielding's shifting political point of view, the dedication of The Modern Husband to Sir Robert Walpole in 1732 and the dedication of Don Quixote in England to Philip, Earl of Chesterfield, in 1734 are discussed in Introduction: Part I, pp. 12-14.

P. 3. As the following description by Samuel Johnson indicates, the eighteenth century, having no name for what now is called a publisher, substituted the term bookseller. "Old Gardner was a member of the Stationers' Company, kept a shop in the face of mankind, purchased copyright, and was a bibliopole in every sense."

(Samuel Johnson, quoted in R. W. Chapman, "Authors and Booksellers," Johnson's England, II, 310-311.)

P. 4. The word patron may be defined as "one who takes under his favour and protection, or lends his influential support to advance the interests of some person, cause, institution, art, or undertaking; specifically in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the person who accepted the dedication of a book."

(James A. H. Murray et al., eds., OED [Oxford, 1933]. All subsequent definitions will be based on those provided in this dictionary.)

P. 5. Fee-simple may be defined as "an estate in land, etc., belonging to the owner and his heirs forever, without limitation to any particular class of heirs."

NOTES TO DEDICATION TO THE PUBLICK

D. 1. Although the custom of dedicating literary works to influential noblemen and of accepting protection and money in return was common during the seventeenth century, it gained widespread popularity in the reign of Queen Anne. Through the example of Charles Montague, Earl of Halifax, the usual twenty-guinea gift became almost automatic.

(Edmund Gosse, "The Patron in the Eighteenth Century," Harper's Monthly Magazine, CVII [June 1903], 3.)

However, during the Walpole administration many authors, like Fielding, considered patronage as a servitude from which, with the support of publishers and of the public, they soon hoped to free themselves. Certainly both the growth of the reading public and the efforts of publishers hastened the decline of literary patronage.

(Chapman, "Authors and Booksellers," Johnson's England, II, 323.)

D. 2. Despite the absence of adequate data, a successful run of twenty-eight performances almost certainly can be credited to The Historical Register.

(Brown, "Four Plays," p. 70.)

D. 3. The Latin phrase may be translated "money matter" or "argument concerning money."

D. 4. Like other critics, Wilbur L. Cross regards the entire

paragraph as simply a serious comment "about the state of theatrical affairs--the rivalry between managers, who bid against one another for the best actors (he had lost Yates, who went over to Giffard), the high price of seats in consequence and the difficulties that confront a new playwright in getting his pieces, however excellent, properly performed unless they happen to suit the taste of the manager, that is, Mr. Fleetwood, having the largest purse."

(Cross, History of Henry Fielding, I, 222.)

But Jack Richard Brown, in pointing out the double-entendre of the passage, praises Fielding's skill in successfully disguising his political purpose to protect himself from prosecution. Though his remarks presented an accurate account of theatrical affairs, they also served as a severe indictment of the ministry. As Brown explains, "The 'Constitution of the British Theatre' is the constitution of England; 'Mr.----,' who hires actors at an exorbitant figure, is Walpole, who bribes the members of Parliament; the 'advanced Prices' are increased taxes, and so on. Any 'Piece of most exquisite Contrivance,' prevented from making its appearance, is of course any bill not suitable to the prime minister, stopped by his bribing the members of Parliament."

(Brown, pp 424-425, n. 1.)

D. 5. Since Fielding's dedication was published on May 12, 1737, the "17th Instant" is probably an error for the "7th." On that day "An Adventurer in Politicks" had attacked The Historical Register in a lengthy Daily Gazetteer article.

(Ibid., p. 425, n. 1.)

A reply to the "Adventurer in Politicks," penned perhaps by Fielding, appeared in Common Sense on May 21, 1737, and prompted a second attack by the "Adventurer."

D. 6. Despite its daring dialogue, The King and the Miller of Mansfield was not mentioned specifically in the Gazetteer article of May 7. Of little literary merit, the work was a current political satire by Robert Dodsley, a footman who wrote verses and eventually became the most influential publisher in London. Performed at Drury Lane, Dodsley's play related the adventures of the King, who, after having lost his companions in a forest, was entertained incognito by the simple miller and succeeded in making amends for the abuses of Lord Lurewell, one of his courtiers.

(Allardyce Nicoll, A History of Early Eighteenth Century Drama: 1700-1750 [Cambridge, Engl., 1925], p. 204.)

D. 7. A major weapon of the Opposition, this journal is discussed in Introduction: Part I, p. 5.

Although sometimes garbled in the execution, the Craftsman's aim, as stated in No. 264, July 24, 1731, was "first to establish those general principles of government, upon which the true interest, happiness, and glory of this nation are founded, and upon which only they can subsist; secondly, to give countrymen, from time to time, a genuine account and information of all great transactions of state, which might occur, whilst we continued to write."

(The Craftsman, July 24, 1731, quoted in Laurence Hanson, The Government and the Press: 1695-1763 [London, 1936], p. 6.)

Because it demonstrated the possibility of publishing violent anti-Walpolean articles over a long period, the Craftsman spurred the movement toward freedom of speech. Since the periodical was financially secure, Walpole's suits against it failed; whenever the publisher was arrested for printing libels, his supporters posted bail, and the paper resumed publication.

(David Harrison Stevens, Party Politics and English Journalism: 1702-1742 [Menasha, 1916], p. 128.)

D. 8. Adopting its name, perhaps, from the "Queen of Common Sense" in Fielding's Pasquin, Common Sense or the Englishman's Journal was established by Lords Chesterfield and Lyttleton. Published weekly from 1737 to 1743, the periodical proposed to take "from the shoulders of the Craftsman some part of the

burthen, which every man who is laboring against corruption labors under." Its special function was to attack Walpolean writers by making broad references to the pensions and privileges to be obtained in the ministry's service.

