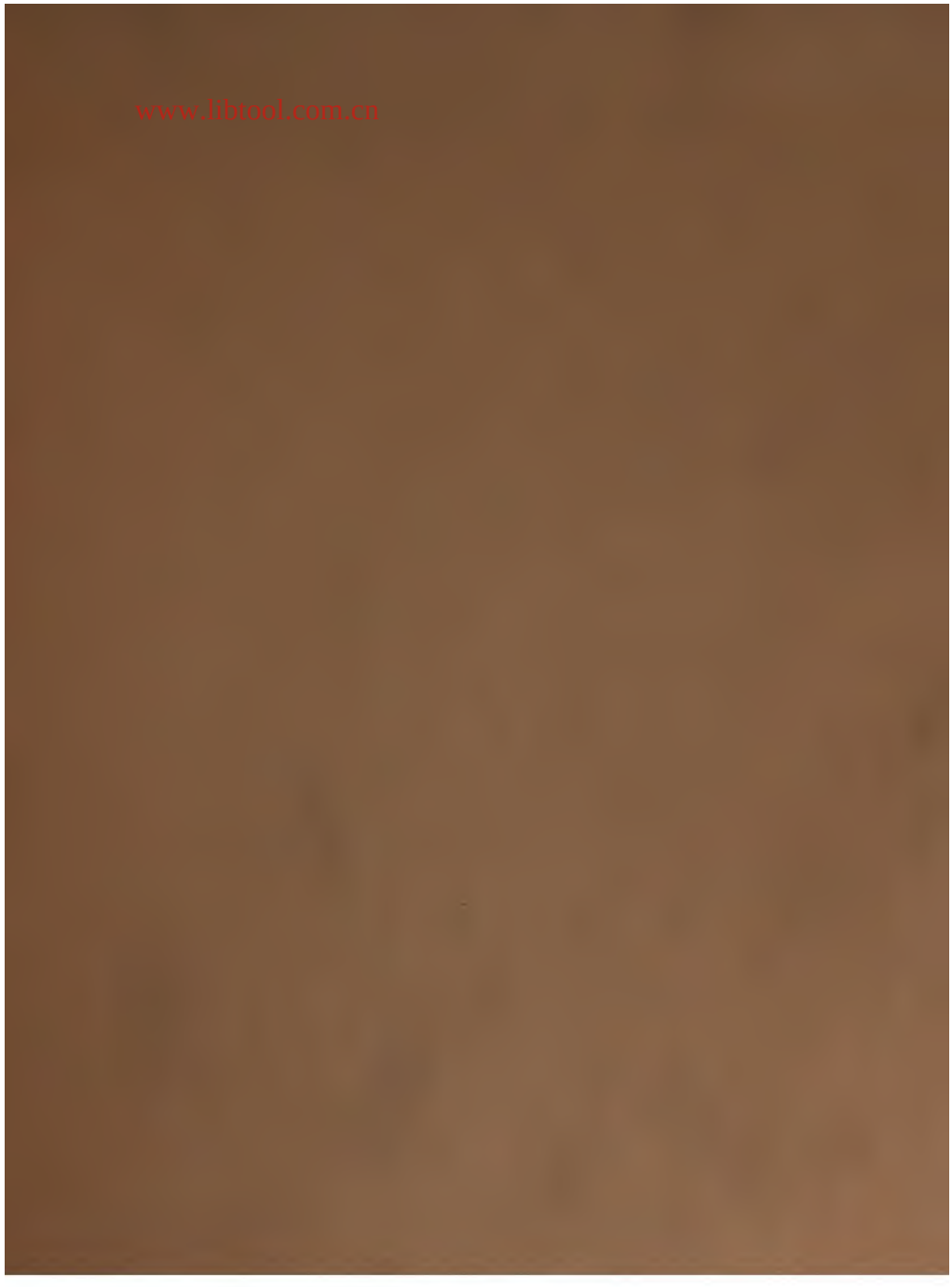

SWIFT

THE MYSTERY OF HIS LIFE AND LOVE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

JOHNSON:

HIS CHARACTERISTICS AND APHORISMS.

Extracts from Press Notices.

". . . . An interesting and judicious life. . . ."—*The Times.*

". . . . This book is a sound piece of work. . . ."—*The Spectator.*

". . . . We welcome this book. . . ."—*The Academy.*

". . . . Good in substance. . . ." —*The Contemporary Review.*

". . . . An excellent short biography. . . ."—*The Westminster Review.*

". . . . We thank our author and are grateful to him. . . ." —*The Whitehall Review.*

". . . . Full of interest and entertainment. . . ."—*The Scottish Review.*

"Who that is familiar with the writings of Boswell and Hawkins, of Dr. George Birkbeck Hill and the Reverend James Hay, of Lord Macaulay and Mr. Leslie Stephen, can have forgotten their vivid descriptions of Dr. Johnson's undergraduate career at Pembroke College, Oxford?"—From a Leading Article of *The Daily Telegraph.*

"The Minister of Kirn has, in modest way, rendered no slight service to the memory of Samuel Johnson and to English Literature. . . ."—*The Scotsman.*

". . . . Particularly interesting. . . ."—*The Glasgow Herald.*

SWIFT

THE MYSTERY OF HIS LIFE AND LOVE

BY

JAMES HAY,

MINISTER OF THE PARISH OF KIRN,

AUTHOR OF "JOHNSON'S CHARACTERISTICS,"

ETC.

2d ed.

"Hated by fools, and fools to hate,
Be this my motto and my fate.'

SWIFT.

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL,
LIMITED.
1891.

CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.

is related of Lord Orrery, Swift's first biographer, that, when examining the Dean's papers, he found a letter, written by himself to Swift years before, unopened.

Whether this circumstance influenced him against Swift we cannot tell; we only know that he flattered the old man when living, and maligned him when dead.

As to Johnson, his next biographer, it is notorious that he had a strong prejudice against Swift, which he repeatedly showed both at the club and at the dinner-table. On one occasion Boswell said to him: "Sir, can you account for your antipathy to Swift?" Johnson replied: "No, sir, I cannot." We wonder whether Swift's neglect to answer Johnson's petition, in his Grub Street days, which he sent to the great Dean through Lord Gower, to procure an Irish degree, could have anything to do with his prejudice. Anyhow, prejudice he had which utterly disqualified him, acute and intellectual though he was, for being a fair interpreter of the life of Swift.

Sheridan, the next of his chief biographers, must not be identified with the famous Dr. Sheridan, the lifelong friend and companion of Swift. A biography from him would have been priceless. It

partisanship has made their judgment of him unjust. They have given us their picture of Swift—would that it were possible for us to have Swift's picture of them! Indeed, it might have been said of them, by anticipation, before they began to write on him:

> "Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
> And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him."

Well was it for these Whig lords, when they maligned Swift, that he was gone.

We have next an eloquent but superficial chapter on Swift by Taine. Finally, we have a slight, but fascinating lecture-room performance on Swift by Thackeray, which has now deservedly become cheap railway literature.

Doubtless there are some men whom to abuse is pleasant, and for a lecturer profitable. Swift is one of these. Yet the lecture-room is hardly the place for biography, and especially the biography of such a man as Swift; and one might be pardoned for doubting whether such a life can be satisfactorily deciphered even by Mr. Thackeray, with all his ability and acuteness, in a lecture of one hour's duration.

In these circumstances, I have ventured to give a sketch of Swift from my own standpoint.

SECOND EDITION.

PREFATORY NOTE.

I HAVE to thank the Public for the avidity with which they are purchasing the last Edition.

I have taken the opportunity of making a few alterations and corrections in this Edition.

KIRN, 1891.

CHAPTER II.

SWIFT: THE POLITICIAN.

retained for three years by the woman who stole him, lest having borne one voyage well he might not be able to bear a second—a reason which it must be confessed is frivolous enough.

At the age of six, Swift was sent to the school of Kilkenny, called, and justly called, the Eton of Ireland, since it produced Swift, the greatest satirist, Congreve, the greatest dramatist, and Berkeley, the greatest metaphysician of the centuries in which they lived. Doubtless, this place, with its surroundings and associations, must have impressed mightily the mind of the acute and wondering boy; Kilkenny, with its separate corporations, and jurisdictions, and religionists dwelling apart, with its dividing streams, across which Catholic and Protestant used to threaten and glare defiance at each other, inaugurating the famous fable of the Kilkenny cats. Amid such scenes the mind of young Swift received the moral twist which made him, in after life, so bitter, sarcastic, and dogmatic.

Doubtless, the author of "Gulliver" must have been a remarkable boy; but, unfortunately, only two anecdotes of his school days have been preserved. "I remember," said he, "when I was a little boy, I felt a great fish at the end of my line, which I drew up almost on the ground, but it dropped in, and the disappointment vexes me to this very day; and I believe it was the type of all my future disappointments."

He recalls another reminiscence, when gently rebuking and helping a young clergyman who

his burial. By the pecuniary help of his uncle Godwin, Swift passed from the school of Kilkenny to the University of Dublin in 1682. This uncle Swift never liked, from a mistaken notion that he was rich and penurious. It was not so. His apparently prosperous uncle was the victim of unfortunate speculations, and, like many of the present day, preferred the reproach of avarice to the acknowledgment of the humiliating truth. This uncle was once the subject of a trenchant conversation. An Archdeacon, at a Diocesan dinner, asked Swift in a loud voice across the table: "Sir, did not your uncle educate you?" "Yes," said Swift, "he educated me like a dog." Swift undoubtedly was too severe in speaking thus against his uncle, who latterly was weak in intellect and light in purse—he had married four times. Perhaps after all it was better that young Swift was not encumbered with too much help.

Regarding his College days and his powers as a student—dull was the appellation which he applied to himself. His ideal of scholarship and intellectuality was very high, "dull and laborious" being the characteristics which he unjustly applied to Bentley. It is well known that Swift was a severe student in his own desultory way, but not according to academic rule.

It has been said that he failed in Dublin to take his B.A., and when he went up for his final examination to take his certificate, he received it only *speciali gratia*.

Had Swift taken his place at College as a great scholar, which by a little attention he could easily have done, the Swift of the world might have been lost in a University monk.

It is sad to note that during the greater part of his curriculum he was miserably poor, and much indebted to his cousin Willoughby, a rich Lisbon merchant, son of William Swift, whom Jonathan characterised as the best of his relatives. Swift, in his great days, used to relate with glee an incident which happened during his College curriculum.

One day, sitting penniless, gazing from his chamber window, he saw in the College quadrangle a master mariner, evidently inquiring for a student. "Lord," thought he, "if that person should now be inquiring and staring about for my chamber in order to bring me some present from cousin Willoughby Swift, what a happy creature should I be!" In a few seconds, in true sailor style, like the Oxonians amongst themselves, which is to knock and then come in, unless forbidden, the stranger entered, and, without uttering a word, poured a leathern sackful of silver coin at the young student's feet. Swift, in his ecstasy, insisted that the bearer should take part of the treasure as a reward for his trouble; but, no! with the noble generosity which distinguishes the British sailor, he refused to take a gift from one poorer than himself. "No, no, master," said he, "I'se take nothing for my trouble. I would do more than that comes to for Mr. Willoughby Swift," whereupon Jonathan gathered up the money as fast

Even such a rebel was Swift under similar circumstances; not only in College days, but in all days, they had much in common. Both had a hard struggle to get the wherewithal to live. The one harnessed to Sir William Temple, the other to Bookseller Osborne and Printer Cave. Both were morbid; indeed, partially insane. Both were the very essence of generosity and goodness. Both were deeply religious. Both were keenly sarcastic. Both were dogmatical in the street, at the club, and at the dinner-table. Both were dictators — the one the political dictator of England, the other the intellectual dictator of the British nation.

In the year 1688, Swift returned from Ireland to Leicester, the home of his mother—a mother who, by her early rising and her simple dress, by her needle and her reading, and her happy, contented spirit, dignified that home of poverty upon a pension of twenty pounds a year.

At this acute crisis of his career he was twenty-one years of age, and without a future plan of life. The poor mother could not assist him either in the way of money or advice, but said:

"Go, my son, in God's name, to Sir William Temple, and he will advise you what to do."

Strange, is it not, that this poor widow, living on the charity of friends, should presume to send her son to take counsel of such a man—a politician whose ambassadorial exploits had made a part of the history of Europe? A polished courtier, a man

of literature, the associate of kings, and confidant of his sovereign; yet a cynic, who shrank from the insincerity of courts, and the turmoil and strife of politics, to his quiet library, his beautiful garden, and his luxurious dinner-table—such was Temple.

We can almost fancy that we see this raw, inexperienced youth—yet destined to be "the future Swift of the world"—with his proud spirit and rebellious will, reluctantly taking on foot that weary journey to Sheen to lay his case before Temple. Sir William received him cheerfully, and treated him kindly, examined into his classical and philosophical attainments, and prescribed for him a course of eight hours' study a day, to which Swift applied himself with great assiduity. He remained in the Temple family two years, when, as he says himself, he returned to Ireland by the advice of physicians, who weakly imagined that "his native air might be of some use to recover his health." I suspect that young Swift returned to Ireland not so much expecting to obtain health as a fellowship in the University of Dublin, through the influence of Sir Robert Southwell, who that year went to Ireland as Secretary of State, and to whom Swift was recommended by Sir William Temple, in the following interesting letter which has recently been discovered:

MOOR PARK, NEAR FARNHAM.
May 20th, 1690.

This afternoon I hear, though by a common hand, that you are going over into Ireland, Secretary of State for that kingdom. I venture to make you the offer of a servant, in case

you may have occasion for such a one as this bearer. He has Latin and Greek, some French, writes a very good and current hand, is very honest, and diligent, and has good friends, though they have for the present lost their fortunes in Ireland. . . . If you please to accept him into your service, either as a gentleman to wait on you, or as a clerk to write under you; and either to use him so; if you like his service; or upon any establishment of the College, to recommend him to a fellowship there, which he has a just pretence to, I shall acknowledge it as a great obligation to me as well as to him.

Little did Sir William think that the bearer of this letter, for he does not even name him, with his "good and current hand," was destined to outlive in fame himself and all the Secretaries and Lord-Lieutenants of Ireland.

One regrets that neither this letter nor the Irish air did Swift any manner of good. The one failed to secure for him a fellowship, and the other to procure health.

Accordingly he takes his flight from Ireland, and returns once more to the Temple family about Christmas, 1690, doubtless with strange reflections. This year, Ireland had made a desperate struggle for independence, at the Battle of the Boyne. This year, young Swift had made a desperate struggle for his own independence. Both had failed, miserably failed. Yet Swift is destined one day—not by the sword, but by the pen—to secure independence for himself and for Ireland too.

Of Swift's second residence at Moor Park, Lord Macaulay thus writes: "An eccentric, uncouth, disagreeable young Irishman, who had narrowly escaped plucking at Dublin, attended Sir William as an

amanuensis, for board and twenty pounds a year, dined at the second table, wrote bad verses in praise of his employer, and made love to a very pretty, dark-eyed young girl who waited on Lady Gifford. Little did Temple imagine that the coarse exterior of his dependent concealed a genius equally suited to politics and to letters, a genius destined to shake great kingdoms, to stir the laughter and the rage of millions, and to leave to posterity memorials which can perish only with the English language.

"Little did he think that the flirtation in his servants' hall, which he, perhaps, scarcely deigned to make the subject of a jest, was the beginning of a long, unprosperous love, which was to be as widely famed as the passion of Petrarch or of Abelard.

"Sir William's secretary was Jonathan Swift. Lady Gifford's waiting-maid was poor Stella." * These are eloquent words, but they are not true and righteous words. I have consulted every acknowledged source of information to discover Macaulay's warrant for using them, and I can find no better authority for the first sentences than John Temple, nephew of Sir William, Swift's implacable foe, with whom, through life, he had been at bitter enmity. Was it fair of Macaulay to take such an authority? There is absolutely no proof that Swift sat at the second or servants' table; even John Temple does not say it. He only says that Swift was not allowed by Sir William to sit down at table with *him*.

Macaulay characterises him also as being eccentric

* Macaulay's "Essay on Sir William Temple."

and in love. It may be true that he was in love, although we have our doubts as to that; but if he was in love at this time, certainly it was not with Stella, nor is there the slightest proof that he was eccentric. At this time his eccentricity was not developed. How Macaulay could say so, we cannot divine, unless, indeed, to a grave bachelor it might seem eccentricity "that an uncouth, disagreeable young Irishman should make love to a very pretty, dark-eyed young girl." Again, he was "uncouth," writes Macaulay. There is no evidence that Swift was uncouth or coarse in appearance. The portrait of him, painted by Jervas, proves the contrary. It is true that there is no perfect standard either of beauty or of taste, and Macaulay was so transcendently attractive himself, that his ideal would be high; but we contend that at no time in Swift's life could it be truthfully said that he was uncouth. On the contrary, he was interesting and attractive to all who came into contact with him, especially to ladies —indeed, magnetically so.