(Ibid., p. 127.)

D. 9. Described in its preface as the union in one paper of all the supporters of the government, the Daily Gazetteer appeared on June 30, 1735. At its publication three pro-ministry periodicals, the Daily Courant, the Free Briton, and the London Journal, were incorporated into the Gazetteer, which was subsidized by Walpole. After the death in May, 1736, of William Arnall, the government's chief writer and the most highly rewarded of Walpole's hacks, the Gazetteer no longer received confidential information and thus resorted to the purely passive role of contradicting the comments of the Craftsman and Common Sense.

(Hanson, p. 115.)

D. 10. By Posthouse was meant post office. Fielding here referred to the government's practice of allowing ministry propaganda to pass free of charge through the London post office, while Opposition material, though properly posted, often was withdrawn from circulation. Angered by this abuse, the editors of the Craftsman in November, 1728, had accused the ministry of

mailing administration periodicals to addresses copied from issues sent to Craftsman subscribers.

(Stevens, pp. 118-119.)

In the Champion of February 5, 1740, Fielding once more protested against the unfair practice:

But here lies the artifice: that paper is circulated gratis where no other is suffer'd to appear; and granting all the readers within the Bills of Mortality are convinced of its knavery, many who live more remote from public business and controversy, are not aware of such frontless deceit; and, by the help of a comment upon the text, the exciseman or parson, believe every man who dips a quill against the administration, is descended in a right line from Guido Faux, or one of the Papishes who began the Fire of London.

(The Champion, February 5, 1740, quoted in Hanson, p. 116.)

D. 11. Although there is no evidence indicating that Fielding had been promised employment by the ministry, his statement might have been based upon fact.

(Brown, p. 426, n. 1.)

Following the fall of Walpole, Fielding became in the later years of the reign of George II perhaps the most famous literary man actively to support the government. In 1745 he initiated the True Patriot and in 1747 the Jacobite's Journal, the latter being the only publication ungrudgingly to uphold the ministry in 1747. The next year a pamphlet entitled the Patriot Analyzed accused

him of writing in behalf of the government for monetary reasons and claimed that the post office distributed two thousand copies of his Journal each week.

(Hanson, pp. 118-119.)

D. 12. Defined by a foreign visitor of London as "taverns of the second rank," all alehouses had at least two rooms. The first room, which served the masses, lacked both cleanliness and decorum; the second was a parlor in which more dignified patrons smoked pipes, played draughts, and scanned the newspapers. Those alehouses with a third room reserved it for the meetings of private clubs.

(M[ary] Dorothy George, "London and the Life of the Town." Johnson's England, I, 182.)

D. 13. Apparently Fielding wanted to make certain that this passage and the entire dedication would be applied without question to Sir Robert Walpole.

(Brown, p. 427, n. 1.)

D. 14. Spark may be defined as "a young man of an elegant or foppish character; one who affects smartness or display in dress and manners."

D. 15. To smoke may be defined as "to get an inkling of, to smell or suspect (a plot, design, etc.)."

D. 16. Patriots was a popular designation for members of the

opposition. In his "Epilogue to the Satires" of 1738, Alexander Pope wrote, "Patriots there are, who wish you'd jest no more."

(Alexander Pope, "Dialogue I," Alexander Pope: Selected Poetry and Prose, ed. William K. Wimsatt, Jr., Rinehart ed. [New York, 1951], p. 291.)

D. 17. Author of The Prince, Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527)

was an Italian statesman and writer on government.

D. 18. Fielding naturally was referring to Walpole. The scene of Quidam and the Patriots is included in Act III of The Register.

D. 19. The reference is again to Walpole.

D. 20. Perhaps Fielding was punning upon the name of the anti-ministry paper, Common Sense, which was obviously in direct opposition to the Gazetteer.

D. 21. Fielding was referring to the devil.

D. 22. Although Fielding here indicated his plan to establish an Opposition periodical, he did not introduce the Champion until November 15, 1739.

(Brown, p. 432, n. 1.)

D. 23. Judging from Fielding's comments in this final paragraph, he did not seem especially apprehensive that there was any real danger of the passage of a censorship bill to regulate the theatres. The Licensing Act of 1737 and the events leading to it are discussed in Introduction: Part I, pp. 18-21.

NOTES TO DRAMATIS PERSONAE

D. P. 1. In the character of Mr. Hen, Charlotte Cibber Charke again portrayed one of the masculine roles which were her forte. At an early age she had shown a preference for male pursuits and, after quitting the stage, assumed masculine dress on all occasions.

(Senior, Life and Times of Colley Cibber, pp. 63, 65.)

The daughter of Colley Cibber, she had made her dramatic debut in 1730 as Mademoiselle in The Provoked Wife. A creditable actress, she performed sporadically upon the London stage until the passage of the Licensing Act in 1737. Written in 1755, Mrs. Charke's spicy Memoirs reveals her scandalous adventures as actress, grocery and oil shop owner, puppet show manager, strolling player, valet to a nobleman, sausage maker, and tavern head waiter and owner. Since she had lampooned her father in The Battle of the Poets, it is not surprising that she was willing to perform in The Historical Register, a play which attacked him.

(Walter Hamilton, The Poets Laureate of England: Being a History of the Office of Poet Laureate [London, 1879], pp. 174-176.)

NOTES TO ACT I

I. 1. Fielding borrowed the satirical technique of the play within a play from The Rehearsal of the Duke of Buckingham. First presented in 1671 as a burlesque of John Dryden and other heroic playwrights, The Rehearsal exerted a strong influence upon numerous eighteenth-century productions, an influence which culminated in Richard Sheridan's The Critic of 1779. Others of Fielding's pieces cast in this form are Tom Thumb, Pasquin, Tumble-Down Dick, Eurydice, and Eurydice Hiss'd.

(Brown, "Four Plays," p. 9, n. 1.)

I. 2. Staged at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, Pasquin, Fielding's initial undertaking as a theatrical manager, enjoyed an original run of sixty nights. That it was an outstanding success is evidenced by the observation of Mrs. Pendarves in a letter to Dr. Swift, dated April 22, 1736. "When I went out of town last autumn the reigning madness was Farinelli; I find it now turned on Pasquin, a dramatic satire on the times."

(Pendarves, quoted in Nichols, PQ, III, 310.)

I. 3. Fielding here suggested that the abundance of pointed wit had conditioned audiences to attach a satirical significance to even the most innocuous statements.

(Brown, p. 435, n. 1.)

I. 4. Fielding's choice of the name Sowwit was consistent with

the eighteenth-century image of the critic. In his "Preface, 1717," Alexander Pope remarked, "Yet, sure upon the whole, a bad Author deserves better usage than a bad Critic; for a Writer's endeavour, for the most part, is to please his Readers, and he fails merely through the misfortune of an ill judgment; but such a Critic's is to put them out of humour; a design he could never go upon without both that and ill temper."

(Pope, "Preface, 1717," Selected Poetry and Prose, pp. 1-2.)

I. 5. The name Lord Dapper connotes the London beau of quality whose life was noted for its frivolity and inanity. For a contemporary description of the eighteenth-century beau, see II, 7.

I. 6. Fielding was playing upon eighteenth-century interest in the "rules of art." Although a strict application of the pseudo-Aristotelian unity of action condemned tragi-comedy, occasional attempts, usually unsuccessful, were made to combine comic with tragic elements. With the rise of the sentimental school, a number of "comedies" were produced which because of their seriousness could scarcely be placed in the comic category.

(Nicoll, Early Eighteenth Century Drama, p. 220.)

As the inclusion of tragic scenes in comedy increased, tragi-comedy became a more or less accepted type of popular drama although extremists still considered it a concession to human

frailty.

(Kilbourne, Alterations and Adaptations, p. 15.)

I. 7. The name Medley is appropriate for the author of a piece "not of a Nature confin'd to any Rules, as being avowedly irregular." Of The Historical Register itself Allardyce Nicoll comments, "There are witty passages in it, but the whole seems nothing but a medley of confused elements not too harmoniously fused together."

(Nicoll, p. 261.)

I. 8. Imposed upon the French pseudo-classical drama by Pierre Corneille and adopted by Dryden and other English dramatists of the Restoration, the "Rules of Writing" stressed the unity of time. Accordingly, the time of action in a play was not to exceed twenty-four hours. In Tom Jones Fielding struck out ironically at the unities.

But in process of time, and in ages of ignorance, the clerk began to invade the power and assume the dignity of his master; the laws of writing were no longer founded on the practice of the author, but on the dictates of the critic; the clerk became the legislator, and those very peremptorily gave laws whose business it was at first only to transcribe them. Hence arose an obvious and perhaps an unavoidable error; for these critics, being men of shallow capacities, very easily mistook mere form for substance: they acted as a judge would who should adhere to the lifeless letter of law, and reject the spirit. . . . and thus many rules for good writing have been established, which have not the

least foundation in truth or nature; and which commonly serve for no other purpose than to curb and restrain genius in the same manner as it would have restrained the dancing-master, had the excellent treatises on that art laid it down as an essential rule that every man must dance in chains.

(Henry Fielding, The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling [London, 1884], I, 164-165.)

I. 9. Frederick Wilkinson Kilbourne states that "to an age which derived its ideas of the drama from Corneille, Moliere, and Racine, it seemed rank heresy or gross ignorance in an author not to make his plays 'regular.'"

(Kilbourne, p. 11.)

I. 10. For the complete title of the annual journalistic Register from which Fielding adopted the name of his satire, see Introduction: Part I, p. 1.

I. 11. Although he himself dabbled in journalism, Fielding seldom evidenced any esteem for his fellow periodical writers. In the first four issues of the Covent-Garden Journal of 1752, for example, he waged a jocose war against that "Army of Scribblers, who, at present, seem to threaten the Republic of Letters with no less Devastation than that which their Ancestors the Goths, Huns, Vandals, etc. formerly poured in on the Roman Empire!"

(Henry Fielding, The Covent-Garden Journal, ed. Gerald Edward Jensen [New Haven, 1915], I, 138.)

I. 12. Fielding's Eurydice; or The Devil Henpeck'd recently had been damned. A farcical ballad-opera, Eurydice had been presented at Drury Lane on February 19, 1737, as an afterpiece to Addison's Cato. The performance had been halted amid cat-calls and hisses from an excited audience which had witnessed a riot of footmen earlier in the evening.

I. 13. Fielding here introduced his aim in presenting The Historical Register. An eighteenth-century adaptation of the classical formula ridendo corrigere mores, this statement is a significant forerunner of Fielding's famous declaration in the dedication of Tom Jones, "I have endeavored to laugh mankind out of their favourite follies and vices."

(Dudden, Henry Fielding, I, 231-232.)

I. 14. The reference is to the uninspired odes of Colley Cibber. As poet laureate, Cibber was required to pen appropriate verses for New Year's Day, for the King's birthday, and for other state occasions. Background material on Colley and his family is provided in Introduction: Part I, pp. 22-26.