He was also "disagreeable," says Macaulay. Doubtless he had the power of making himself very disagreeable when he pleased; but in the absence of proof to the contrary, we contend that it is highly improbable that Swift made himself disagreeable in the very house where, as Macaulay says, he was making love. Another accusation of Macaulay is that Swift was a writer of bad poetry. A very likely thing indeed. But surely this was a thing for Macaulay to lament, but not to censure.

eloquent and graphic description must refer to Swift's second residence with the Temple family at Moor Park. If so, he is equally in error. During this residence he was the companion of Temple. When Sir William was under the paroxysm of gout which his sister called "spleen," he entertained his aristocratic and Royal guests. Swift used to walk with King William in the garden, when the King graciously showed him how to prepare asparagus for the table in the Dutch style. Struck by the physical rather than the mental endowments of the robust young Irishman, he offered him a captaincy in the Dragoons, which when Swift refused, King William, to mark his high appreciation of him, promised him a prebend in Westminster. Again, to mark the high estimation in which Temple held Swift at this time, he sent him to London to argue King William into the granting of Triennial Parliaments. This is the man whom Macaulay would have us believe sat at the servants' table.

Macaulay's next statement is that this humble student, as he calls him, would not have dared to raise his eyes to a lady of family; but that when he had become a clergyman, he began, after the fashion of clergymen of that generation, to make love to a pretty waiting-maid, who was the chief ornament of the "servants' hall." With all due deference to Lord Macaulay, we venture to say that these words are not merely a scurrilous libel on Swift, but on all the clergy of Queen Anne's reign.

No man knew better than Macaulay, that the

he heard or saw anything to my disadvantage, would let me know in plain words, and not put me in pain to guess by the change or coldness of his countenance or behaviour; for it was what I could hardly bear from a crowned head, and I thought no subject's favour was worth it." To which he added the next day: "I think what I said to Mr. Secretary was right. Don't you remember how I used to be in pain when Sir William Temple would look cold and out of humour for two or three days, and I used to suspect a hundred reasons? I have plucked up my spirit since then. Faith! he spoiled a fine gentleman." This last sentence contains a bit of Swift's humour, which Macaulay has interpreted literally. His fondest associations were connected with Moor Park. He ever retained the most pleasing memories of his stay in the Temple family. He repeatedly visited the house after Sir William's death.

He also made his garden at Laracor on a small scale an exact copy of the one at Moor Park. This we think a significant fact. In 1706, he writes to young Temple: "I am extremely obliged by your kind invitation to Moor Park, which no time will make me forget or love less."

A generation after, he writes to the same Lord Temple, now Lord Palmerston, regarding the Moor Park elms, on which, as he tells him, he had carved a Latin verse commending its shades to Temple's descendants.

Swift's position here was less menial than Macau-

lay has represented. He was a gentleman filling the post of private secretary.

In 1692, Swift was sent by Sir William Temple to Oxford to take an M.A. degree, which he did in the July of that year.

The University received him graciously and treated him kindly. Swift himself says that he was almost ashamed of the civilities he received there. Mr. Leslie Stephen ascribes these civilities to Temple's recommendation. This biographer has, I suspect, been misled in this opinion by Lord Orrery, who says that Temple most generously stepped in to Swift's assistance in the matter of his Oxford Mastership of Arts.

I am rather inclined, however, to ascribe these Oxford civilities to Swift's scholarship and genius, and not to Sir William Temple's influence. At Oxford the power of rank counts for little, the power of wealth for less; the power of scholarship, intellect, and genius, everything.

This, we presume, is the secret why Oxford's greatest sons carry with them through life pleasing memories of their Alma Mater. It was so with Dryden, who writes:

> Oxford to him a dearer name shall be,
> Than his own mother university.
> Thebes did his green unknowing youth engage,
> He chooses Athens in his riper age.

It was so with Johnson. Despite the ridiculing by the Christ Church men of his ragged shoes, Johnson retained through life the most rapturous fondness for

Oxford. To its library he left all his books, and to its endowments he would have gifted his house at Lichfield, had he not been prudently reminded that he had poor relations. So was it with Swift. He seems at Oxford to have been inspired with the genius of the place. It was here in the sacred places of the Muses that his poetic power had birth. His first poetical effort was a version or paraphrase of Horace, Book II., Ode 18. This plumed his wings for a more ambitious flight. His next attempt at odes was after the manner of Pindar. "A fashionable exercise at that time," says Johnson; "all the boys and girls caught the pleasing fancy, and they who could do nothing else, could write like Pindar." In this absurd attempt Swift overestimates his poetic powers. He sent his manuscript with these odes to his cousin Dryden, who returned them with these sententious words: "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet." Swift was indignant, nor need we wonder, as this criticism was not quite just. He burned the manuscript, but he never forgave his cousin.

Dryden somewhere says:

> Poets should ne'er be drones, mean harmless things,
> But guard, like bees, their labour by their stings.

Dryden, by bitter experience, realised how well Swift had learned these lines, and how cleverly he could apply them even to him.

From Oxford, Swift went to Leicester to pay a visit to his mother, after which he again returned to the Temple family. Swift, although treated by

parted, not perhaps in anger, but with mutual displeasure. Accordingly Swift, like another prodigal, gathered his all and took his journey, not "into a far," but into an Irish country—Dublin, where a fresh difficulty awaited him.

When he went up to present himself for orders, the Church dignitaries refused to ordain him until he presented a certificate from Sir William Temple, as to how he had conducted himself during these seven intervening years since he left the University of Dublin.

After waiting five months there was nothing for it but to write, which he did reluctantly, to Sir William for a testimonial. This letter, which Lord Macaulay characterises as the "language of a lackey, or rather of a beggar," Lady Gifford, with whom Swift quarrelled and called an "old beast," allowed to be transcribed and endorsed as Swift's penitential letter. There is a suspicion about this letter. Why did Lady Gifford bundle up and endorse the transcribed letter and not the original one? Why has the original letter never been seen? Be this as it may, Lord Macaulay might have spared his sneer. He must have known that Swift had done as much for the name and fame of Temple as Temple ever did for him. Whether the proud spirit of Swift on this occasion stooped to conquer I know not; but this I know, that conquer he did. Instantly Sir William sent the necessary document for Swift's admission to holy orders, which he received on the twenty-eighth day of October, in his twenty-eighth year.

Sir Walter Scott is under the impression that with the testimonial Temple had sent some kind of recommendation in behalf of Swift to Lord Capel, who was then Lord Deputy of Ireland, as immediately after ordination Swift was presented to the prebend of Kilroot, near Belfast, worth a hundred per annum. I should have thought so too, had the living not been so small and Temple's influence with Capel so great. It is just possible, however, that it was the best in the gift of the Lord Deputy at the moment; so, after all, Sir Walter Scott's surmise may be the correct one.

He was ordained at Kilroot in 1695. He did not understand the parishioners, nor did they him. During his brief incumbency here his little church was miserably empty. He went under the appellation of the mad clergyman. His leisure was great, his duties small. He seems to have employed his time pretty much in making books, and in making love, and skipping stones into the sea. He seems, however, to have been more successful in literature than love.

A young lady to whom he had given his affections refused to reciprocate them. Accordingly he resolved instantly to leave Ireland, and never see her more. Next day, on the road, he met a curate, an old Oxford College chum, married, with a large family, having empty barrels and quivers full—"passing rich on forty pounds a year"—from whom Swift borrowed his black mare, and riding to Lord Capel as fast as the beast could carry him, resigned his

living to this friend, Wender. It is related that the happiest moment in the life of Swift was the indescribable look of gratitude which he received from the poor curate when he placed the presentation to the living in his hand, and informed him that he had resigned it in his favour.

The story may be apocryphal, and I give it only on the authority of Sir Walter Scott, the great master of fiction. This at least is certain, that Wender was appointed to the living through the influence of Swift.

Accordingly he left Kilroot for London, mounted on the black mare, the curate's gift, which he accepted not to hurt the sensibility of a generous heart under obligations, carrying with him in his pocket four-score pounds, and in his heart a lingering love of Varina, and a bitter hatred of Presbyterians. But even now malevolence, "atra cura," is on Swift's track, travelling faster than his black mare. The tongue of scandal is now busy propagating the reason why he resigned his living. It was not, said the enemy, out of benevolence to his curate friend; not because he preferred the polished society of the Temple family to the boorish society of Kilroot; not because he desired to get away from the presence and memory of Varina, who would not reciprocate his love; but to get away from a criminal prosecution. This crazy story, which has been proved over and over again to be a baseless slander—an untruth taken from the very well of untruth, and which we decline to pollute our pages by recording—has been related *ad nauseam*

crisis, the King desired his advice and presence in London.

Temple, being confined with gout, which his sister called "spleen," could not obey the Royal summons, but sent Swift to argue the King into the granting of Triennial Parliaments. The task was difficult and delicate. Swift had to watch the humour of the King; but how well he performed his part, although the mission failed, history tells. Swift declared that his failure to convince the King was the first thing that cured his vanity. One may guess from this the confidence in himself with which the young scholar had stepped into the closet of the King. High honour this for Macaulay's—"servant!"

Swift remained at Moor Park enjoying refined society and learned leisure until the death of Temple.

During Temple's illness Swift watched over him with pious care to the end, and thus concludes his journal: "He died at one o'clock this morning, 27th January, 1699, and with him all that was good and great." This opinion of Temple Swift never changed. The death of Temple closed Swift's quietest and happiest time. Temple left Swift a legacy of money and his literary works, which he edited and dedicated to the King. Swift received from these works about two hundred pounds; a larger sum, indeed, than he ever received from his own, which had filled the world with his fame.

Temple is now dead, and henceforth Swift must fight the battle of life alone. Indeed, he had expectations from the King's promise of a prebend

Not to hearken to flatteries, nor conceive I can be beloved by a young woman; et eos qui hæreditatem captant odisse at vitare.

Not to be positive or opinionative.

Not to set up for observing all these rules, for fear I should observe none.

Two of these strange resolutions touched the mystery of his life. "Resolution first. Not to marry a young woman."

This may be interpreted by the sentence in his last love-letter to Varina: "Only remember that if you still refuse to be mine, you will quickly lose him that has resolved to die as he has lived,—All yours, JON. SWIFT."

After this pathetic appeal to Varina, we believe, he bade an eternal farewell to what is called true love. A few years hence we hear him saying, "That true friendship is more lasting than violent love." Swift's friendship, however, was characteristic of his personality. With him, whether it was hatred or affection, it was intense. His magnetism had a terrific power of attraction or repulsion. When he found his affinities in any one, that person he made a friend—and the friend became a part of himself. It was ever his way, when he trusted a friend, to trust him wholly. His friendships were founded upon reason, not sentiment, and therefore were lasting. It is very touching to know that the friendships of his youth, with one or two exceptions, were the friendships of his old age.

The fifth resolution is: "Not to be fond of children, *nor let them come near me hardly.*"

Many of his biographers have construed these words to mean that he had a hatred of children, but they have misconstrued them.

These words prove the very opposite. We do not need to defend ourselves by resolutions from what we hate, but from what we like—from that which is apt to become a temptation and a snare.

Swift was conscious when he penned that resolution that he himself had been ensnared into a strange liking, I do not say love: for the beautiful little Stella with her winning ways, had once been a sore entanglement to him, and continued so through life. "Our little language," as he calls it, is but Swift's imitation of little Stella's childish language. This seems to have had a strange influence over him, and must have satisfied some want in his nature. On his return home one evening from the dinner-table of Secretary St. John, where there had been a dispute about a house between Farnham and London, he writes to Stella: "Pshaw! I remember it very well when I used to go for a walk to London from Moor Park. What I warrant oo' don't remember, the golden farmer neither Figgarkick Soley"—a part, doubtless, of their childish gibberish known only to themselves, and which can never be deciphered. Swift was always kind to children and young people.

Mrs. Whiteway, the Doctor's friend, when she found the manuscript with these resolutions, to save, as she thought, the Dean's character, with her own hand obliterated the latter part of the fifth resolution, which is printed in italics, not knowing that these

very words proved the delicate tenderness of Swift's nature; that the innocent, winning ways of childhood, in contrast with the world's deceitfulness, unmanned him, and made him uncomfortable. To maintain, as most of his biographers do, that the fifth resolution showed his hatred of children, is as monstrous a proposition as that made by Thackeray, that Swift's famous proposal for eating children proved what a monster he was. He adds, "great and giant as the Dean is, I say we should hoot him"; when Thackeray either knew, or should have known, that this pamphlet to which he refers was a great political satire, written by Swift to compel the Government by force of public opinion to save the children of the Irish poor from absolute starvation, which he actually did.

At this epoch the Earl of Berkeley, one of the Lords Justices of Ireland, invited Swift to accompany him to that country as his secretary and chaplain, with the promise of the first Church living that became vacant. Swift accepted, and accordingly acted as his secretary until his lordship reached Dublin, when he found that he had been supplanted by one Bush, who had persuaded his lordship that the offices of the chaplain and the secretary should not be combined.

Berkeley apologised to Swift as best he could, and held out speedy Church preferment. The first living that fell vacant in the patronage of the Earl was the rich Deanery of Derry. His secretary, Bush, however, entered into a negotiation to sell it for a bribe of a

forty-four pounds per annum. After Swift's presentation to Laracor, Lady Berkeley and her two charming daughters—with whom Swift was an immense favourite—insisted that, for the present, he should continue his chaplaincy. They prevailed, and he remained at the Castle until the official term of Lord Berkeley's administration expired. Swift was on the most intimate terms with the Berkeley family, and with them and their aristocratic guests had many a frolic. On one occasion he nearly burned the Castle, when Lord Berkeley and himself had a narrow escape. Swift's bedroom was next the Earl's, when Jonathan, in bed reading with candle-light, fell asleep. The candle had fallen on the bedclothes and set them on fire, and they burned until the heat reached his thighs, when he sprang out of bed, and succeeded in quenching the flames; and in the morning by the aid of a few guineas of hush-money judiciously distributed among the servants, nothing more was heard of this strange and risky episode. Another story is related of his Castle life. It seems that Lady Berkeley, like many good ladies of the present day, was fond of what is called devotional reading. In that class of literature, her favourite book was "Hervey's Meditations," which she desired Swift daily to read to her. Swift, who felt the duty irksome, thought one morning that he would insert a meditation of his own. Accordingly, when she had arranged herself in the orthodox manner, with shut eyes and folded hands, she, as usual, asked the subject of meditation.

indebted for some of his inimitable pieces, which give us a glimpse of Castle life apart from ceremony. In this style of writing, Swift had no rival. How inimitable, for instance, is that humorous piece:

ON THE LOSS OF MRS. FRANCIS HARRIS'S PURSE OF MONEY.

"Lord! Madam," says Mary, "how d'ye do? "Indeed," says I, "never worse."
"But pray, Mary, can you tell what I have done with my purse?"
"Lord help me!" says Mary, "I never stirred out of this place!"
"Nay," said I, "I had it in Lady Betty's chamber, that's a plain case."
So Mary got me to bed, and covered me up warm;
However, she stole away my garters, that I might do myself no harm.
So I tumbled and tossed all night, as you may very well think;
But hardly ever set my eyes together, or slept a wink.
So I was a dream'd methought, that we went and search'd the folks round.
And in a corner of Mrs. Duke's box, tied in a rag, the money was found.
So next morning we told Whittle, and he fell a-swearing;
Then my dame Wadgar, and she, you know, is thick of hearing.
"Dame," said I, as loud as I could bawl, "do you know what loss I have had?"
"Nay," said she; "my Lord Colway's folks are all very sad,
For my Lord Dromedary comes on Tuesday, without fail."
"Pugh!" said I; "but that's not the business that I ail."
Says Cary, says he, "I have been a servant this five-and-twenty years, come spring.
And in all places I lived, I never heard of such a thing."
"Yes," says the steward, "I remember, when I was at my Lady Shrewsbury's,
Such a thing as this happen'd just about the time of gooseberries."

The actors in that drama are as real to us to-day as they were a century and a half ago. These Castle

servants—Wadgar, the old housekeeper, who is thick of hearing, Whittle, the butler, who fell a-swearing, and the others—live as vividly as they ever did. This satire seems to have been long remembered by the Berkeley family, as is evident from a fond allusion to it, written by Lady Betty Germain to Swift, when he was about to perform one of the most touching incidents of his life.

Lady Berkeley had three daughters; the youngest, Lady Penelope, died in Dublin, and was buried there, during their official residence at the Castle. Two-and-thirty years after this, when Swift was the famous Dean of St. Patrick's, he resolved to erect a marble slab in St. Andrew's Church over the altar, under which young Pen was buried. He writes to his famous friend, Lady Betty, who for a generation had been one of his familiar correspondents, asking the exact date of her young sister's death. In her reply, dated 23rd February, 1732, she says: "I find you are growing a horrid flatterer, or else you could never have thought of anything so much to my taste as this piece of marble you speak of for my sister Penelope, which I desire may be at my expense. I cannot be exact, neither as to the time nor year, but she died soon after we came there, and we did not stay quite two years, and were in England some months before King William died. I wish I had my dame Wadgar's or Mr. Ferrier's memorandum here, that I might know whether it was at 'the time of gooseberries.'" This fond allusion is to the humorous piece on the lost purse, written

by Swift in his Castle days, when Lady Betty and he were both young and companions together, writing doggerel rhyme to one another.* She ends the letter playfully, as if they were both young again. "Adieu abruptly; for I will have no more formal humble servants, with your whole name at the bottom, as if I was asking you your catechism."