I. 15. Aggressively opposed to Italian opera, Fielding attacked it and the "fine" singing of its performers in several of his pieces. For example, the playwright's Eurydice is a burlesque of opera in mock recitative form. Its hero, Orpheus, is

represented as an opera singer who travels to Hades to retrieve his Eurydice. In Act II of The Register, Fielding again ridiculed the Italian import.

That he was not alone in his criticism of "fine" singing is evidenced by the doggerel of a writer in the Universal Spectator, October 5, 1734.

Music, I own should ne'er be understood,
 But warbled Nonsense is supremely good;
 Sweet, senseless, sing-song, softens sinking Souls,
 And unintelligible Sound controuls.

.
 Our British Patriots fall beneath a Note,
 Sent from an Eunuch and Italian Throat,
 While our own Language much offends the Ear;
 For Sense and Sound united harsh appear.

(The Universal Spectator, October 5, 1734, quoted in Nichols, PQ, III, 309-310.)

Italian opera is discussed in Introduction: Part I, pp. 30-33.

I. 16. Tickets for a benefit night early in May bore both the words and music of Fielding's burlesque ode.

(Cross, History of Henry Fielding, I, 211.)

In his "Dedication to the Publick," p. 61, the playwright attached a political significance to this ode by suggesting the substitution of "man" for "day." "Man," of course, referred to Walpole.

(Brown, p. 440, n. 2.)

In satirizing Cibber's New Year Odes, Fielding included some of Colley's cliches. Apparently a favorite theme of the poet laureate was that of "singing the day." His ode of 1736 had opened, "Ye Smiling Seasons sing the Day," and his ode of 1737 had begun, "Grateful Britons, grace the day."

(Nichols, PQ, I, 281.)

Although no reference is made to Cibber, an interesting anticipation of this parody may be found in Act I.i of Tom Thumb when Noodle asserts, "This Day, O Mr. Doodle! is a Day Indeed, a Day we never saw before."

(Taylor, MP, XXIX, 79.)

I. 17. Fielding set the scene in Corsica both to allow for his subsequent allusion to King Theodore and to suggest an island kingdom such as England.

(Brown, p. 441, n. 1.)

I. 18. The reference is to Walpole, who was noted for his ability to remain in the background and to withhold his views until he had sounded out both court and commoners.

(Ibid., p. 442, n. 1.)

I. 19. Fielding here played upon two subjects of recent public interest. The obvious allusion is to King Theodore of Corsica, whose current exploits were the talk of London. The second

reference is to the extended absence of King George II from England during the previous year. The English king had been sharply criticized for remaining at Hanover from May, 1736, to January, 1737.

(Ibid., p. 442, n. 2.)

I. 20. Though the Turks' open antagonism to Russia was a topic of current concern, the reference is more likely to the disturbed state of western Europe.

(Ibid., p. 444, n. 1.)

I. 21. Fielding was implying that the Walpole ministry, in its eagerness to extort money from the masses, shamefully had neglected England's foreign affairs.

(Ibid., p. 445, n. 1.)

I. 22. The word head is employed for "the person himself in reference to his mind or disposition or to some quality or attribute."

I. 23. The death of Poland's King Augustus in 1733 had set off the War of the Polish Succession. While the Emperor and Russia favored another Augustus, France and Spain supported Stanislaus. Because Walpole feared a united Bourbon kingdom, he refused to allow England to follow its traditional policy and side with the Emperor. The minister's position provided the Opposition with

another point of attack.

(Ibid., p. 447, n. 1.)

I. 24. Usually represented as a Frenchman, the dancing-master was often the butt of eighteenth-century satire. A typical mention of the subject is made in The Dunciad.

The sturdy Squire to Gallic masters stoop,
And drown his Lands and Manors in a soupe.
Others import yet nobler arts from Fzance,
Teach kings to fiddle, and make Senates dance.

(Pope, (Dunciad IV. 595-598, Selected Poetry and Prose, p. 447.)

I. 25. Erected by Christopher Rich and opened on December 18, 1714, by his son John, the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields was furnished with large mirrors on each side of the stage.

(Stephen and Lee, DNB, XVI, 1001.)

It is here contrasted with Fielding's playhouse, the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, which opened on December 29, 1720. Not to be confused with the larger King's Theatre, Haymarket, the Little Theatre specialized in irregular drama. Under Fielding's management in the mid-thirties, it won new popularity with his much-publicized satires.

(Charles Beecher Hogan, Shakespeare in the Theatre: 1701-1800: A Record of Performances in London: 1701-1750 [Oxford, 1952], I, 463.)

I. 26. The greenroom is "a room in a theatre provided for the accommodation of actors and actresses when not required on the

stage, probably so called because it was originally painted green."

I. 27. Members of society's upper classes occupied the boxes, which lined both sides of the theatre and stretched beyond the proscenium on and above the stage.

(John J. Lynch, Box, Pit, and Gallery: Stage and Society in Johnson's London [Berkeley, 1953], p. 201.)

That even the more sophisticated spectators regarded the theatre as little more than a fashionable rendezvous is apparent from the observation of James Ralph in The Taste of the Town,

Essay V:

During the Time of the Representation, the Ladies are so employ'd in finding out all their Acquaintances, Male and Female, lest a Bow, or Curtsy should escape them; criticising on Fashions in Dress, whispering cross the Benches, with significant Nods, and Hints of Civil Scandal of this, and that, and t'other Body; --they scarcely know whether they are at OPERA or PLAY.

While the Belles are ogling the Beaus, and the Beaus admiring themselves, the Affairs of real Moment (which should have seduc'd them there) are entirely neglected....The Gentlemen are so taken up with their own Intrigues, that they never mind them on the Stage. The Ladies tattle too much to one another to heed Comedy, it is too much of a piece with their daily Life.

([James Ralph] , The Taste of the Town: or, A Guide to all Publick Diversions [London, 1731] , p. 143.)

NOTES TO ACT II

II. 1. For a discussion of opera, see Introduction: Part I, pp. 30-33.

II. 2. The reference is to opera star, Carlo Broschi Farinelli. According to a comment in the Prompter, the fad for Farinelli was waning as early as April, 1736, yet Fielding apparently considered it still serious enough to warrant criticism almost a year later. In satirizing the idolization of Farinelli by women of fashion, he voiced the opinion of numerous contemporary social critics. William Hogarth, for example, on Plate Two of The Rake's Progress cleverly treated the same subject by portraying Farinelli upon a pedestal with an altar between his feet. As two hearts burn upon the altar, female worshipers offer their own hearts to the idol. Supposedly illustrative of the actual infatuation for the singer was the exclamation of one lady in the boxes, "One God, one Farinelli!"

(Nichols, PQ, III, 310, 312.)

For a mention of Farinelli, see Introduction: Part I, pp. 32-33.

II. 3. Farinelli was thought to be a eunuch. The following excerpt from the Prompter of December 4, 1734, is typical of the critics' objections to Italian castrati. "How can Signor

Farinelli, or any of his Stamp, convey into the Breasts of his fair Auditors, those soft Passions requisite in this Case, since 'tis impossible to suppose he can feel them within himself?"

(The Prompter, December 4, 1734, quoted in ibid., p. 311.)

II. 4. Advertisements in London newspapers of 1736 indicate the popularity of purchasing wax figures.

(Nichols, PQ, III, 314-315.)

Because of the personal appeal of Farinelli, it is possible that wax images of the singer actually were on sale in 1736.

II. 5. Gemini is a mild form of oath or exclamation.

II. 6. That the patriotic Fielding viewed the effeminacies of Italian opera as un-English is obvious in his epilogue to The Universal Gallant of 1735 in which he recalled England's glorious past

When Men were dress'd like Men, no curl'd their Hair,
 Instead of charming, to out-charm the Fair.
 They knew by manly Means soft-Hearts to move,
 Nor ask'd an Eunuch's Voice to melt their Nymphs to Love.
 Ladies, 'tis yours to reinstate that Age,
 Do you assist the Satire of the Stage!
 Teach foreign Mimicks by a generous Scorn,
 You're not asham'd of being Britons born;
 Make it to your eternal Honour known,
 That Men must bear your Frowns, whenever shewn
 That they prefer All Countries to their own.

(Henry Fielding, The Universal Gallant: or, The Different Hus-
bands. A Comedy. As It Is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-
Lane. By His Majesty's Servants [London, 1735], n. pp.)

II. 7. Dangle is representative of the beaux who appear in the following auction scene. He fits the pattern of the beau of this decade, who

was like the cinnamon-tree; his bark is worth more than his body. A creature of the doubtful gender, masculine in habit, and feminine in manners; one who has so little manners, that he himself doth not regard it half so much as his body. All his reading has been the academy of compliments; and his heels have profited as much by it as his head. The cut of his cloaths he learnt at Paris, the tone of his voice in Italy, and his affectation everywhere. In his dressing he shews his industry; for he spends four hours a day constantly in it without being fatigued or out of patience. His genius appears in the variety of his suits, and his generosity in his taylor's bills; his delicacy in not so much as bearing a breath of wind to blow on him, and his innocency in being seen with ladies at all hours, and never once suspected of doing an uncivil thing. When he is dressed, the business of the day is over; when he is undressed, he grows invisible for his cloaths are all that is seen of him; when he dies, they are his only valuable remains, and hung up as trophies in Monmouth-street.

(James Peller Malcolm, Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London during the Eighteenth Century [London, 1808], p. 169.)

II. 8. The reference is to Christopher Cock, popular Covent-Garden auctioneer. In The Taste of the Town, Essay VII, James Ralph afforded Cock the following praise:

He is allow'd by all the World, to be a very clever Gentleman in his Business, and manages his little Hammer as much to the Purpose as any Instrument can possibly attain to: His Flourishes are genteel,

yet significant; his Manner of Address easy and well-bred, but intrepid; his Phrases manly without Rudeness, and expressive without Obscurity, or Circumlocution. Not Tully himself could fill a Rostrum with more Grace, or Eloquence.

(James Ralph, The Taste of the Town, pp. 233-234.)

Since the auctioneer's role was played by an actress, Charlotte Cibber Charke, Fielding's use of the name Hen was especially appropriate.

II. 9. Pulpit may be defined as "an auctioneer's desk or platform"; however, because of the allegorical nature of the auction, its figurative meaning, "the place from which anything of the nature of a sermon, as a moral lecture, is delivered," is significant.

II. 10. According to James Ralph in The Taste of the Town, Essay VII, public auctions were a favorite amusement of smart society, "so calculated for the Use of the Idle and Indolent; that Morning, Noon and Night, they may know where to be most agreeably busy." He related that critics of the auction claimed that "fine ladies go there only to get the better of some idle Hours, and that fine Gentlemen will follow them: Both are oblig'd in Honour to bid for something, tho' ever so unnecessary; and when they are so happy as to meet with a delicious Bargain, they do not know what to do with their Purchase, and would give

Fifty per Cent. to have this Piece of good Fortune taken off their Hands."

(Ibid., pp. 232-233.)