During his Castle days, Swift was also an inveterate maker of puns. The Castle circle, including their autocratic guests, under Swift's influence, became famous punsters. He invented a language of puns which the Lord Lieutenant's family and friends called the "Castilian." How different was Johnson from Swift in this respect! "Sir," he said to Boswell, "a man who makes a pun would pick your pocket."

Shortly before the Berkeley family left the Castle for England, Swift, who was fond of equestrian as well as pedestrian exercise, galloped down incognito to take possession of his new living at Laracor. On his way thither he amused himself by making impromptu sarcastic rhyme on the villages through which he passed. One he characterises as "High church and low steeple; dirty place and proud people." When he arrived at his parish, he went direct to the curate's house, entered and asked his

* This specimen of Lady Betty's doggerel, playfully written by her on one of Swift's manuscripts, will suffice:

With these is Parson Swift,
Not knowing how to spend his time,
Does make a wretched shift
To deafen them with puns and rhyme.

Pretty good fortune, we should say to Lord Macaulay, for a pretty waiting-maid to possess, when we consider the relative value of money then and now. Swift ended his visit by inviting the ladies to follow their funds — to come over themselves to Ireland, and to reside there. He prevailed. They both complied.

Swift next had an interview with the King, doubtless to present His Majesty with another volume of Temple's works. Referring to this interview, afterwards, he says: "I remember when I was last in England, I told the King that the highest Tories we have with us in Ireland would make tolerable Whigs in England." To King William, however, Whig and Tory were equally annoying. The one party doubted his title, and the other party his prerogative.

Speaking on this subject to Halifax, King William remarked: "The only difference between them was that the one would cut his throat in the morning, and the other would let him live till the afternoon."

He next paid a visit to the rendezvous of the Whig wits in St. James's Coffee-house, where Addison nightly gave his little senate laws. His first appearance there is graphically portrayed by Ambrose Philips, one of the wits and a spectator of the scene. "They had for several successive nights," he informs Sheridan, "observed a strange clergyman come into the coffee-house, who seemed utterly unacquainted

too cold, too wet or too dry; but however God Almighty contrives it, at the end of the year 'tis all very well.'"

We are reminded here of his own anecdote of "Will Seymour, the General," when grumbling under scorching heat. A philosophic friend remarked, "that the weather at least pleased the Almighty."

"Perhaps it may," said the General, "but I am sure it pleases nobody else."

To that observation Dr. Johnson would instantly have replied:

"Sir, I do not see the least necessity that it should."

This story, which Sheridan relates upon the authority of Ambrose Philips, has been rejected by some as apocryphal; at all events, it has been received as correct by Dr. Johnson and Sir Walter Scott. Evidently, however, Sheridan is mistaken in affirming that it occurred in Button's Coffee-house, as that was not established until 1711. It must have occurred at St. James's Coffee-house, the well-known rendezvous of Addison and his Whig wits.

Sheridan relates another story, which occurred about the same time and in the same place, but which we prefer giving in the more delicate language of Sir Walter Scott. "I am happy," says Sir Walter Scott, "to give, upon the authority of Dr. Wall of Worcester, who had it from Dr. Arbuthnot himself, a less coarse edition than that which is generally told. Swift was seated by the fire; there was sand on the floor of the coffee-house, and Arbuthnot, with

a design to play upon this original figure, offered him a letter which he had been just addressing, saying, at the same time, 'There—sand that.' 'I have got no sand,' answered Swift, 'but I can help you to a little gravel.' This he said so significantly, that Arbuthnot hastily snatched back his letter, to save it from the fate of the capital of Lilliput."

Ah, little did Addison and his little senate know that the eccentric parson they were laughing at had been listening to their silly jokes, and measuring their intellects, and silently writing over them the inscription—very small. Little did they know that he was the greatest satirist and political writer of the age, the confidant of Cabinet Ministers, and personal friend of the King; that one day he was to be Addison's patron, and, indeed, the patron of nearly all of them; and that shortly he was to be presented with Addison's "Travels in Italy," with this inscription:

TO
DR. JONATHAN SWIFT,
THE MOST AGREEABLE COMPANION,
THE TRUEST FRIEND,
AND THE GREATEST GENIUS OF HIS AGE,
THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED BY HIS MOST HUMBLE SERVANT
THE AUTHOR.

After this scene in St. James's they saw Swift no more until the "Tale of a Tub" burst upon the world, and was received with the applause of nations, and when, in the person of the author, the wits at St. James's recognised their mad parson.

Before taking his final departure from London

to Laracor he paid a visit to Leicester, the home of his mother. Indeed, it is one of the most pleasing characteristics of his life, that in the midst of his power and politics he never forgot to pay an annual visit to his mother, travelling with coach in his great days, and on foot in the days of his poverty. In after years, he used to tell great Ministers of State that he had never studied life to greater advantage than when journeying home in a carrier's cart, or eating dinner with rustics at the wayside inn, or in the village alehouse, over whose door was written "Lodgings for a penny," where he used to give sixpence extra as a bribe to the pretty waiting-maid to get clean sheets and a bed to himself. Earl Orrery ascribes this to meanness; but Johnson, with greater acuteness, ascribes it to his desire of surveying human life through all its varieties.

Swift now returned to his Irish rectory; but this was not for long. When the rough March winds of 1705 were hushed, Swift once more betook himself from Laracor to London to find the "Tale of a Tub" published. This book, at one and the same moment, unbarred to Swift the gates of immortality, and barred against him the gates of a bishopric.

When I say that it debarred him from a bishopric, I am looking at ostensible reasons. If the Court favourite, Lady Suffolk, on bended knee implored her Sovereign that Swift, the author of the "Tale of a Tub," might not be made a bishop, we may rest assured that it was only the ostensible reason; the

ridiculing of her red hair by Swift, the correct one: *Spretæ injuria formæ.* Warton says that Swift nowhere acknowledged or claimed the authorship. That assertion is not true. Letters from Swift to his bookseller remain, giving instructions and directing corrections for a new edition. It is true that Swift never put his name to the "Tale," but it is equally true he would allow no one else to do so. His little parson cousin, Thomas Swift, knowing that Jonathan could hardly acknowledge it for fear of losing his expected bishopric, thought that he might be helped through an uncle of his to a war chaplaincy, to which he was appointed, or nearly so, by being unprincipled enough to lay claim to the authorship of it. Regarding the pretended claim of his cousin, Swift wrote to the publisher: "If he should happen to be in town, and you light on him, I think you ought to tell him gravely that if he be the author, he should set his name to it, and rally him a little upon it, and tell him if he can explain something, you will, if he pleases, set his name to the next edition. I should be glad to hear how far the foolish impudence of a dunce could go." In a P.S. to the Apology he wrote sarcastically to the same effect: "If any person will prove his claim to three lines in the whole book, let him step forth and tell his name and titles, upon which the bookseller shall have orders to prefix them to the next edition, and the claimant shall from henceforward be acknowledged the undisputed author." But not only did the little parson cousin

impose upon his uncle, but what was more wonderful, he nearly persuaded the learned Wotton into a belief of his authorship, although the shrewd litterateurs of the day looked upon it as a practical joke. What is more wonderful still, even Johnson, with acute intellect, was suspicious that the "Tale" was too clever for Swift. He says that "Swift's 'Tale of a Tub' has little resemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copiousness of images, and vivacity of diction such as he afterwards never possessed or never exerted." But with all due deference, we submit that these objections were the best internal evidence that the book was Swift's. A pernicious vice, this pulling down of great names; and if truth must be spoken, Johnson was not free from it. He had unmistakable prejudice against Swift; and the misery of a prejudice is, that, not being founded upon fact for its continuance, facts cannot shake it. Otherwise his sturdy intellect must have seen internal evidence from the "Tale" itself, as well as certain coincidences in "Gulliver's Travels," that he was the author of the book. Besides, could Johnson imagine that Swift would not have denied it when he knew that a single word of denial to the Queen, the Archbishop of York, or to Lord Somers would have procured for him the See of Hertford? But, above all, that tragic scene in the Deanery in the twilight of Swift's intellect, when, mournfully turning over the leaves of the copy of the "Tale of a Tub" which he had presented to his nurse and friend, Mrs. Whiteway,

he was heard murmuring to himself, not knowing that any one was listening to him: "Good God! what a genius I had when I wrote that book!"

Whilst the French nation, under the literary dictatorship of Voltaire, cheered the "Tale of a Tub" to the echo as the greatest prose satire of the age, it is notorious that another nation never liked it—that nation which, Sydney Smith impertinently said, required a surgical operation to understand a joke. But surely the Anglican divine, if correct in his sweeping assertion—which I deny, unless he meant a religious joke—did not know the cause of the nation's obtuseness, as given by the author from whom he borrowed the witticism, without acknowledgment—namely, Scotland's gloomy skies and sour Calvinism; otherwise the reverend joker would have felt that this obtuseness was a subject for pity and not for sneering criticism. The Scottish nation, although it never liked the "Tale," admired the immense genius of its author. As a work of genius, no praise can be too high for it. It is doubtless the greatest prose satire in any language. It may well be called the "Prose Dunciad," the forerunner of Pope's poetical "Dunciad," which Swift indeed suggested and helped to execute. To the connoisseurs of learning, science, and morals, as well as religion, it applied the satirical lash unmercifully. This stirred up a nest of hornets, from the archiepiscopal throne to the Grub Street hack; but the yelping critics have perished, all save one—the loudest and the most learned, Wotton by name, whom Swift cleverly caught and harnessed

to his triumphant chariot, amidst the laughter and hosannahs of a nation. This was one of the cleverest jokes that Swift ever perpetrated. The learned Wotton had quarrelled with Swift over "The Battle of the Books," and was enraged at the unparalleled success of the "Tale of a Tub." With the avowed purpose of warning the people, who greedily bought up the book, against its subtle and dangerous influence, he wrote an elaborate elucidation of its darker passages. Swift, with inimitable cleverness and coolness, printed in the next edition these illustrations, as "the notes and elucidations contributed to its text by the worthy and ingenious Mr. Wotton, Bachelor of Divinity." Thus the enraged Wotton goes down to posterity amidst a chorus of laughter as the friendly elucidator of the "Tale" which he tried so hard to condemn.

From the first words of dedication to the last of peroration, the "Tale" is brimful of subtle humour and inimitable satire, beating hollow even that of Rabelais. Instead of subtle humour we wish we could have said delicate humour, but regret we cannot, for it must be confessed, even making allowance for the age, that many passages are very coarse although inimitably clever. Even in the dedication what a fund of humorous satire! "Detur Dignissimo," written in great letters on the outside cover of the manuscript, struck the publisher as likely to mean something, but what he could not say. He only knew that the words were Latin. Accordingly he sent for an interpreter. "But," he adds, "it unluckily

fell out that none of the authors I employ understand Latin, though I have them often in pay to translate out of that language." At last in the parish curate an interpreter was found, who deciphered that the book was to be given to the worthiest—but who was he? Accordingly, he took his interpretation to be interpreted by a neighbouring poet, who lived in a garret, and whose landlady kept the ladder. This worthy individual, after hesitation, modestly replied that although he hated vanity, yet he believed that these words were meant for himself, and in the most generous manner offered to write gratis a dedication to himself. The publisher, however, slily thought that he would try another guess; and, doubtless without any selfish motive, fixed upon Lord Chancellor Somers, to whom, at last, the "Tale" was dedicated.

The "Tale of a Tub" for a century and a half has been lustily censured and rapturously applauded, and shall continue to be so until the end of time.

CHAPTER II.

SWIFT: THE POLITICIAN.

IT was during his incumbency in the obscure vicarage of Laracor that Swift, by his politics, startled Europe.

His first appearance in the arena of politics was by the publication of a political pamphlet of much power, written in haste and published in secrecy, under the following circumstances. Earl Berkeley, at the close of the seventeenth century, by a change of Government was recalled to England. He prevailed upon Swift to accompany him.

On Swift's arrival in London with the Berkeleys, he found political matters in a state of the greatest confusion. I shall now let Swift speak for himself. "Soon after I went to London; and in a few weeks drew up a discourse under the title of 'The Contests and Dissensions of the Nobles and Commons in Athens and Rome, with the Consequences they had upon those States.' This discourse I sent very privately to the press, with the strictest injunctions

to conceal the author, and returned immediately to my residence in Ireland."

Here, in his snug Irish vicarage, Swift watched with interest and amusement the result of his political pamphlet. So ably was it written, that it was first ascribed to the Bishop of Salisbury, the ablest theological writer of the age, who was threatened by the Government with prosecution on account of its treasonable tendency, which compelled the poor Bishop, in mortal terror, to resign the honour of its authorship by public renunciation of it. It was next fathered on Lord Somers, the ablest statesman of the day, who also, in fear and trembling, renounced it. At this critical time the Tories had impeached four other Whig lords. All this was infinite merriment to the humorous and unsuspected Swift in his snug Irish vicarage.

When the pamphlet was in the height of its popularity and had created "a stream of tendency" in the public mind against the Government, it is related that Swift, one day in Dublin, met old Bishop Sheridan, who asked "if he had seen the famous pamphlet that was doing such work and making such noise?"

Swift modestly replied that he had, and observed:

"It was very well liked at London."

"Very well liked?" said the Bishop, with some degree of emotion.

"Yes, sir, it is one of the finest tracts that ever was written."

"Well, surely Bishop Burnet is one of the best writers in the whole world!"

"Bishop Burnet, my lord!" said the Doctor. "Why, my lord, Bishop Burnet was not the author of that discourse."

"Not the author of it?" said the Bishop. "Pray sir, give me your reason—your reason, Mr. Swift, for thinking so."

"Because, my lord, that discourse is not written in the Bishop's style."

"Not in the Bishop's style!" replied old Sheridan, with some degree of contempt.

"No, my lord; the style of that pamphlet is, I think, wholly different from the style of the Bishop."

"Oh, Mr. Swift," replied Sheridan, "I have had a long acquaintance with your uncles, and an old friendship for all your family, and really I have a great regard for you in particular. But let me advise you, Mr. Swift—for you are still a very young man, I know that you have a good share of abilities, and are a good scholar—however, let me assure you, notwithstanding, that you are still a great deal too young to pronounce your judgment on the style of authors."

"I am greatly obliged to your lordship," replied Swift, "for the good opinion you are pleased to entertain of me; but still I am to assure your lordship that Bishop Burnet was not the author of that discourse."

"Well, sir, if Bishop Burnet was not the author of it, pray, sir, let me know who it was that did write it?"

"Why, really, my lord, I wrote it myself."

And this was the first time, says Dean Swift, he ever acknowledged it or any other of his writings. We can imagine the astonishment with which his lordship received the startling information.

Indeed, politicians on both sides were struck by its trenchant sarcasms, its infinite humour, and logical acumen. It was at once apparent that a giant had arisen to wield the club of political controversy.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1702, he left his flowers, his willows, and the beautiful Stella, and betook himself to the great metropolis to claim the authorship of the pamphlet, and to see what it could do for him with the Whig Government, in whose interests it was written.

"Hearing," says Swift, "of the great reputation this piece had received (which was the first I ever printed), I must confess, the vanity of a young man prevailed with me to let myself be known for the author; upon which my Lords Somers and Halifax (Charles Montagu), as well as the Bishop above mentioned, desired my acquaintance, with great marks of esteem and professions of kindness—not to mention the Earl of Sunderland, who had been my old acquaintance. They lamented that they were not able to serve me since the death of the King, and were very liberal in promising me the greatest preferments I could hope for, if it ever came in their power.

"I soon grew domestic with Lord Halifax, and

was as often with Lord Somers as the formality of his nature (the only unconversable fault he had) made it agreeable to me."

Even at this time he took high ground with the Ministry. He says (it was then 1702): "I began to trouble myself with the differences between the principles of Whig and Tory, having formerly employed myself in other and, I think, better speculations. I talked upon this subject to Lord Somers, and told him that having been long conversant with Greek and Latin authors, and therefore a lover of literature, I found myself much inclined to be what they call a Whig in politics; but as to religion, I confessed myself to be a High Churchman . . . and I could not conceive how any one who wore the habit of a clergyman could be otherwise . . . that I would not enter into the reproaches made by the violent men on either side; but that the connivance, or encouragement, given by the Whigs to these writers of pamphlets, who reflected upon the whole body of the clergy without any exception, would unite the Church to one man to oppose them; and that I doubted his lordship's friends did not consider the consequences."

If the Ministry, after the publication of Swift's first political pamphlet, had doubted that he was the keenest satirist and political pamphleteer of the age —a power that had to be reckoned with in Church and State—the publication of the "Tale of a Tub" must have convinced them beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Queen Anne, and the prelates and clergy of the "Scoundrel Island," were as perplexed what to make of this eccentric genius as his puzzled, yet admiring, parishioners of Laracor.

Neither Whig nor Tory could interpret his political and ecclesiastical attitude. Tories called him Whig, and Whigs a Tory. A Whig in politics, and a Tory in churchmanship, was what they did not, and could not understand.

In Queen Victoria's reign the party holding this creed is numbered by tens of thousands. In Queen Anne's reign the party holding it numbered only Swift himself. The Whig Ministry of that day were shrewd enough to realise that inevitably, sooner or later, one or other of the principles must give way; therefore, Swift was not wholly to their liking. Yet they felt that he was a power with which they had to reckon. During these years, Swift mingled in splendid society. The nobles, the famous wits, and the proud statesmen were at his feet. From 1702 until 1708, Swift's contemporaries in literature and politics were receiving splendid appointments. Congreve got a comfortable office; Addison descended from a garret to a Secretaryship of State; and small men got bishoprics; but none of the good things fell to the lot of Swift. How was that? Just as it was, is now, and ever shall be! The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bishoprics to men of genius.

At the end of 1704, we hear Swift saying, that he received nothing but "the good words and wishes of

Swift's political creed in a pamphlet entitled, "The Sentiments of a Church of England Man with respect to Religion and Government." In this treatise he defines his position very clearly in the opening sentence.

"Whoever," he says, "has examined the conduct and proceedings of both parties for some years past, whether in or out of power, cannot well conceive it possible to go far towards the extremes of either, without offering some violence to his integrity or understanding."

His reason for publishing this pamphlet is given in these words: "When the two parties that divide the commonwealth come once to a rupture, without any hopes left of forming a third, with better principle, to balance the others, it seems every man's duty to choose one of the two sides, although he cannot entirely approve of either."

In this paper he presents his political and religious creed in relation to Church and State.

At this juncture, Swift had a strong and rampant desire to form a third party, to be designated, not by the name of Whig and Tory, but Church of England men. His scheme was a masterly one. "He poses," says Johnson, "as a dignified moderator. He states his qualifications with perfect frankness and with perfect truth." "I believe I am no bigot in religion, and I am sure I am none in government," he says, and proceeds, accordingly, to give advice to the Whigs and warning to the Tories.

"Had the Whigs," says Foster, "taken his advice

and let the Church alone, they might have escaped the disaster of the five following years."

"In order to preserve the constitution entire," says Swift, "in Church and State, whoever has a true value for both would be sure to avoid the extremes of Whig, for the sake of the former, and the extremes of Tory, for the sake of the latter."

"But moderation in politics," says Sir Walter Scott, "however reasonable in itself, and though recommended by the powers of Swift, has been always too cold for the English nation."

As to government, there could not be a stauncher Whig than Swift on the old principle of Whiggism. "But," says Sheridan, "he was an utter enemy to some new ones adopted by that party which evidently tended to Republicanism. And as to their measures with regard to religion, he widely differed from them."

At this time Swift stood in an anomalous position. He was too much of a Whig for the Tories, and too much of a Tory for the Whigs.

His next political pamphlet was "An Argument against Abolishing Christianity," a piece of satire consummate and inimitable. The grave irony of his argument is subtle and impressive. It is not real Christianity that Swift is against abolishing, "for that," he says, "has long since been abolished by universal consent, as being incompatible with wealth and pleasure." It is nominal Christianity that he has resolved to defend. This being clearly understood, he proceeds to enumerate in a masterly but sarcastic way the many inconveniences that

would follow its extinction. One or two illustrations may be given of his humorous style of argument.

"It is urged," says Swift, "that there are, by computation, in this kingdom above ten thousand parsons, whose revenues, added to those of my lords, the bishops, would suffice to maintain at least two hundred young gentlemen of wit and pleasure, and freethinking, enemies to priestcraft, narrow principles, pedantry, and prejudices; who might be an ornament to the court and town. And then, again, so great a number of able [bodied] divines, might be a recruit to our fleet and armies. This appears to be a consideration of some weight; but then, on the other side, several things deserve to be considered likewise. . . . What would become of the race of men in the next age, if we had nothing to trust to beside the scrofulous, consumptive productions, furnished by our men of wit and pleasure, when, having squandered away their vigour, health, and estates, they are forced, by some disagreeable marriage, to piece up their broken fortunes, and entail rottenness and politeness on their posterity? Now, here are ten thousand persons reduced, by the wise regulations of Henry the Eighth, to the necessity of a low diet and moderate exercise, who are the only great restorers of our breed, without which the nation would, in an age or two, become one great hospital."

Another advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity, is, "the clear gain of one day in seven, which is now entirely lost, and consequently the

kingdom one-seventh less considerable in trade, business, and pleasure, beside the loss to the public of so many stately structures, now in the hands of the clergy, which might be converted into play-houses, exchanges, common dormitories, and other public edifices. But he would fain know how it can be pretended that the churches are misapplied? Where are more appointments and rendezvous of gallantry — where more care to appear in the foremost box with greater advantage of dress— where more meetings for business — where more bargains driven of all sorts—and where so many conveniences or incitements to sleep?"

He urges another argument of a parallel nature: "If Christianity were once abolished, how could the freethinkers, the strong reasoners, and the men of profound learning, be able to find another subject, so calculated in all points, whereon to display their abilities? What wonderful productions of wit should we be deprived of, from those whose genius, by continual practice, has been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives against religion, and would therefore never be able to shine or distinguish themselves upon any other subject; we are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and would we take away the greatest, perhaps the only, topic we have left? Who would ever have suspected Asgil for a wit, or Toland for a philosopher, if the inexhaustible stock of Christianity had not been at hand to provide them with materials?

"To conclude: whatever some may think of the

great advantages to trade by this favourite scheme, I do very much apprehend, that in six months' time after the Act is passed for the extirpation of the Gospel, the Bank and East India stock may fall at least one per cent. And since that is fifty times more than ever the wisdom of our age thought fit to venture, for the preservation of Christianity, there is no reason we should be at so great a loss, merely for the sake of destroying it."

The drift of the pamphlet is a subtle attack upon the Whigs for being the friends of the freethinkers. We can also read between the lines his opinions as a Churchman, which help us to interpret many difficulties in his political career.

His next political treatise was entitled, "A Letter from a Member of the House of Commons in Ireland, to a Member of the House of Commons in England, concerning the Sacramental Test, dated from Dublin, December, 1708," and is an admirable pamphlet from Swift's standpoint, and of great political power. In it he treats the Roman Catholics with contempt. "Under the penal laws they are as inconsiderable," he declares, "as women and children."

The Presbyterians he also treats with infinite scorn. This bitter feeling against Catholic and Presbyterian is due, doubtless, to early associations in Kilroot, where they treated him with much contempt, refusing to associate with him, and denouncing him as the mad parson. To this treatment the world is indebted for the "Tale of a Tub,"

which otherwise had never been written. This bitter treatment Swift never forgot and never forgave.

Long years after, when the Presbyterians of Ireland wished to be on friendly terms with Episcopalians and called them brother Protestants, Swift resented this with great scorn in that scathing satire, entitled, "The words Brother Protestants and Fellow Christians, so familiarly used by the Advocates for the Repeal of the Test Act in Ireland."

An inundation, says the fable,
O'reflowed a farmer's barn and stable;
Whole ricks of hay and stacks of corn
Were down the sudden current borne;
While things of heterogeneous kind
Together float with tide and wind.
The generous wheat forgets its pride,
And sailed with litter side by side,
Uniting all to shew their amity
As in a general calamity.
A ball of new-dropp'd horse's dung,*
Mingling with apples† in the throng,
Said to the pippin, plump and prim,
"See, brother, how we apples swim."

To the question, Shall the Episcopalians unite with the Presbyterians against the Catholics for State purposes, Swift gives an emphatic, No. Of the two, he thinks that the Catholics are less harmless to the Church and State. "Naturalists," says Swift, "might agree that a lion was a bigger, stronger, more dangerous enemy than a cat; but bind the lion fast, draw his teeth, and pare his claws to the quick, and determine whether you'd have him in that condition at your throat, or an angry cat at full liberty." Swift

* Presbyterians. † Episcopalians.

saw, with perfect clearness, that the battle was not between Catholics and Protestants, but between Episcopacy and Presbytery. The Presbyterians were chiefly Scottish, a thrifty, brave, and noble race, who had come from the barren Lochaber Hills to the more fruitful valleys of the Emerald Isle, with a bitter antipathy to Episcopacy. Swift clearly realised the utter incompatibility of union or communion with them. Yet they were a power that his Church had to reckon with, more especially as Wharton, the Lord Lieutenant—not as a religionist, for he had no religion, but as a politician—had given his influence to them. To this Swift refers in these bitter lines:

> Yet critics may object, why not?
> Since lice are brethren to a Scot;
> Which made our swarm of sects determine
> Employments for their brother vermin.
> But be they English, Irish, Scottish,
> What Protestant can be so sottish,
> While o'er the Church these clouds are gathering,
> To call a swarm of lice his brethren?
>
> Let folks, in high* or holy stations,
> Be proud of owning such relations;
> Let courtiers hug them in their bosom
> As if they were afraid to lose 'em;
> While I, with humble Job, had rather
> Say to Corruption, "Thou'rt my father,"
> For he that has so little wit
> To nourish vermin may be bit.

Swift might be conquered, but would not capitulate, although he foresaw, with fatal clearness, the Church's coming doom as a national institution in Ireland.

* This refers to Wharton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

yet why should you require me to attend next morning at your levée, with my humble thanks, for the favour you have done me?"

He also portrays with a master hand the contrast between the wail for conscience of the Nonconformist when down, with his shout for persecution when he is up. "Where, then," he asks, "is this matter likely to end, when the obtaining of one request is only used as a step to demand another?" The lover portrayed by Swift is different from Cowley's: "A lover is ever complaining of cruelty while anything is denied him; when the lady ceases to be cruel, she is, from the next moment, at his mercy; so persecution, it seems, is everything that will not leave it in men's power to persecute others."

"But to bring this discourse," says Swift, "to a conclusion, we make a mighty difference here between suffering thistles to grow amongst us, and wearing them as posies. We are fully convinced in our consciences that we shall always tolerate them, but not quite so fully that they will always tolerate us, when it comes to their turn; and we are the majority and we are in possession.

"Neither is it very difficult to conjecture, from some late proceedings, at what a rate this faction is likely to drive, wherever it gets the whip and the seat. They have already set up courts of spiritual judicature in open contempt of the laws; they send missionaries everywhere, without being invited, in order to convert the Church of England folks to Christianity. They are as vigilant, as I know who,

to attend persons on their death-beds, and for purposes much alike. And what practices such principles as these (with many other that might be invidious to mention) may spawn when they are laid out to the sun, you may determine at leisure."

This pamphlet was received by the Irish nation with rapturous applause. Even Presbyterians were compelled to laugh at its scathing satire and masterly irony, and applaud its genius. Swift had entirely mistaken this question. His idea was to strengthen and extend Protestantism. The only possible method to accomplish this was co-operation with Presbyterians, and this he rejected with infinite scorn.

This is still the question of the age. At the Reformation so called—which, perhaps, was a mistake, as a Reformation worthy of the name might have been accomplished by a gentler and more effectual policy—Protesters left the Communion of the Roman Church in protest against her corruptions. Now we have the pitiable spectacle of the Protesters protesting against one another, to the infinite merriment of Romanists. If Protestantism goes on as it is doing now, in less than a century there will be only two great streams, Romanism and Rationalism, into one or other of which our sectarianisms must inevitably drift:

> Our little systems have their day;
> They have their day and cease to be.

In the year 1709, Swift published "A Project for the Advancement of Religion and Reformation of Manners." This most able and masterly production

has quite the ring of the nineteenth century literature. Steele informs us that it was said by one in company, alluding to that knowledge of the world the author of this pamphlet seems to have: "The man writes much like a gentleman, and goes to heaven with a very good mien."

There is practical wisdom in his project, "That some check should be placed on the practice of fraud in the common callings of life. The vintner who, by mixing poisons with his wines, destroys more lives than any one disease in the bill of mortality; the lawyer who persuades you to a purchase which he knows is mortgaged for more than the worth; the banker who takes your fortune to dispose of when he has resolved to break the following day—do surely deserve the gallows much better than the wretch who is carried thither for stealing a horse." He condemns and denounces that inscrutable gulf of injustice and oppression the law, the detestable abuses of electioneering, and the high-handed patronage in the Army, the Navy, and in the Civil Service, without the least regard to merit or qualification. As to the immoralities of the stage, his proposal to appoint a censorship doubtless gave an impulse to the appointment of such an office in after years. The reformation of the stage, he held, was entirely in the hands of the Queen, and suggests that a pension would not be ill-employed on some men of wit, learning, and virtue, who might have power to strike out every offensive or unbecoming passage from plays already written, as well as those that may be

offered to the stage for the future; by which, and other wise regulations, the theatre might become a very innocent and useful diversion, instead of being a scandal and reproach to our religion and country. He has also a proposal for regulating the liquor traffic. He ventures to say that it would be well to have a law made that all taverns and alehouses should be obliged to dismiss their company at twelve at night and shut up their doors, and that no woman should be suffered to enter any tavern or alehouse upon any pretence whatever. It is easy to conceive what a number of ill consequences such a law would prevent — the mischiefs of quarrels and lewdness, thefts and midnight brawls, the diseases of intemperance, and a hundred other evils needless to mention. Nor would it be amiss if the masters of those public-houses were obliged, upon the severest penalties, to give only a proportioned quantity of drink to every company; and when he found his guests disordered with excess, to refuse them any more. This is the nearest approach to the Permissive Bill, defined to be "a simple little bill, meant to pass *incog.*, to permit me to prevent you from having your glass of grog." Indeed, as a temperance reformer, Swift is in advance of the present age.

As to vices in the Army, he says; "If swearing and profaneness, scandalous and avowed lewdness, excessive gaming and intemperance, were a little discouraged in the Army, I cannot readily see what ill consequence would be apprehended."

It is commonly charged upon the gentlemen of

the Army that the beastly vice of drinking to excess has been lately, from their example, restored among us, which, for some years before, was almost dropped in England. "This might soon be remedied," he says, "if the Queen would think fit to declare that no young person of quality whatsoever, who was notoriously addicted to that, or any other vice, should be capable of her favour, or even admitted into her presence, with positive command to her ministers, and others in great office, to treat them in the same manner."

As to University discipline and reform, he is thoroughly sound and practical. Indeed, the reformers in our University councils of the present day might get admirable hints to help them in their schemes of reformation.

His next proposal as to the sociality of the clergy is thoroughly characteristic. He rebukes the clergy for clustering together in their own clubs and coffee-houses. "This behaviour of the clergy," he says, "is just as reasonable as if the physicians should agree to spend their time in visiting one another, and leave their patients to shift for themselves." In his opinion the clergy's business lies entirely with the laity, neither is there a more effectual way of saving men's souls than for spiritual persons to make themselves as agreeable as they can in the conversations of the world, for which a learned education gives them great advantage. This advice is sound enough; for Christianity is not like Judaism, *separation from* the world, but *permeation in* the world. I

and then with zeal. It compelled the last Ministry of Queen Anne to build in London alone above fifty new churches.

At first view, this pamphlet seems to have no other drift than the improvement of the morality of the nation. Yet those who are conversant with Swift's style can read between the lines a covert but powerful attack upon the Whigs. It was apparent to the acute and penetrating mind of Swift that the Queen was meditating a change of Ministry, and this treatise was written expressly to confirm the wavering mind of Her Majesty; and nothing could be better calculated to make an impression upon the weak but religious mind of the Queen. Swift contrived that the pamphlet should be inscribed anonymously, as from a disinterested party, to his friend, the Countess of Berkeley, who adored him, and that through her hands it should filter into the ears of her Royal mistress. He proceeds, in the most insidious way, yet in the most graceful language ever penned, to tell the Queen her duty. The chief remedy was for the Queen to employ none in her Ministry, or in any office about her person, but such as had the cause of religion at heart. This was meant as a stroke at Godolphin and others of the Ministry, who had yet their religion to choose. This was an insidious way of saying that she should begin by turning out the Whigs, or Low Church party, who professed either an indifference or contempt of religion, and select her Ministry from among the Tories, whose watchword was "Church and State."

This pamphlet was one of the subtle forces which created a strong dissatisfaction against the Government, and which, with the prosecution of the famous preacher Sacheverell, overturned the Whig Administration. After the publication of this treatise, which he left to simmer with the Queen and the nation, Swift returned to his snug Irish rectory at Laracor, to watch the gathering political storm, which eventually overwhelmed the Whig Government.

In the month of May of this year the first great sorrow of his life befell him. His mother died. "I have now," he pathetically writes, "lost my barrier between me and death. God grant I may live to be as well prepared for it as I confidently believe her to have been. If the way to heaven be through piety and truth, justice and charity, she is there."

At this juncture the Irish bishops elect him to manage their first-fruit business with the Government.