II. 11. While satirizing the banality of subject matter in fashionable conversation, Fielding also attacked the trend toward affectation and elegance in polite speech. For example, he employed the expression, "There will be all the world there," to illustrate the fashion of using French idioms in English.

(William Matthews, "Polite Speech in the Eighteenth Century," English, I [1937], 504.)

II. 12. Most critics agree that the auction scene is "the best in the whole Performance." Patterned upon Lucian's Sale of Creeds, it later was used by Theophilus Cibber as the basis for his farce, The Auction.

II. 13. Because of the large quantities of snuff available in London after the seizure of Spanish ships at Vigo Bay, snuff-taking became common during the first year of Queen Anne's reign.

(G[eorge] M[acaulay] Trevelyan, English Social History: A Survey of Six Centuries: Chaucer to Queen Victoria [London, 1944], p. 315.)

As the habit increased in popularity, elaborate accessories were

introduced. Although most men grasped the snuff in their fingers, large, dark handkerchiefs were on the market.

(Rosamond Bayne-Powell, Eighteenth-Century London Life [London, 1937], p. 186.)

Of all shapes and sizes, bejeweled snuff-boxes of gold, silver, tortoise-shell, or mother-of-pearl were purchased by both sexes.

(Jay Barrett Botsford, English Society in the Eighteenth Century: as Influenced from Oversea [New York, 1924], p. 98.)

II. 14. Forms may be defined as long, backless seats or benches.

II. 15. Cudgels were sturdy sticks with basket-handguards. In cudgel play he who first succeeded in drawing blood from his opponent's head won the match.

(E. D. Cuming, "Sports and Games," Johnson's England, I, 378.)

II. 16. Under a Swiss named Heidegger, master of the revels to George II, masquerades became major diversions for the upper classes at Ranelagh, the Pantheon, Vauxhall, Marylebone Gardens, and the Court.

(Walter Besant, London in the Eighteenth Century [New York, 1903], p. 410.)

Another especially popular setting for masquerades was the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, where everyone arrived, masked, in characteristic costume or in dominos. Although gentlemen often unmasked at suppertime, ladies seldom removed their masks.

As the masquerades grew more spectacular, friends frequently outfitted themselves in costumes centering about an elaborate theme and sometimes included live animals in their numbers.

(Talbot Hughes, "Costume," Johnson's England, I, 402-403.)

II. 17. Though the exact date of its first performance is not recorded, several critics regard March 21 as the possible opening night of The Historical Register. An entry in the diary of Viscount Percival, afterwards first Earl of Egmont, indicates that he attended a performance on Tuesday, March 22, 1737.

(Emmett L. Avery, "An Early Performance of Fielding's Historical Register," MLN, XLIX [June 1934], 407.)

II. 18. As Jack Richard Brown points out, this remark is a reference to those turn-coats whom Walpole bribed to abandon the Opposition.

(Brown, "Four Plays," p. 457, n. 2.)

II. 19. Birth-day suits refer to outfits worn on the King's birthday.

II. 20. Westminster Hall contained courts of law. There spectators entertained themselves by listening to court cases and by shopping at stalls which lined the sides of the hall.

(Bayne-Powell, p. 22.)

The allusion is to the fact that Patriot and Patriotism

were terms frequently used in regard to the Opposition forces, which could expect little sympathy in the Walpole-dominated halls of justice. As Jack Richard Brown indicates, it may also be a reference to the Calico Act of 1721, which, in order to protect home industry, prohibited the using or wearing of printed or colored calico.

(Brown, p. 458, n. 1.)

II. 21. In sympathy with the Opposition were many disgruntled small country landowners who resented Walpole's office-holders, pensioners, and the politics of London.

(J[ohn] H[arold] Plumb, "Nobility and Gentry in the Early Eighteenth Century," History Today, V [December 1955], 815.)

II. 22. French fashions were the rage in London. Through Sir Harry Fox-Chace in Pasquin, Fielding recalled the happy days "before your damn'd French Fashdons were brought over. . . ."

(Henry Fielding, Pasquin. A Dramatick Satire on the Times: Being the Rehearsal of Two Plays, viz. a Comedy Call'd The Election; and a Tragedy Call'd, The Life and Death of Common-Sense. As It Is Acted at the Theatre in the Hay-Market [London, 1736], p. 21.)

II. 23. As facial adornment became more of an industry than an art, dyes such as carmine, yellow ochre, and verdigris were employed in lip salves and face pastes. Horace Walpole reported in his Journal that the Countess of Coventry died supposedly as a result of an over-application of cosmetics.

(William Connor Sydney, England and the English in the Eighteenth Century [New York, 1891], I, 100.)

II. 24. During the reign of Queen Anne, fans became important accessories. Ladies labored to master the art of fluttering them, and their suitors sometimes collected them. Composed of gauze, silk, or chicken skin, they often had two elaborately painted faces, one of which was to be displayed in decorous company and the other to be exposed on gallant adventure.

(Bayne-Powell, p. 184.)

II. 25. A tallow-chandler is one who makes or sells tallow candles.

II. 26. Strictly municipal forces, the London trained bands were supported by the city. Although they could not be sent abroad, they might be called to service in time of invasion or state of national emergency. Their members ordinarily were chosen by lot.

(Ibid., pp. 110-111.)

II. 27. Reverting to the custom of medieval mercenary companies, army officers purchased their commissions and, when they wished to retire, sold them. In poking fun at the army, Fielding voiced a common sentiment. Considerably less respected than the navy, the army of his period included in its ranks undisciplined recruits of the lowest character.

(John Fortescue, "The Army," Johnson's England, I, 66, 70.)