Swift was still, at this period, the ostensible champion of the Whig Government, but on account of his High Church proclivities, he was not wholly to their liking. Hitherto the Whig leaders had rewarded him only with good words, and had bestowed their good things on followers more wholly their own.

Swift was now more than doubtful of preferment from them. Although they still plied him with splendid promises, he knew their value, as appears from his endorsement on the following letter received from Lord Halifax, dated October 6, 1709:

"I am quite ashamed for myself and friends to see you left in a place so incapable of testing you, and to see so much merit and so great qualities unrewarded by those who are sensible of them. Mr. Addison and I are entered into a new confederacy never to give over the pursuit, nor to cease reminding those who can serve you, till your worth is placed in that light it ought to shine. Dr. South holds out still, but he cannot be immortal. The situation of his Prebend would make me doubly concerned in serving you; and upon all occasions that shall offer I will be your constant solicitor, your sincere admirer, and your unalterable friend. I am your most humble and obedient servant,

(Signed) "HALIFAX."

Thus it was endorsed by Swift: "I kept this letter as a true original of courtiers and Court promises." And in the first page of a small book he wrote these memorable words: "Given me by my Lord Halifax, May 3, 1709. I begged it of him, and desired him to remember it was the only favour I ever received from him or his party."

Swift was living at his Laracor rectory during the greater part of Lord Wharton's Administration, but saw him seldom. He declined all invitations to visit him. He could have had Church preferment from his lordship; but it is on record that he refused to accept it at the hands of such a man—a man of no principle.

Swift spent much of his time with Addison, the

Secretary of Ireland, with whom he was on terms of the greatest intimacy; but hated the Lord Lieutenant. This antipathy arose from the fact that his lordship gave his influence to the Dissenters—not as a religionist (for he believed that all religions were equally false and equally useful), but as a politician. Swift, on the other hand, detested Dissenters, not so much from a sectarian point of view, but because he believed them dangerous to the State.

From Swift's close intimacy with Addison, he was a witness to Wharton's corrupt Administration, which, by-and-by, he exposed to the world in scathing language.

At this epoch, Swift still stands before Church and State a kind of Egyptian hieroglyphic, which they could not decipher. A High Church Whig was not intelligible by politicians. That the author of the "Tub" could be a Christian, a clergyman, and a Whig was not intelligible by the Church. Yet there he was, the greatest power in both. They might not love him; but they were bound to fear him, and glad to make use of him in their first-fruit business.

This was a work for which he had little liking; but out of love to the Church he undertook it. His commission was signed and sealed in August, and on the 1st of September he set out for London.

In further telling the story of Swift's political life I shall quote largely from his Journal to Stella, the most wonderful the world has ever seen, in

candle, his landlady came into his room with a servant of Lord Halifax to desire he would dine with him next night at Hampton Court, but he sent him word he had business of great importance that hindered him.

October 4.—To-day he is brought privately to Mr. Harley, who received him with the greatest respect and kindness imaginable. Appointed him an hour on Saturday afternoon, when he will open his business to him.

October 7.—Jack How told Harley that if there were a lower place in H—— than another, it was reserved for his porter, who told lies so gravely and with so civil a manner. This porter Swift had to deal with going this evening to visit Mr. Harley by his own appointment; but the fellow told him no lie, though he suspected every word he said. Mr. Harley came out to him, brought him in, and presented him to his son-in-law, Lord Doblane, or some such name, and his own son, and, among others, Will Penn the Quaker. They sat two hours drinking wine, and two hours more he and Harley alone; when he heard him tell his first-fruit business, entered into it with all kindness. Asked for his powers and read them, and read likewise a memorial he had drawn up and put in his pocket to show the Queen. Told him the measures he would take, and, in short, said everything he could wish. Told him he must bring St. John, Secretary of State, and him acquainted, and spoke so many things of personal kindness and esteem for him, that he is inclined half to believe what some friends had

a Governor to share in the popularity of this Act. Besides, Swift is told on all hands that Harley has a mind of his own.

October 13.—Lord Halifax is always teasing him to go down to his country house, which will cost him a guinea to his servants and twelve shillings coach-hire, and he shall be hanged first. He is vexed at heart for Harrison, for he loves the young fellow, and has resolved to stir up people to do something for him. Harrison is a Whig, and he will put him upon some of his cast Whigs, for he has done with them, and he hopes that they have done with this kingdom for our time.

October 14.—He stands with the new people ten times better than ever he did with the old, and forty times more caressed. He has to dine to-morrow at Harley's, and if he continues as he has begun no man has been better treated by another.

October 15.—Dined to-day with Harley. Prior dined with them. Harley has left Swift's memorial with the Queen, who has consented to give the first-fruits and twentieth parts, and will declare it to-morrow in the Cabinet; but is ordered to tell it to no person alive until it appears in public.

Swift, amidst his political and controversial activities, was not forgetful of his commission from the Irish Convocation regarding the first-fruit business. He was not faithless to his trust. The grant had been long and earnestly interceded for from the late Ministry, but all in vain. The Tory Government understood Swift's power and appreciated his

queen has now granted the first-fruits and twentieth parts; but he will not yet give me leave to write to the archbishop, because the queen designs to signify it to the bishops in Ireland, in form, and to take notice, that it was done upon a memorial from me, which Mr. Harley tells me he does to make it look more respectful to me, etc. I believe never anything was compassed so soon, and purely done by my personal credit with Mr. Harley, who is so excessively obliging that I know not what to make of it, unless to show the rascals of the other party that they used a man unworthily who had deserved better."

Little did the Irish bishops know that Swift's genius had helped to overwhelm the late Government, and was keeping the present in power. After they really knew how matters stood, they did their little best to make amends to him. It is amusing to read the awkward apologies which the Archbishop made to Swift, totally unconscious that he was adding insult to injury. In a curiously apologetic, yet patronising, letter the Archbishop advises Swift to use his power with the Ministry to get preferment in the Church, and direct his genius from literature and politics to the study of theology, and so manage it as to be of use to the Church and the world. Swift, in the hurry of politics, sends him in reply a bitter, biting letter, which, doubtless, must have made the poor Archbishop wince. He tells him that however much he may have used his influence for others, he would never do so on his own behalf; that prefer-

stay. Why should the Whigs think that he came to England to leave them? Sure his journey was no secret. He protests that he did all he could to hinder it, although now he does not repent it. But who the devil cares what they think? Is he under obligations in the least to any of them all? Rot them for ungrateful dogs. He will make them repent their usage before he leave this place.

November 11.—Dined to day, by invitation, with the Secretary of State, Mr. St. John, who treated him with great kindness. He thinks what a veneration they used to have for Sir William Temple, because he might have been Secretary of State at fifty, and here is a young fellow hardly thirty in that employment. St. John told him, among other things, that Mr. Harley complained that he could keep nothing from Swift, he had such a way of getting in to him.

November 30.—Does Patrick write word of my not coming till spring? Indolent man; he knows my secrets! No, as my Lord Mayor said: "No, if that I thought my shirt knew," etc. He is at present, however, a little involved with the present Ministry in some certain things. As soon as ever he can clear his hands he will stay no longer. But the present Ministry have a difficult task, and want him. Perhaps they may be just as ungrateful as others; but, according to his judgment, they are pursuing the true interests of the public, and therefore he is glad to contribute whatever is in his power. For G—'s sake, not a word of this to any alive.

him no more if he can help it. It breaks all his measures and hurts his health. His head is disorderly but not ill, and he hopes it will mend.

February 6.—Mr. Harley desired he would dine with him again to-day; but he refused him, for he fell out with him yesterday, and will not see him again till he makes me amends; and so he goes to bed.

February 7.—He was this morning early with Mr. Lewis of the Secretary's office, and saw a letter Mr. Harley had sent to him, desiring to be reconciled; but he was deaf to all entreaties, and desired Lewis to go to him, and let him know he expects farther satisfaction.

If we let these great Ministers pretend too much, there will be no governing them. He promises to make me easy, if I will but come and see him; but I will not, and he shall do it by message, or I will cast him off.—This was sending Swift a fifty pound bank-note, which he refused with scorn, reminding us of the sturdy independence of Johnson in his college days at Oxford, when he flung away with indignation the shoes which kindness, if not consideration, had placed at his chamber door, preferring his own tattered shoes to the presented shoes of another man, no matter how fine soever they might be. So with Swift. He would return from the Premier's luxurious dinner-party to his lodgings, of eight shillings a week, and to save his bushel of coals pick them off the fire, which Patrick, the extravagant whelp, had placed there in anticipation

of his master's home-coming, yet the while be ruler of the British nation. This is the man who writes to Stella: "I have taken Mr. Harley into favour again. If Swift is to associate with the Ministry, he must do it on terms of perfect equality, if not something more." In this resolution there was philosophy as well as dignity—independence being necessary to genuine friendship.

February 12.—He went to the Court of Requests at noon, and sent Mr. Harley into the House to call the Secretary to let him know he would not dine with him if he dined late.

Most of Swift's biographers abuse him for what they call a childish piece of insolence, to stop for a time the business of the nation by calling out the principal Secretary of State on such a frivolous pretext. They do Swift injustice in this. The brilliant St. John loved Swift mightily. His dinner-party was not complete without him. That evening he wished especially to have his presence, but Swift, at this time, on account of his head, had given up late dinners. Six weeks before this he writes in his Journal to Stella: "January 4.—This evening I had a message from Mr. Harley, desiring to know whether I was alive, and that I would dine with him to-morrow. They dine so late, that since my head has been wrong I have avoided being with them." Again, on February 13, the very day after he had called the Secretary out of the House, he writes to Stella: "I have taken Mr. Harley into favour again, and called to see him. I will use

to visit him after dinner, for he dines too late for my head."

This act of Swift's, therefore, which most of his biographers have characterised as domineering rudeness, was really an act of the most delicate politeness. After invitation, he went, at the earliest moment, at noon, to explain to his friend Bolingbroke how matters stood, and to give him the option to alter the dinner-hour or want his company.

Nor was Swift without hope that the dinner-hour would be arranged to suit his convenience, as St. John was master of his own house. With Harley, the Premier, it was different; like other Prime Ministers of recent date, he, although ostensibly ruler of the nation, was ruled by his wife; but St. John had his well in hand, and, doubtless, in this matter, was willing to accommodate Swift.

Nor was the giving up of late State dinners any sacrifice to Swift. He enjoyed good wine, but cared nothing for good eating. Swift describes his manner of living in these satiric lines:

> On rainy days alone I dine
> Upon a chick and pint of wine;
> On rainy days I dine alone,
> And pick my chicken to the bone;
> But this my servants much enrages,
> No scraps remain to save board wages.

Swift, having taken Harley into favour again, is invited by the Premier to the Cabinet dinner-party, consisting of the Lord Treasurer, the Lord Keeper, the Secretary St. John, and Swift.

only man in England the Ministry were afraid of was Swift. To have secured such a man, able to combat and overthrow such men as Addison and Steele, was for the Ministry of that day what the miraculous advent of a new *Times*, antipodal to the old in all but talent, would now be to an Administration powerfully assailed by that journal.

Now, admit Swift's indispensableness to the Ministry, and it follows that he had it in his power to determine the kind of reward that should be his. What did he really want? To be a bishop. That was the dream of his life. But, from the excess of his genius, that was next to impossible. Everything in the world has its price. Pay the price and it is yours. The price of a bishopric for Swift was—a penitential renunciation of the past by crying over "The Tale of a Tub," peccavi; a cautious restraint for the future of his pen and his tongue; a conquering for the present of his High Church Toryism; and he would have risen and sat down a mitred Peer in Parliament. This price, the sacrifice of his manhood, was too much for Jonathan Swift to pay. He retained his manhood and sacrificed a bishopric. The gates of glory opened as the gates of a bishopric closed.

The next significant work that fell to the lot of Swift was to quell the October Club.

The members of this club were Tory parliamentary malcontents. To understand their grievance it is necessary to remember that the Ministry were

called into power, not so much because they were Tories, but capable men able to manage the business of the nation. They were not extreme party men. They were what we might call modern Conservatives. At the dictation of Swift they retained in office some of the minor Secretaries of State. This gave mortal offence to the old inveterate Tories. This party, in order to bring pressure to bear on the Ministry, formed themselves into a club called "The October." Swift's description of it to Stella is a graphic one:

"*February* 18.—We are plagued here with an October Club; that is, a set of above a hundred Parliament men of the country who drink October beer at home and meet every evening at a tavern near the Parliament, to consult affairs and drive things on to extremes against the Whigs, to call the old Ministry to account, and get off five or six heads. The Ministry seem not to regard them, yet one of them, in confidence, told me that there must be something thought on to settle things better. . . . The Ministry is for gentler measures, and the other Tories for more violent. Lord Rivers, talking to me the other day, cursed the paper called *The Examiner* for speaking civilly of the Duke of Marlborough; this I happpened to talk of to the Secretary, who blamed the warmth of that Lord, and some others, and swore that if their advice were followed they would be blown up in twenty-four hours."

Shortly after this Swift writes to Stella that "Lord Compton desired, in the name of the October Club

that I should do them the honour to dine with them. I sent my excuses, adorned with about thirty compliments, and got off. It would have been a most improper thing for me to dine there, considering my friendship for the Ministry." Swift advised the Ministry not to ignore but to acknowledge and sanction the club. He even prevailed with them to send a representative to take part in their deliberations. A crisis soon came when the Ministry must either extinguish the club or be themselves extinguished by it. Swift once more stepped into the arena as champion of the Ministry. He did his work against the members of the club in the most subtle and powerful way. He softened them by compliments, he convinced them by arguments, he irritated them by jealousies, and dispersed them at each other's throats. Thus ended the famous October Club.

There was another difficulty at this time with which the Ministry had to contend. The Queen was uncontrollable. Queen Anne of blessed memory, like many another Queen before and since, had a stubborn will. In relating this difficulty to Stella, Swift says: "I will tell you one great State secret; the Queen, sensible how much she was governed by the late Ministry, runs a little into the other extreme, and is jealous, on that point, even of those who got her out of the others' hands. And I have reason to think that they will endeavour to prevail on the Queen to put her affairs more into the hands of a Ministry than she does at present. And there

are, I believe, two men thought on, one of them you have often met the name of in my letters." But so much for politics. The endeavour was in vain. Her Majesty still continued to be governed by back-stair influence and intrigue. She refused to be wholly governed by the Ministry, as Swift knew to his cost. Could the Ministry have controlled her, Swift had died a spiritual Peer.

Swift is now a Tory chief; a Cabinet Minister without a portfolio; their ablest and most powerful defender. Nay, he was more. In the language of the Premier, he was their governor. In his intercourse with the Ministry, Swift was fearlessly honest in his counsel.

He writes to Stella: "I forgot to tell you that I was at Mr. Harley's levée; he swore I came in spite to see him among a parcel of fools. He engaged me to dine with him to-day. Every Saturday Lord Keeper, Secretary St. John, and I dine with him, and sometimes Lord Rivers, and they let in none else.

"I stayed with Mr. Harley till past nine, when we had much discourse together, after the rest were gone, and I gave him very truly my opinion where he desired it."

March 4.—He dined to-day with Mr. Secretary St. John, and after dinner he had a note from Mr. Harley that he was much out of order; "pray God preserve his health, everything depends upon it. The Parliament at present cannot go a step without him, nor the Queen neither."

April 1.—At dinner this evening with Secretary St. John, Swift noticed that he was absent and silent; and Prior, who was also present, thought so too.

April 3.—He called at Mr. Secretary's to see what the d—— ailed him onSunday. "I made him a very proper speech, told him I observed he was much out of temper, that I did not expect he would tell me the cause, but would be glad to see he was in better; and one thing I warned him of, never to appear cold to me, for I would not be treated like a schoolboy; that I had felt too much of that in my life already (meaning Sir William Temple); that I expected every great Minister who honoured me with his acquaintance, if he heard or saw anything to my disadvantage, would let me know in plain words, and not put me in pain to guess by the change or coldness of his countenance or behaviour; for it was what I would hardly bear from a crowned head, and I thought no subject's favour was worth it; and that I designed to let my Lord Keeper and Mr. Harley know the same thing, that they might use me accordingly. He took all right; said I had reason; vowed nothing ailed him but sitting up whole nights at business and one night at drinking; would have had me dined with him . . . to make up matters, but I would not."

How St. John's ears must have tingled as he listened to Swift setting him right on a matter of etiquette. He appeals to Stella for approval of his rebuke to St. John.

"Why, I think what I said to Mr. Secretary was

and till then I can have no peace. Good night, and pity Presto.

"11.—Mr. Secretary and I met at Court, where we went to the Queen, who is out of order and aguish. I doubt the worst for this accident to Mr. Harley. We went together to his house, and his wound looks well, and he is not feverish at all. I had the penknife in my hand, which is broken within a quarter of an inch of the handle.

"12.—We have been in terrible pain to-day about Mr. Harley, who never slept last night and has been very feverish. But this evening I called there, and young Mr. Harley [his only son] tells me he is now much better, and was then asleep. They let nobody see him, and that is perfectly right. The Parliament cannot go on till he is well, and are forced to adjourn their money businesses, which none but he can help them in. Pray God, preserve him!"

Shortly after this Harley quite recovers, but on the 17th Swift writes to Stella:

"Guiscard died this morning at two, and the coroner's inquest have found that he was killed by bruises received from a messenger, so to clear the Cabinet Counsellors from whom he received his wounds."

These quotations reveal a characteristic of Swift which the world has been slow to acknowledge—his tenderness of heart.

At this critical time during Harley's illness, the affairs of State were nominally in the hands of St. John, the Secretary, but really in the hands of

that fell to Swift was to stop the war, and to recall England's successful general—the Duke of Marlborough. Swift saw with perfect clearness that the existence of Harley's Government depended on the making of peace with France. There was only one man in Europe at that moment that could do it, and that man was Swift. This extraordinary man could either make a war or stop one. Ask Swift to make a war—with pleasure. Ask him to stop it—certainly. Accordingly he writes a pamphlet, entitled "The Conduct of the Allies," which the nation, anxious for peace, devoured. The arguments were irresistible and overwhelming. Marlborough was recalled amidst the hosannahs of the nation, and the war ceased. Lord Macaulay, Swift's implacable foe, admits that in this the Tories, with Swift at their head, were in the right, and the Whigs, who commenced the war, were in the wrong.

We have now reached the most brilliant and thrilling epoch in the life of Swift—his political dictatorship of the British nation. In the eloquent language of *The Times*, "Under the Harley Administration, Swift reigned; Swift was the Government; Swift was Queen, Lords, and Commons. There was tremendous work to do, and Swift himself did it all." These words are true. He was omnipotent. The following is a description of him at the height of his power and politics from the Whiggish and, therefore, unfriendly pen of Bishop Kennet:

"When I came to the antechamber at Court to

wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as Master of Requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother, the Duke of Ormond, to get a chaplain's place established in the Garrison of Hull, for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in jail and published sermons. He was promising Mr. Thorald to undertake with my Lord Treasurer that he should obtain a salary of £200 per annum, as member of the English Church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwyne, Esq., going into the Queen with the red bag, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my Lord Treasurer. He took out his gold watch and, telling the time of day, complained that it was very late. A gentleman said that he was too fast. 'How can I help it,' says the Doctor, 'if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?' Then he instructed a young nobleman that the best Poet in England was Mr. Pope, a Papist, who had begun a translation of Homer into English, for which he would have them all subscribe. 'For,' says he, 'he shall not begin to print till I have a thousand guineas for him.' Lord Treasurer, after leaving the Queen, came through the room beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him. Both went off just before prayers." What bitter sarcasm in these words—*Just before prayers*!

Swift, at this time, held a high place in the ranks of European statesmen. Ministers of State, men of wit, men of genius, men of rank, and men of letters, were at his feet. Swift had nobly done his

duty to the Ministry, and it was not too much to expect that they should do their duty to him. As yet, they had given him nothing but promises, Royal levées, and Cabinet dinners. Up to the present, be it remembered that there is no evidence that he had ever interceded for himself, however much he had done so for others. About this time the private secretary of the Premier happened to call on Swift, with whom he was on the most intimate terms of friendship, and showed him a warrant for three Deaneries, but none of them to him. At this Swift got irritated, and resolved that this neglect of the Ministry must instantly cease. He bade the secretary tell the Premier that he took nothing ill of him, but his not giving him timely notice, as he promised to do if he found the Queen would do nothing for him. At noon Lord Treasurer came to Swift, and said many things too long to repeat. Swift told him he had nothing to do but go to Ireland immediately, for he could not, with any reputation, stay longer here, except he had something honourable immediately given to him.

The Premier and he dined together that night at the Duke of Ormond's. "He there told me," says Swift, "that he had stopped the warrants for the Deans, that what was done for me might be done at the same time. I told the Duke of Ormond my intentions. He is content Sterne should be a Bishop and I have St. Patrick's." To give Harley and Bolingbroke their due, they were waiting to give Swift a better appoint-

my absence. The poor Dean can't afford it." He arrived in Dublin safely, and was installed to the Deanery in due course.

During the installation ceremony he felt dreadfully melancholy. For generations, students of Swift have wondered why, on this auspicious occasion, he should have been so overpowered with melancholy. His life had not been a failure. He had returned amidst thunders of applause to the Emerald Isle, where lived his beloved Stella; returned with a great name in politics, in literature, in churchmanship; returned to the city that gave him birth to be its Dean. Yet he writes to Vanessa that he felt so horribly melancholy, that, during the ceremony of installation, he thought he would have died. Why was this? There were many reasons. He had been promised a Bishopric, and only got a Deanery. True it was the best in Ireland, but Ireland to him was a "Scoundrel Island," a place of banishment. To Vanessa he writes: "The great house they call the Deanery, and which they say is mine, is very dreary." Yet he felt that, in all likelihood, that was to be his future home, separated from the comings and goings of the great men in politics and in literature, who were destined with himself to play a brilliant part in the history of civilisation and Europe. Swift also had a wholesome dread of debt. Debt to him was synonymous with the devil, and he felt conscious that his acceptance of St. Patrick's Deanery, which the installation ceremony sealed, that day had plunged him a thousand pounds in debt. He writes to Stella:

"Unless the Queen pays this thousand pounds, and I am sure that she owes me a great deal more, I am ruined." Add to this his fatigue by travelling, and indifferent health, and we need not wonder that he felt melancholy. The day after the installation above a hundred visitors called at the Deanery. Swift betook himself to his bedchamber, and neither received the visitors nor returned their visits. He complained to a friend that the visits were all paid to the Dean and not one to the Doctor. After a short stay of a week in Dublin, he hurried away to Laracor. As he came in sight of the little rectory, his melancholy passed away. There was the little river, with the willows on its bank. There were the shrubbery walks, and the mossy well where travellers even now linger to drink of its water in solemn silence to the memory of the great Dean. He had just got settled down in his snug rectory when letters arrived pell-mell from London, imploring his return to England to settle a quarrel between Harley and Bolingbroke, which threatened to break up the Cabinet. Tired of the perpetual bickerings of the two Tory chiefs, Swift resolved to pay no heed to their entreaties.

Another urgent letter, however, arrived from the Premier's private secretary, beseeching him, for the last time, to come at once, and restore peace in the Cabinet, or all was over. Accordingly, Swift started for London, and on his way thither, in passing through Dublin, did not even stay to visit the Archbishop, which gave great offence to his Grace. Swift

hurried on his journey. When he reached London he found the Cabinet in great disorder, through the quarrel of the Premier and St. John. Swift reconciled them, and things once more went smoothly on, but this was not for long. A few months after this and there was another quarrel between Harley and Bolingbroke. Indeed, their bickerings and jealousies were well-nigh perpetual.

Once more Swift, as a friend of both, tried to reconcile them. What a strange and busy life was Swift's! He was either assailing the enemy from without, or assailing his friends from within. He had stopped the war abroad, and he had just stopped a war in the Cabinet at home. Swift was born to rule, to control action, not to affect thought. He had a large share of "personal power so difficult to define, so easy to feel, so essentially magnetic in its operations, which enabled him to assert himself as a leader of men."

Politically, Swift saw far and he saw clearly. He told them if they would be reconciled to one another, and act upon his suggestion, their dispute would be settled in two minutes; if not, their Government would be upset in two months. Bolingbroke was willing; Harley hesitated, muttered that all things would yet go well, and invited Swift to dine with him next evening. Swift declined. He retired, and their fate was sealed. He left London next day for Berkshire. His intensely sensitive and proud nature could not bear to witness the coming catastrophe.

Swift's prognostication proved to be true. Nine short weeks, and the white wand of office had passed from the hands of Harley to that of Bolingbroke.

Bolingbroke was Premier for three days. Yet that ephemeral Premiership enabled Swift to perform one of the noblest and most unselfish deeds that was ever recorded on the page of history. No sooner had Bolingbroke grasped the wand of office than he sat down and penned a letter to Swift, of which any man might have been proud; enclosed a cheque for a thousand pounds to defray his installation fees, and earnestly asked his co-operation with the Ministry. This was accompanied by a letter from Lady Masham, the Queen's favourite, through whose influence Bolingbroke had been made Premier. She writes, 29th July, 1714:

"MY GOOD FRIEND,

"Will you who have gone through so much and taken more pains than anybody, and given wise advice, if that wretched man* had had sense enough and honesty to have taken it, I say, will you leave us and go into Ireland? No, it is impossible. Your goodness is still the same, your charity and compassion for this poor lady, the Queen, who has been barbarously used, would not let you do it. I know you take delight to help the distressed, and there cannot be a greater object than this good Lady, who deserves pity. Pray, dear friend, stay here, and do

* Harley, the late Premier.

not believe us all alike to throw away good advice and despise everybody's understanding but their own. I could say a great deal to you upon the subject, but I must go to her, the Queen, for she is not well."

The same post brought a letter from Harley, soliciting Swift's company and condolence in his retirement. To the eternal honour of Swift be it known, that he did not hesitate a moment in accepting the invitation of his fallen friend in preference to the flattering invitation of Bolingbroke and Lady Masham.

As these letters were being written, Queen Anne lay a-dying in Kensington Palace. It was a perilous time, for the nation and the Ministry were equally divided, as to whether James Stuart or George Louis Guelph should be King of Great Britian. She was called Queen "Anne of blessed memory." A strange comment on that title was given by the stock-jobbers of the day. On a false announcement of her death, the stocks rose three per cent.; next day, on the announcement of her recovery, they instantly fell again. If England, at this perilous time, escaped the blood-bath of a revolution, the praise of it should be given to Jonathan Swift more than to any other man. He was the first to teach the nation and the Cabinet that a political disturbance was to be accounted sufficient occasion for a change of Ministry, but not for a revolution.

At the first meeting of the Privy Council, on the announcement of the Queen's serious illness, Boling-

broke showed how well he had learned the lesson, and how cleverly he could practise it. The first to enter the Council Chamber were the Premier and the Duke of Ormond; next came Shrewsbury, whose heart was always unsearchable. The next moment who should enter uninvited, to the amazement and consternation of the others, but the Duke of Somerset, representing the Whig interests of England, and the Duke of Argyll, representing the Whig interests of Scotland. Doubtless, they had then as now a legal right at such a crisis to sit in Council, but the privilege had never been exercised before nor since in the history of Cabinets. The Duke of Shrewsbury welcomed their presence and co-operation. Bolingbroke, in a moment, realised the situation, and, remembering Swift's maxim, after the report of the Royal physicians had been called for and read, he arose, and in the most graceful manner, proposed that it would be for the public interests that Lord Shrewsbury should be named to the Queen as Lord High Treasurer. This sealed his political destiny, but it saved a revolution. Doubtless, by risking his own and a few other heads he might have remained a formidable enemy and retained power a little longer, but he remembered the advice of Swift. A deputation, with Shrewsbury at their head, went from the Council to the Royal chamber of the dying Queen. Her Majesty received them, and with a trembling hand gave to Shrewsbury the staff of office, and, with a feeble voice, bade him use it for the good of her people. The crisis was now over. The Whig leaders

next despatched summonses to all the Privy Councillors, living in or near London, to meet that afternoon. They met accordingly. Anticipating a revolution, they ordered a concentration of troops in the City; despatched a fleet to sea; made General Stanhope military dictator; and gave him possession of the Tower for the special use of Jacobites. This done, they had nothing now to do but to wait the Queen's death, nor had they long to wait. On Sunday, 1st August, 1714, she gently passed away. That same day the Royal heralds proclaimed that the high and mighty Prince George, Elector of Brunswick and Luxemburgh, is by the death of Queen Anne of blessed memory become our lawful and rightful liege lord, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith. This high and mighty prince, this Defender of the Faith, was just then arranging with his favourite mistresses to accompany him when he went, grudgingly, to take possession of the British throne. As soon as George ascended the throne, the political storm which Swift predicted, arose with great violence. Bolingbroke fled before it to France, Harley was driven by it to the Tower of London, and Swift to the Deanery of Dublin. The stars of Bolingbroke and Harley had set for ever. Not so with Swift. He had not yet reached the zenith of his power either in politics or literature. He had written the "Tale of a Tub," but not his "Gulliver." He had written *The Examiner*, but not the Drapier's Letters. He had ruled England for a time, but was

yet destined to be the ruler of Ireland. The real tragedy of his life was yet to be enacted, and was now at hand.

In estimating the political life of Swift, Lord Macaulay has accused him of political apostasy. Lord Jeffrey has accused him as a Tory libeller of the Whigs, against his conscience, and William Makepeace Thackeray has accused him as a social highwayman.

These are serious charges; but what are the facts? If there is any foundation for Lord Macaulay's accusation, it must rest on Swift's first political pamphlet, "A Discourse on the Contests and Dissensions of Athens and Rome." It was meant to show the undesirableness of the House of Commons having an undue share of power, and the dangers which attend the tyranny of a majority, and the tendency which such a majority has to follow a popular leader until the tyranny of many becomes the despotism of one. This pamphlet might have been written by a Whig of the old school, or by a Conservative of the new. It is true that it was claimed by the Whig leaders, as its arguments told powerfully in their favour.

This identical pamphlet, however, might have been equally claimed by the Conservatives a few years ago, when Mr. Gladstone, backed by a majority of the House of Commons and of the nation, defied the House of Lords—rightly or wrongly, it is not for me to determine—and appealed to the Royal preroga-

tive, which had not been done since the Revolution of 1688. After the publication of this pamphlet the Whig leader "desired his (Swift's) acquaintance with great marks of esteem and professions of kindness."

At his first interview with Lord Somers, Swift describes his political and ecclesiastical attitude with perfect clearness. "I am much inclined," he said, "to be what is called a Whig in politics, but in religion a High Churchman." In politics a Whig; in churchmanship a Tory. From this attitude he never once varied during the whole course of his life. In his days of power and politics, under the Harley Administration, he writes to Steele, in May, 1713, referring to this very pamphlet: "I think principles are, at present, quite out of the case, and that we differ and dispute wholly about persons. In these last you and I agree, for I have, in print, professed myself in politics to be what we formerly called a Whig." Says Johnson: "Swift did not desert the Whigs until they deserted their principles." The truth is, none of Swift's Whig or Tory contemporaries could interpret accurately his political and ecclesiastical attitude. He stood before them a political enigma. He hated the stupid, distinctive names of Whig and Tory, which came in at the Revolution. Swift was too much of a genius to belong wholly to any party. With him it was measures, not men.

A High Church Whig in those days was not understandable. The Whig Ministry of that day, with Godolphin at their head, were shrewd enough

to realise that, inevitably, one or other of these principles must give way; therefore, Swift was not wholly to their liking, and they would have parted with him if they dared, but they felt that he was a power with which they had to reckon. Accordingly the Whig Ministry were only too glad to accept him on his own terms, and rewarded him with good words, meanwhile giving their good things to those more wholly their own.

The crisis, which Godolphin foresaw, did come. Swift, as Commissioner for the Irish Church, demands from Government a remission of the first-fruits.

The Premier, Godolphin, refuses, except on terms with which Swift could not comply. "Small good," said the Premier, "had been got by the remission to the English clergy, and he should not consent to it in the case of the Irish unless assured it would be well received with due acknowledgment."

Swift asked what was to be understood by this?

"Nothing under their hands," said Godolphin; "but I will so far explain myself to tell you. I mean better acknowledgments than those of the clergy of England."

"What sort of acknowledgments would my lord think fittest?"

"I can only say again," replied Godolphin, drily, "such as they ought."

The subtle Godolphin would not commit himself; but Swift was acute enough to understand that the bribe offered was for the repeal of the "Test Act."

Swift resolved that this should not be, and left the house of the dry Godolphin "vowing vengeance." A few months afterwards we find him a leader among the Tories.

It was the natural and logical development of his political creed. Swift did exactly what thousands in the Church of England and Scotland, at the present day, would do in the same circumstances. He preferred the welfare of the Church, in which he was a dignitary, to that of a political party. Where is the inconsistency or apostasy in this? I fail to see it. Granting, for the sake of argument, that Swift did change his political creed, what did he more than Marlborough, or Godolphin, or Somers, or Harley, or Walpole, or Gladstone, or even Lord Macaulay himself, who began life as a Wilberforce Tory and ended it as a member in the Whig Cabinet of Lord Grey? Where then is the political justice in Lord Macaulay singling out Swift for special animadversion?

My contention, therefore, is that the accusation of political apostasy, which has been preferred against Swift, is false, and that Swift spoke truthfully when he declared that "the Whigs and Tories had changed principles, and that he attacked the Whigs in defence of the true Whig faith."