II. 28. Located in Westminster, Tothill Fields or "Tuttle Downs" served as a dumping ground for filth. There bears, bulls, lions, and sometimes leopards and tigers were baited.

(Bayne-Powell, p. 169.)

II. 29. A fashionable meeting place for aristocracy and for social climbers, Hyde Park was also the site of memorable duels, such as that of the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun, and of the public executions of military deserters.

(Fortescue, I, 70.)

II. 30. As Jack Richard Brown indicates, Fielding here perhaps satirized military pomposity through the "braggart soldier."

(Brown, p. 460, n. 1.)

II. 31. The reference is to John Rich, famous promoter of pantomime. For a discussion of Rich and his entertainments, see Introduction: Part I, pp. 34-36.

II. 32. Although he had died the previous year, the reference may be to William Arnall, chief political writer for the ministry.

II. 33. Viewing the passage as an extension of the double-entendre in Fielding's "Dedication to the Publick," Brown concludes that "House" refers not only to the theatre but also to

the House of Commons. As "Manager" of the House of Commons, Walpole was the only one interested in defenses of his government.

(Ibid., p. 461, n. 1.)

II. 34. Judges of the period were generally competent and honorable; however, some were notorious for underhandedly acquiring the luxuries of life for themselves and for their families.

(Basil Williams, The Whig Supremacy: 1714-1760 [Oxford, 1939], pp. 61, 63.)

II. 35. Appointed for political rather than for spiritual reasons, most bishops actively supported Walpole and the status quo and were rewarded with lucrative sees.

(Dorothy Marshall, English People in the Eighteenth Century [London, 1956], pp. 94, 97-98.)

II. 36. As their fortunes increased, members of the gentry struggled to gain acceptance in Court society. Generally unsuccessful in their efforts, they eyed the privileged aristocracy with interest and with envy and attempted to imitate its extravagances.

(Plumb, History Today, V, 811.)

II. 37. A vigorous foe of Roman Catholicism, Fielding missed few opportunities to hit at its hierarchy. As early as 1732 he

had attacked that religion in a disagreeable three-act comedy, The Old Debauchees.

(Dudden, Henry Fielding, I, 107-108.)

II. 38. In Peri Bathous "Martinus Scriblerus" discusses the essentials of "the true Genius for the Profund." "And I will venture to lay it down, as the first Maxim and Cornerstone of this our Art; that whoever would excel therein, must studiously avoid, detest, and turn his head from all the ideas, ways, and workings of that pestilent Foe to Wit, and Destroyer of fine Figures, which is known by the Name of Common-Sense."

(Pope, Peri Bathous, in Selected Poetry and Prose, p. 313.)

II. 39. Perhaps Fielding again was satirizing the inflated style of Colley Cibber.

(Brown, p. 463, n. 1.)

II. 40. The reference is to Theophilus Cibber, whose personality and whose extravagant portrayal of Pistol in Shakespeare's Henry IV merited him that nickname. An unattractive replica of Colley, his son handled broadly humorous roles with competence but sometimes annoyed his audiences by over-acting.

(Nichols, PQ, I, 279.)

II. 41. By relating Cibber to a "great man," Fielding began to develop the analogy between Theophilus and Walpole.

II. 42. In exhibiting Pistol's ministerial capacity, Fielding hinted that, just as Theophilus Cibber was the acknowledged fool of the theatrical world, Walpole was the fool of the political. (Hessler, "Literary Opposition," p. 137.)

II. 43. This scene may have been inspired by an anonymous burlesque entitled The Stage-Mutineers. Produced in 1733, the play had Pistol as its hero. (Nichols, PQ, I, 279.)

Pistol's appearance as leader of a rebellious mob recalled both the Kitty Clive-Susannah Cibber controversy over the part of Polly Peachum in The Beggar's Opera and the theatre war of 1733-34. Both incidents are discussed in Introduction: Part I, pp. 23-26.

II. 44. Fielding here alluded to three of Colley Cibber's greatest dramatic failures. Written in imitation of The Beggar's Opera, Love in a Riddle was a pastoral. When it was presented at Drury Lane on January 7, 1729, it was, as Colley painfully recalled, "as vilely damn'd and hooted at as so vain a Pre-sumption in the idle Cause of Virtue could deserve." (Cibber, An Apology, I, 244.)

A tragedy presented at Drury Lane on December 9, 1724, Caesar in Egypt was derived from The False One of Beaumont and

Fletcher and La Morte de Pompee of Pierre Corneille.

Cibber's adaptation of Shakespeare's King John recently had been withdrawn from the stage during its rehearsal. Fielding played upon it more extensively in Act III of The Register.
II. 45. Through this speech of Theophilus, Fielding perhaps hit at the notorious lack of sensitivity to criticism exhibited by the Cibbers.

(Taylor, MP, XXIX, 84.)

NOTES TO ACT III

III. 1. Apollo is the patron of poetry and music.

III. 2. Moria refers to stupidity, folly, or dullness, arising chiefly from lack of imagination or memory. Fielding here was attacking dullness in the poetry of contemporary drama.

III. 3. Thespis was the traditional father of Greek tragedy.

III. 4. The reference is to Theophilus Cibber's arrogant attitude in theatrical circles.

III. 5. Fielding was implying that the achievements of English lords were of little importance since these gentlemen acted only as Walpole directed them.

(Brown, "Four Plays," p. 473, n. 1.)

III. 6. The reference is to Philip Faulconbridge. As Fielding indicated, he, like Robert Faulconbridge, Peter of Pomfret, King Philip of France, and the French Ambassador Chatillon, is a character in Shakespeare's King John.