Lord Jeffrey, in his vituperation of Swift, goes even further than Lord Macaulay. He accuses Swift as a Tory libeller of the Whigs against his conscience. This Jeffrey assumes from his private letters, which were inconsistent with his public utterances. It may

be so; but we should have preferred his lordship's proof, instead of his dogmatic assertion. Lord Jeffrey, as a man of letters, and a Scotch judge, should have known that dogmatism is not permissible either in the realm of literature or law; only in theology is it allowable. I do not defend Swift in his personal libels. No man ever wielded more terrible weapons than Swift, and he often used them unmercifully, and sometimes with a coarseness which we all deplore. But it would be difficult to prove that he was a libeller against his conscience, as Lord Jeffrey asserts. To be a writer against conscience is about the lowest degradation to which a human being can fall; so we must have the clearest proof before we admit it against Swift. I am afraid, however, that Lord Jeffrey, in bringing this grave charge against Swift, is unconsciously passing a severe judgment on himself. There is a private letter of Lord Jeffrey's, published in his Life, which is in entire contradiction to principles which, as editor of *The Edinburgh Review*, he announced to the world. In this private letter he writes, in perfect terror, and in the deepest despair of the nation, arising from the dangerous tendency of articles in that *Review*, with the apology that he could not restrain his contributors—an apology which, for a powerful editor to make, is frivolous enough.

Again, one of the most brilliant contributors to the *Review*, appalled at the frequency and virulence of these libels, writes to the editor for an explanation; Lord Jeffrey defends the practice in a curiously inconsistent letter to Francis Horner, Esq., of date 12th

March, 1815, where he says: "Many people, and I profess myself to be one, may think such a proceeding at variance with the dictates of good taste, of dangerous example, and repugnant to good feeling .... but the system of attacking abuses of power, by attacking the person who instigates or carries them through by general popularity or personal influence, is lawful enough, I think, and may form a large scheme of Whig opposition." Jeffrey admits that personal attacks are against good taste and repugnant to good feelings, yet calmly sins against both by recommending this as "a large scheme of Whig opposition."

Lord Jeffrey descended to even a lower depth than this. Not only was he a writer against conscience himself, but when editor of *The Edinburgh Review*, by a dishonourable act compelled Coleridge to do the same.

Coleridge relates that Clarkson (the moral steam-engine, or giant with one idea) had recently published his book, and being in a very irritable state of mind, his wife expressed great fears of the effect of any severe review in the then state of his feelings. "I wrote," says Coleridge, "to Jeffrey, and expressed to him my opinion of the cruelty of any censure being passed upon the work as *a composition*. In return I had a very polite letter, expressing a wish that I should review it. I did so, but when the review was published, in the place of some just eulogiums due to Mr. Pitt, and which I stated were upon the best authority (in fact they were from Tom

Clarkson himself), was substituted some abuse and detraction."

The editor asks, and justly asks: "Was not this a fraud, a moral forgery? And this man who attained notoriety and influence by conduct and practices like these, is he not a judge, whose office it is to punish such acts in another?"*

This is the identical man who accuses Swift as a Tory libeller of the Whigs against his conscience.

The inconsistency of Jeffrey is appalling.

Thackeray goes even farther than their lordships in his scurrility against Swift. He has the good taste to compare him to a "highwayman"! Thackeray writes: "It is an outlaw who says, 'These are my brains—with these I'll win titles and compete with fortune. These are my bullets—these I'll turn into gold,' and he hears the sound of coaches and six, takes the road like Macheath, and makes Society stand and deliver. The great prize has not yet come. The coach, with the mitre and crosier in it, which he intends to have for his share, has been delayed on the way from St. James's; and he waits and waits until nightfall, when his runners come and tell him that the coach has taken a different road and escaped him. So he fires his pistols into the air with a curse, and rides away into his own country."

I protest against such language. It proves that Mr. Thackeray was strangely biassed against Swift, or wanted brain power to estimate his character.

* "Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of Coleridge," edited by Thomas Allsop, page 184.

Think *who* Swift was!

Addison certifies him as "the greatest genius of his age."

"A genius," says Macaulay, "destined to shake great kingdoms, to stir the laughter and the rage of millions, and to leave to posterity memorials which can perish only with the English language."

Thackeray himself calls him "a king fit to rule at any time or empire."

Think on *what* Swift did!

"Under the Harley Administration," says *The Times*, "Swift reigned. Swift was the Government, Queen, Lords, and Commons. There was tremendous work to do, and Swift did it all." And what was his reward? A paltry Deanery in Ireland. Harley and Bolingbroke, whom Swift governed, got their share of the good things, and the rag-tag of the party, we may be quite sure, got their share; but nothing to Swift. His literary contemporaries, infinitely smaller men, were splendidly rewarded for services. Addison received a Secretaryship of State. Prior was made an Ambassador. Dick Steele gets appointments that yielded twelve hundred pounds a year, and Congreve commissionerships that yielded two thousand.

Even Macaulay, in our own time, when a mere stripling in politics, gets an appointment in India of ten thousand a year. And Swift, who swayed the destiny of nations, because he aspired to a bishopric is likened by Thackeray to a "highwayman." With all due deference to Thackeray, I con-

tend that it was not unreasonable in Swift to expect that room should be made for him in the palaces of the world.

It is pitiful that political partisanship should make judgment unjust.

The political triumphs of Swift will keep his name alive long after the names of his detractors have perished utterly.

The critics of next century will assign a high place to Swift as a politician.

CHAPTER III.

SWIFT: THE LOVER.

JONATHAN SWIFT was no common lover. He neither lived nor loved like other men. Therefore we must not construe his words and actions rashly, lest we misconstrue. His amours hitherto have been inexplicable. This, I believe, is the reason mankind have taken such a prying interest in them, because "men are mostly captivated by the mysterious and inexplicable."

Biographers have differed as widely as the poles regarding Swift's amours. Nor need we wonder; mixed up as they are with traditional stories, apocryphal gossipings, and hearsay evidence, it is difficult to form a correct judgment regarding them.

Should I fail, like the rest of Swift's biographers, to shed *new* light on the darkness and mystery of his amours, I hope at least to be able to extinguish a good deal of *false* light which has been kindled on the subject by Lord Jeffrey, Lord Macaulay, and William Makepeace Thackeray, and which has misled the world.

Thackeray accuses Swift of having loved, and conquered, and jilted Varina, Stella, and Vanessa. The sad thing about this accusation is that the world believes it.

But what are the facts?

Swift's *first* love episode was in 1696, when Minister of Kilroot. The object of his affection was a Miss Warring, which name Swift changed to Varina. She was an accomplished and beautiful young heiress, whose ancestors gave their name to Warring Street, Belfast, and Warring's Town, County Down.

She seems to have been the only person in the entire neighbourhood who sympathised with him in his loneliness. His little parish was full of Catholics and Presbyterians. They had not brain power to understand the eccentricity of his genius. They called him the Mad Parson, and boycotted him. He had little parochial work. His congregation was small. It consisted, he tells us, of a score, mostly gentle and all simple. Accordingly he betook himself for his amusement to the skipping of stones into the sea, the writing the "Tale of a Tub," and the making of love to Varina. This, at last, led up to Swift sending her a ridiculous love-letter—as love-letters generally are—declaring his affection for her in unmeasured terms, asking her love in return, or he would instantly leave Ireland and never see her more.

I shall quote from it. It deserves it. There is nothing like it in the literature of love.

To VARINA.

MADAM,

Impatience is the most inseparable quality of a lover. In my case there are some circumstances which will admit pardon for more than ordinary disquiets. That dearest object, upon which all my prospect of happiness entirely depends, is in perpetual danger to be removed for ever from my sight. Why was I so foolish to put my hopes and fears into the power or management of another? Liberty is undoubtedly the most

valuable blessing of life, yet we are fond to fling it away on those who have been, for five thousand years, using us ill.

You have had time enough to consider my last letter, and to form your own resolutions upon it. I wait your answer with a world of impatience. I desire nothing of your fortune; you shall live where and with whom you please, till my affairs are settled to your desire.

Study seven years for objections against all this, and, by Heaven! they will, at last, be more than trifles and put-offs. It is true that you have known sickness longer than you have me, and therefore perhaps you are more loath to part with it as an old acquaintance. But, listen to what I solemnly protest by all that can be witness to an oath, that, if I leave this kingdom before you are mine, I will endure the utmost indignities of fortune rather than ever return again, though the King would send me back his deputy. And if it must be so, preserve yourself in God's name for the next lover who has those qualities you love so much beyond any of mine, and who will highly admire you for those advantages which will never share any esteem from me. Would to Heaven you were for a while sensible of the thoughts into which my present distractions plunge me. It is so, by Heaven! The love of Varina is of more tragical consequence than her cruelty. Would to God you had treated and scorned me from the beginning. It was your pity opened the first way to my misfortune, and now your love is finishing my ruin, and it is so then. In one fortnight I must take eternal farewell of Varina, and I wonder will she weep at parting a little to justify her poor pretence of some affection to me?... By Heaven! Varina, you are more experienced and have less virgin innocence than I. Would not your conduct make one think you were highly skilled in all the little, polite methods of intrigue? Love, with the gall of too much discretion, is a thousand times worse than with none at all. It is a peculiar part of nature which art debauches but cannot improve. ...The little disguises and affected contradictions of your sex were all, to say the truth, infinitely beneath persons of your pride and mine; paltry maxims that they are, calculated for the rabble of humanity. Farewell, madam; and may love make you a while forget your temper to do me justice. Only, remember, that if you still refuse to be mine, you will quickly lose him that has resolved to die as he has lived,

All yours,

JON. SWIFT.

That is the first and last genuine love-letter that Swift ever wrote, and completely disposes of the theory that the finer feeling in him had never lived, that he was physically unfit for marriage, and other biographical theoretical rubbish. What Varina's answer was to this impassioned and imperious letter we cannot tell, as no eye ever saw it but Swift's. Doubtless, she made him understand that love goeth not forth by commandment. Whatever was the reply, it was unsatisfactory, as, shortly afterwards, Swift resigned his living and left Kilroot for England, carrying with him in his pocket four-score pounds, and in his heart a lingering love of Varina and a bitter hatred of Catholics and Presbyterians.

Swift returns again to the bosom of the Temple family. Time passes; Temple dies; Swift visits London; has an interview with the King; gets appointed secretary and chaplain to the Earl of Berkeley, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; whilst there, fails to get the rich Deanery of Derry except on terms which he rejects with scorn; gets instead the substantial living of Laracor. Just as he was about to leave Dublin Castle to take possession of his rectory, he received a letter from Varina, who was now residing on her estate in the country. In the letter she kindly inquires as to his health and Church preferments, and generally upbraids him for his fickleness in love, and hints that now her hand, her heart, and purse were at his disposal. Swift's reply was severe, but not so sarcastic as that professor who was plied by a young lady in the same way, and who returned for answer: "Give your purse

to the poor, your heart to the Lord, and your hand to him who asks it."

Swift placed before Miss Warring—it is not Varina now—the fact that much had happened since the time, eight years ago, when he fled from her presence in Kilroot, to bury himself in politics and literature; affirms that his change of temper and style of letter to her was not owing to thoughts of a new mistress. "I declare," he says, "upon the word of a Christian and a gentleman, it is not; neither had I ever thoughts of being married to any other person but yourself." He goes on to offer her yet his love on certain conditions. She had been inquisitorial in her letter to him. He in return is now inquisitorial to her. "Are you," he asks, "in a condition to manage domestic affairs with an income of perhaps less than three hundred a year? Have you such an inclination to make us both as happy as you can? Will you be ready to engage in these methods I shall give you, to the improvement of your mind, so as to make us entertaining company for each other, without being miserable when we are neither visiting nor visited?" If so, he intimates his willingness to wed her.

"Such conditions," says Thackeray, "no young lady with a spark of pride could comply with."

I am not an adept in love matters, like Mr. Thackeray, and therefore do not pretend to judge the conditions with which no young lady could comply. I venture to think, however, that all sorts of conditions have been complied with in the court of love. Swift ends his letter thus: "I singled you

out, at first, from the rest of women, and I expect not to be used like a common lover."

The letter is thoroughly characteristic of Swift, outspoken, perhaps a little impolite, but withal sincerely genuine, and such as could give no offence to any young lady who really understood him. I am afraid, however, that she did not understand him, or she would not have trifled with his love for so many years. Anyhow, this famous letter ends another love chapter in the life of Swift.

Regarding this strange love episode, some have severely blamed Swift, others Varina. I cannot see how blame should fall on either. The story is quickly told. Swift, in Kilroot, was misunderstood, unsympathised with, except by Varina. She had given him some slight encouragement, at which in his loneliness he grasped; and one day in a frenzy of passion he sent her a love-letter, fantastic in style, imperious in tone, not wise—like much literature of that type. On receipt of the letter, Varina was not prepared to say "yes," nor was she quite prepared to say "no." She did not exactly know her own mind, and what young lady at her age does? She was not quite out of her teens. In her reply she seems to have temporised with him, which the fiery spirit of Swift could not brook. She had touched his pride. She had wounded his sensitive heart, and he instantly resigned his living, fled from her presence, resolved to blot her name from his memory and her image from his heart. He succeeded. Fatal success. It deepened within him the stream of tendency to

bitterness and misery which coloured the whole of his after life. Between the two, however, there was no real love. The affinities did not agree, and both might thank their stars that she at first repelled him, and that he at last repelled her.

What became of poor Varina we cannot tell, but we can all, at least, endorse the wish of Thackeray, "that she met with some worthy partner, and lived long enough to see her little boys laughing over Lilliput, without any *arrière pensée* of the great Dean."

The next and most thrilling love episode in the life of Swift was his mysterious connection with STELLA AND VANESSA.

Had Swift been a dunce instead of a genius, he would have pursued the well-known, well-beaten track which leads to happiness—or what is called happiness—marriage, but he despised that way.

He must have new sensations. This phase of his character is vividly portrayed in his Stella and Vanessa connection. He tried with them the experiment of how far friendship could be carried on with the opposite sex, excluding the thought of love. Few men, and still fewer women, are intellectually strong enough for such an experiment. The companionship of Abelard and Héloïse is always dangerous. "No man," said Johnson, "is perfectly safe with women." Swift's acquaintanceship with Stella commenced in the earlier part of his life, when resident in Moor Park as Temple's secretary. An inmate of that household was little Hester Johnson, six years old. Swift was then one-and-twenty. He became her

tutor. In this self-imposed task he had much pleasure, because he believed in the intellectual capabilities and rights of women. He had a theory as to their treatment and education, which he held against the opinions of the world.

After Swift became Rector of Laracor, he invited Hester Johnson and Mrs. Dingley, as her chaperon, to Ireland. In this there was a want of worldly wisdom. Swift must have known that the undefined companionship of a young lady of nineteen, even with a chaperon, must have set many tongues a-wagging; but he cared not. He despised the so-called proprieties and prejudices of the world.

In the year 1711, another young lady appeared on the scene, one Hester Vanhomrigh by name, of whom Swift said "that there was nothing ugly about her but her name," which afterwards he changed to Vanessa. She was young and beautiful, accomplished, intellectual, and rich. She lived not far from Swift, in London, with her widowed mother, who moved in the best society. Swift soon became the young lady's guide, philosopher, and friend.

In the field of our vision we have now both Stella and Vanessa, as friends of Swift, with whom he resolved to give to the world an example of unlimited friendship between the sexes, excluding the thought of love. He realised what a profound pity it was that the inexorable laws of society would not allow of this, without the thought of love or marriage.

He felt that young ladies "lost much thereby; that they knew not what slumbered in their soul, and would be aroused in them by the conversation of a

noble friend." Accordingly, Swift trained Stella and Vanessa from their youth, with the view of their being intellectual companions with himself. He prescribed their studies, watched over them with deep interest, gave them maxims for their guidance in life, different from the maxims of the world. But, alas, brilliant as their intellects were, they were not strong enough for the ordeal through which they had to pass. Their intellectuality degenerated into love, their love into passion, their passion into rivalry, their rivalry into jealousy, and the end of it was misery to all the three. This is the key to many of the difficulties which we shall encounter in the strange narrative of Swift's dealings with these illustrious ladies.

Regarding Swift's connection with Stella, it has been asserted by most of his biographers that he was married to her, by the Bishop of Clogher, in the year 1716. This I do not believe. The first to promulgate the rumour publicly was Lord Orrery. His statement has been accepted without hesitation by one biographer after another, and asserted by them with as much confidence as if they had been present at the ceremony.

The burden of proof must rest upon Lord Orrery, who first made the assertion.

His narrative is as follows:

"Stella's real name was Johnson. She was the daughter of Sir William Temple's steward, and the concealed, but undoubted, wife of Dr. Swift. I cannot tell how long she remained in England, or whether she made more journeys than one to Ireland

after Sir William Temple's death; but, if my informations are right, she was married to Dr. Swift in the year 1716, by Dr. Ashe, then Bishop of Clogher."

Let us carefully examine this narrative. It consists of two statements. First, that Stella was the daughter of Sir William Temple's land steward, and that Sir William bequeathed to her in his will one thousand pounds, as an acknowledgment of her father's faithful services. My contention is that this statement is false. I admit that there may be doubt as to who the father of Stella really was, but there can be no doubt that, whoever he was, he was not Sir William Temple's land steward. Nor is it true that Sir William left her a legacy in acknowledgment of her father's faithful services.