III. 7. For a comment on French dancing-masters, see I. 24.

III. 8. Ground-Ivy satirizes Colley Cibber. Considering Cibber's lack of poetic talent, Fielding found ground ivy more appropriate than laurel for the poet laureate.

III. 9. Stories of Cibber's impertinence to playwrights and of

his arbitrary condemnation of plays were common. One concerns an author who thrust his manuscript into the theatre manager's hands and begged him to read it. After haphazardly flipping through its pages, Cibber decreed, "This will not do at all."

(Senior, Life and Times of Colley Cibber, p. 76.)

III. 10. Fielding again was ridiculing Cibber's unfortunate attempt to produce in 1736 an adaptation of King John. So intense had been the public's criticism of Colley for presuming to improve upon Shakespeare that he had been forced to go to the playhouse and withdraw the drama from rehearsal.

(Emmett L. Avery, "Cibber, King John, and the Students of the Law," MLN, LIII [April 1938], 272-273, 275.)

The eighteenth-century trend toward alteration of Shakespeare and Colley Cibber's part in that trend are discussed in Introduction: Part I, pp. 26-28.

III. 11. As a member of the Drury Lane triumvirate, Colley Cibber, together with Barton Booth and Robert Wilks, had dominated the London theatre for two decades.

III. 12. On February 15, 1745, at Covent Garden, Cibber finally presented his adaptation of King John under the title of Papal Tyranny in the Reigh of King John and cast himself in the role of Cardinal Pandulph. Overshadowed by a revival of the original at Drury Lane, his play had a very short run. Fielding must

have been somewhat familiar with the text of Cibber's drama since he hit upon its two major flaws. The critics of 1745 especially objected to the virtual disappearance of Faulconbridge and the expansion of the character of Constance. In emphasizing the female element, Cibber attributed to Constance actions which history fails to justify.

(Kilbourne, Alterations and Adaptations, pp. 91-94.)

III. 13. This expression appears to have been a favorite of Cibber.

III. 14. When King John was in rehearsal, Cibber, apparently alarmed by the public's disapproval, had written an open letter of appeal to London law students. The publication of his letter in a local newspaper had aroused even more criticism.

(Avery, MLN, LIII, 273-275.)

III. 15. The reference is to a warlike Turkish people, famous as horsemen, inhabiting parts of Russia north of the Black Sea.

III. 16. In his letter to law students, Cibber had written: "And here, Gentlemen, I solemnly protest, I have always been ignorant, from whence the Ill-will that has been shewn to my most successful Plays, on their first Day's Presentation, has proceeded: Yet when I consider that even Shakespear, Johnson, and Moliere, have often met with the same Severities, it would

be almost Arrogance in me to complain of it."

(Colley Cibber, quoted in ibid., p. 274.)

III. 17. The political significance of the two remarks probably was obvious to an audience accustomed to satire aimed at Walpole, "the great man," and at his money-hungry ministry.

(Brown, p. 478, n. 1.)

III. 18. Fielding again was satirizing the overbearing attitude of Theophilus Cibber, who he suggested already considered himself superior to his father.

(Ibid., n. 2.)

III. 19. Odso is a minced form of Godso, an exclamation usually indicating surprise or emphasis.

III. 20. It is possible that Fielding originally had included two characters satirizing the controversy over the role of Polly Peachum but later had withdrawn them because the humor of the situation had become hackneyed.

(Cross, History of Henry Fielding, I, 211-212.)

III. 21. Fielding was ridiculing certain members of the Opposition who, in order to gain public office, were willing to sacrifice some of their "patriotism." His comment may refer specifically to Walpole, who was said to have laughed cynically at patriotism, or to those Patriots who had repudiated the

original motives of the Opposition.

(Hessler, "Literary Opposition," pp. 138-139.)

As Jack Richard Brown states, Fielding's political satire here reached a climax. Its frank quality suggests that he no longer considered dishonesty in government a laughing matter.

(Brown, pp. 72-73.)

III. 22. In an age when excessive drinking was common to all social levels, it was considered a mark of discourtesy not to drink to the health of the assembled party. Thus, toasting provided a polite excuse for imbibing.

(Dorothy Marshall, "Manners, Meals, and Domestic Pastimes," Johnson's England, I, 350.)

III. 23. The word is employed in the adverbial sense of absolutely, entirely, thoroughly.

III. 24. England was in constant danger of becoming entangled in the disputes of Spain, France, and the Emperor over the Polish succession.

(Brown, p. 482, n. 1.)

III. 25. A sword-cutler is one who makes sword blades or swords.

III. 26. By representing Walpole as Quidam in the following scene, Fielding boldly asserted that the minister had bribed his way to power and then had betrayed those whom he had corrupted.

Ultimately the English people would be forced to pay for his

dishonesty.

(Ibid., p. 483, n. 1.)

III. 27. Fourberies may be defined as tricks or pieces of deception.

III. 28. The reference is to John Rich.

III. 29. The Shakespeare Ladies Club is discussed in Introduction: Part I, pp. 28-30.

Although previous critics have viewed the mention of "Shakespeare's Ladies" as merely a reference to the Shakespeare Ladies Club and have regarded "Beaumont and Fletcher's Ladies" as a similar group whose background is unknown, Brown sees a double entendre in the passage. He points out that Fielding may be alluding to the fact that Shakespeare's ladies are characteristically virtuous, while Beaumont and Fletcher's are characteristically corrupt.

(Ibid., p. 486, n. 2.)

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Katherine Margaret Marron has been read and approved by three members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

January 20, 1964
Date

Robert J. Spencer
Signature of Adviser