Temple was dead, and Stella a girl ten years old, when her mother married the late Sir William's land steward, a man named Morse.

This proves to demonstration that Lord Orrery's first statement is false.

At this point a deeply interesting and important question arises. If Stella was not the daughter of Sir William Temple's land steward, whose daughter was she?

The orthodox opinion, which has been accepted by nearly all Swift's biographers, is that Stella was the daughter of a Dutch merchant.

Recently, however, when making research in the British Museum for documents bearing on the life of Swift, I discovered accidentally an extraordinary leading article in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, of date November, 1757, which professes to give a secret clue

to the real parentage both of Swift and Stella. The writer asserts that they were both the children of Sir William Temple. He says: "When Sir William Temple went to reside at Moor Park, he brought down with him one summer a gentlewoman in the character of a housekeeper, whose name was Johnson, the widow of a merchant, and with her a daughter named Esther, who was brought up and educated by Sir William Temple, and whom the world soon declared to be Sir William's daughter, all the more that her features bore a strong resemblance to those of Sir William, and no one could be at a loss to determine what relation she had to that gentleman. And, could the striking likeness have been overlooked, Sir William's uncommon regard for her, and his attention to her education, must have convinced every unprejudiced person that Miss Hetty Johnson was the daughter of one who moved in a higher sphere than a Dutch trader. The respect that Sir William affected to show the child induced his family to copy his example; and the neighbouring families behaving in the same manner, she early lost all that servility that must have tinged her manners and behaviour, had she been brought up in dependence and without any knowledge of her real condition. When or where Sir William thought proper to acquaint her with the history of her birth, we profess not to know; but that he did inform her of the secret we have reason to presume from the following circumstances:

"As soon as she was woman enough to be trusted with her own conduct, she left her mother and Moor

Park, and went to Ireland to reside, by the order of Sir William, who was yet alive. She was conducted there by Swift; but of this I am not so positive as I am that her mother parted with her, as one who was never to see her again."

This article was written, be it remembered, during the lifetime of Stella's mother; indeed, the writer of it states that he had seen her in the autumn of 1742. Anyhow, the narrator's last sentence is undoubtedly and strikingly true, for there is no evidence whatever that after Stella left Moor Park for Ireland she ever saw her mother more.

The narrator's next statement is also true—that Stella made surprising advances toward perfection under the tuition of Dr. Swift. In her poem, dated 30th Nov., 1721, entitled, "Stella to Dr. Swift on his Birthday," we see that she attributed all that was excellent in her to his instructions. Well she might. Young Swift was her first companion in play, and her first companion in study. He was the first to guide her little hand in writing, and the first to guide her little mind in thinking.

The narrator goes on to say: "It is not surprising that her affection towards the Dean should be so great, when we recollect that it commenced from her earlier age, at a time when she thought that affection entirely innocent; that it was increased by Sir William often recommending her tender innocence to the protection of Swift, as she had no declared male relation that could be her defender. It was from Sir William's own lessons that she received the

first rules for her future conduct, which were afterwards continued by the Dean.

"When Stella went to Ireland, a marriage between her and the Dean could not be foreseen; but when she thought proper to communicate to her friends the Dean's proposal, and her approbation of it, it then became absolutely necessary for that person, who alone knew the secret history of the parties concerned, to reveal what otherwise might have been buried in oblivion. But was the Dean to blame because he was ignorant of his natural relation to Stella?" The narrator here states, as delicately as language will permit, that SWIFT AND STELLA WERE BOTH CHILDREN OF SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE. A strange story this, almost incredible! But these were strange times, and they did strange things a century and a half ago.

Yet, strange and incredible as this story may appear to us, it was believed by Dr. Delany, the intimate friend of Swift. The story told by Delany is this: One day, about the time of the marriage, as he was entering the library of the Archbishop of Dublin, Swift passed out, looking fierce and wild, without speaking to him. When he entered the library he found the Archbishop in tears. "Sir," said he, "you have just this moment passed the most miserable man on earth, but as to the cause of that misery you must never ask a question." Delany thought that the cause of this grief was a revelation by the Archbishop to Swift of his relation to Stella.

The most of Swift's biographers fix the date of

this scene in 1716. Monck Mason, however, has proved conclusively that neither this scene nor the pretended marriage of Swift could possibly have taken place that year. Yet it is highly probable that the scene referred to did take place some time, as we cannot believe that Dr. Delany would tell the world a deliberate falsehood. What, then, was the nature of Swift's misery, which with tears the Archbishop entreated Delany not to inquire into? Certainly not the absurd theory of Sir Walter Scott, that it was the confession of Swift to his Grace, that physically he was not fit for marriage. That reason is simply absurd. Can any sane man believe that a confession from Swift, that he was not a marrying man, could cause the Archbishop to shed tears?

Our narrator supplies us with a much more likely and reasonable cause. "When Stella," he says, "thought proper to communicate to her friends the Dean's proposal, and her approbation of it, it then became absolutely necessary for that person who alone knew the secret history of the parties concerned, to reveal what otherwise might have been buried in oblivion."

Who was that person who alone knew the secret history of the parties concerned? Doubtless, it was Mrs. Dingley. If not a cadet of the Temple family, she, at least, was a retainer in it, and likely to know the family secrets. She was Stella's chaperon, and as such, if she became cognisant of anything that was likely to lead to a marriage between Swift and

Stella, it then became imperative on her to reveal either to them or to the Archbishop that which otherwise might have been buried in oblivion. Whether this was the cause of the Archbishop's tears, or whether the epoch of this discovery was on Swift's birthday, which he ever afterwards bewailed—who can tell? This, at least, we know for certain, that shortly after this alleged scene, Swift and Stella were never again seen together without a third party. This also we know for fact, that about this time Swift said, "that the only woman in the world who could make him happy as a wife was the only woman in the world who could not be his wife." Strange language, which has never yet been satisfactorily explained.

The narrator goes on to say, "that Swift admired her, he loved her, he pitied her; and when fate had placed the everlasting barrier between them, their affection became a true Platonic love, if not something more exalted."

Forster declares that at no time was Swift's love for Stella aught else "than Platonic and fatherly."

The narrator ends thus: "The days of Stella were shortened mainly by the knowledge she obtained of her unhappy situation."

It is evident that some of Swift's biographers had heard of this article, but equally evident that they had never read or examined it, but simply ignored it as unworthy of belief. Why? Because, say they, it can be proved that Sir William Temple was Ambassador at the Hague at the time of Swift's

birth, and had been there for a year before. True, but Ambassadors' movements are sometimes ubiquitous, and not always to be depended upon.

Was it impossible for Sir William Temple, who knew the Swift family intimately, to have paid them a short visit in Ireland during his ambassadorial term of office in Holland? I have caused the ambassadorial State papers of Sir William to be examined, and nothing can be proved from them, either for or against this theory. I have myself examined Sir William's letters, sent from the Hague to King William and his Ministers, and certainly there is a strange silence for a time, sufficient to admit of a visit to Ireland. Ambassadors even then had the power to travel quickly, and secretly too, when it suited their purpose. Whether Sir William ever made such a visit there is no evidence to show. *Non possumus*, however, should not be said either in science or theology, or even as to the goings to and fro of an Ambassador of a century and a half ago. But, even granting that it was impossible for Temple to visit Ireland during his term of office, was it equally impossible for Mrs. Swift to have visited the Hague?

We know for fact that Mrs. Swift was a beautiful, but flighty and peculiar woman. On one occasion she took lodgings in Dublin, and told the landlady that the rooms were taken by her for the purpose "of receiving the visits of a gallant." The gallant on this occasion, at least, turned out to be her son Jonathan, Rector of Laracor. This may appear an

insignificant and trifling reminiscence. True, but when we are doubting, or jealously trying to discover the direction of the wind, a straw can sometimes show how it is blowing.

Again, the conduct of Mrs. Swift was, to say the least, most peculiar towards her infant son Jonathan. It is a fact undoubted that the child Jonathan, when a year old, was surreptitiously taken at midnight and conveyed on board ship to Whitehaven. Mrs. Swift, when she discovered the whereabouts of her child, allowed the woman who stole him to retain the child three years in her possession, under the frivolous pretext that he might not be able to bear a return voyage.

From such unnatural conduct one is almost tempted to believe that Mrs. Swift was only the *nominal* mother, entrusted with a charge not her own.

Another incident in the conduct of Mrs. Swift which seems not a little strange was the advice that she gave to her son Jonathan on his return from college, at the age of twenty-one, without a future plan in life. She, a poor widow living on the charity of friends, could do nothing for him; but said:

"Go, my son, in God's name, to Sir William Temple, and he will advise you what to do."

Strange, is it not, that she should *presume* to send her son to the care and protection of Temple—a proud autocrat, the counsellor and confidant of his sovereign, who at the age of fifty refused to be

Foreign Secretary of State, doubtful as to whether his country "was worthy of salvation at his illustrious hands"? Stranger still, that Sir William received young Swift cheerfully, treated him kindly, examined into his classical and philosophical attainments, prescribed for him a course of study, and strangest of all, that he should *himself superintend* it.

The important question now arises, Is this narrative really worthy of belief? Who was the writer of it? I cannot tell. The signature is, C. M. P. G. N. S. T. N. S. I have tried to decipher these initials, but have failed. The same writer has contributed to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, of 1757, several able articles on "Ancient Coins." A correspondent, in reply to one of these articles, calls him Mr. C. S. This is pretty much all that we know about him. We may rest satisfied, however, as to this, that the writer must have been a gentleman, not merely of culture and learning, but of distinction in literature, otherwise this narrative had never appeared as the *leading article* in *The Gentleman's Magazine* — a magazine, be it remembered, which, in its day, occupied in the literary world an equal position to that which *The Contemporary* and *The Nineteenth Century* do now.

Another strong point in favour of the narrative is the fact that it was written and published in the blaze of noonday, when Jack Temple, Sir William's heir, was living, as well as Stella's mother; yet no one dared to impugn its truthfulness. This proves that the editor and publishers of the magazine

must themselves have believed the truthfulness of the narrative, otherwise they had not run the risk of an action for defamation being raised against them by the surviving relatives of the parties impugned.

If we can believe this strange story—and my readers must judge as to that for themselves—then Swift acted nobly, heroically, rather than tarnish the name of Temple and his mother, and carried the secret with him, through life, to his grave.

However, be this as it may, we must now gather up the thread of our story, and proceed with our narrative.

Lord Orrery's next statement is, "That Stella was the concealed, but undoubted, wife of Dr. Swift," and adds, "If my informations are correct, she was married to Dr. Swift in the year 1716, by Dr. Ashe, Bishop of Clogher."

We have just proved that Lord Orrery's last statement regarding Stella was utterly false. We have therefore reason to receive with caution this other statement regarding Swift's marriage. The question then is, Was Swift married to Stella, as Lord Orrery asserts? Mr. Leslie Stephen says that "the fact is not proved, nor disproved, nor to my mind is the question of its truth of much importance." * I beg, respectfully, to differ from Mr. Stephen, as to the importance of the question. To my thinking, it is the most important problem to solve in the life of Swift, as I hope to prove before

* "English Men of Letters," page 134.

this chapter is ended. Indeed, without a solution of this difficulty, it is utterly impossible to interpret his life satisfactorily. Forster, whom the judgment of the world has placed, and justly placed, in the first rank of biographers, says that "he can find no evidence of a marriage that is at all reasonably sufficient." Pity that he did not leave behind, ere he died, the reasons which led him, and which should lead us, to that conclusion. It shall, therefore, be my endeavour, however feebly and imperfectly, to perform that work.

My contention is that Swift was not married to Stella, or to any one else.

The first to promulgate publicly this marriage story was Lord Orrery; and Swift's biographers have believed it, almost entirely, on his lordship's authority.

The first question that I must ask is, What authority Lord Orrery had for the statement that Stella was the concealed, but undoubted, wife of Dr. Swift? His lordship gives none; he only adds the words, "If my informations are right."

The next question is, Did Lord Orrery himself believe his own assertion?

My conviction is that he did not believe it.

In a letter written by his lordship on December 4th, 1742, regarding an outrage committed on the Dean when his mind was clouded, he says: "Good God, Dr. Swift beaten, and marked with stripes, by a beast in human shape—one Wilson. A bachelor will seldom find among all his kindred so true a

nurse, so faithful a friend, as one tied to him by the double chain of duty and affection. A wife could not be banished from his chamber, or his unhappy hours of retirement. Nor had the Dean felt a blow, or wanted a companion, had he been married, or in other words, had Stella lived." It is evident from this letter that Orrery assumes that Swift was a bachelor; that he was not married, and had never been married; but thinks that if Stella had lived he would probably have married her. At the time when this letter was written, in 1742, Stella had been dead for many years, and Swift was a maniac.

Six years later Orrery published his book on Swift. It is impossible to believe, "that during these intervening years, his lordship could have discovered any evidence of Swift's marriage, or his language had been different." During these intervening years, however, he discovered Swift's contempt for him, and, accordingly, did his best to blacken the character of the Dean.

The next writer on Swift was Dr. Delany, in 1754. He accepts the statement of Orrery, regarding the marriage, without examination, and without giving any reason why he did so.

This assertion of Orrery has also been accepted by Deane Swift and Hawkesworth without hesitation or examination. But Orrery's first false statement gains no additional validity by the reiteration of these men. Johnson's "Life of Swift" comes next in order. He says: "Soon after 1716, Swift was privately married to Mrs. Johnson, as Dr.

Madden told me." This Madden was a fanatical prophetic writer. He received the story from young Sheridan.

This leads us to consider what evidence Sheridan had for the marriage.

When a boy, young Sheridan received the story from his father. Can we suppose that the trusty friend of Swift would divulge an important story like this, during Swift's lifetime, to a mere boy—for he was only seventeen years old when his father died? Can we believe that this youth was the sole custodian of such a story for half a century, without divulging it, when it would have become the common property of Swift's political and other enemies? Yet, the first to promulgate it publicly was Lord Orrery, seven years after Swift's death. The recollection of a man of fifty-seven, regarding what was related to him when a boy, is not to be relied upon, more especially, as I have proved elsewhere, that on one occasion young Sheridan told a deliberate falsehood regarding Swift.

Another narrative is told by a Mrs. Whiteway, "that, shortly before Stella's death, Dean Swift sat by her bedside and talked to her in a tone of voice too low for Mrs. Whiteway to hear. At length she heard the Dean say, 'Well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be owned;' to which Stella answered, 'Too late.'"

The word marriage was never mentioned. Sir Walter Scott says: "There can be no doubt that such was the secret to be owned."

I think there remains great doubt. Granting, even, that this rather curious old lady heard distinctly, was there nothing else within the limits of possibility that she might desire to be owned except marriage?

The story seems to want internal authenticity. It is easy to understand how it might be too late to perform the ceremony of marriage; but difficult to conceive how, at any time, it could be too late to acknowledge a marriage that had already been celebrated.

The next writer on the subject is George Monck Berkeley, in 1789. After getting some gossip from a Mrs. Hearn, he goes on to copy Sheridan's account of the marriage, as related by him. He adds: "In 1716 they were married by the Bishop of Clogher, who himself related the circumstance to Bishop Berkeley, by whose relict the story was communicated to me." Impossible. Bishop Berkeley died in 1717—the year after the pretended marriage—and Berkeley was at that time in Italy, where he had resided during several preceding years.

It is amusing to trace the rise and progress of this absurd myth.

Lord Orrery receives the rumour as gospel; Dr. Delany accepts it; Deane Swift, Esq., adopts it; Hawkesworth reiterates it; Johnson gets it from old Madden; old Madden gets it from young Sheridan; young Sheridan gets it, when a boy, from his father, and, after half a century, expands it into a melodramatic scene, fit for the stage; the

old wives of that period gossip about it; until at last it becomes undisputed history, and gives Jeffrey and Macaulay the opportunity of persecuting, not the man, but the memory of him who, a century and a half ago, mauled the Whigs unmercifully.

This pretended marriage is "like the duel in *The School for Scandal.* Nobody denied that Sir Peter was seriously wounded; as to that, there was no manner of doubt, the only question being, whether it was by a sword or a bullet; when in walks Sir Peter, alive and well. The duel rested on the positive assertion of Sir Benjamin Backbite. The marriage depends on that of his prototype—Lord Orrery."

Although the evidence of this alleged marriage should rest upon those who assert it as fact, and although they have failed to put us in possession of evidence, as Forster says, "that is at all reasonably sufficient," yet we need not rest here, for the negative evidence against the marriage is strong and conclusive.

We have the evidence of Dr. Lyon, Swift's physician in ordinary, who tells us that the rumour of marriage "is a hearsay story, very ill-founded." Mrs. Brent, the Dean's housekeeper, did not believe it. Mrs. Dingley, Stella's chaperon—who was never separate from her for a single day all the time they lived in Ireland, and must have known of it if there had been a marriage—laughed at the story as an "idle tale, founded only on suspicion."

But the strongest evidence is that of Swift and Stella themselves.

There is indirect evidence, of a very strong and convincing kind, from the verses they addressed to each other on their birthdays. We find in the poem he wrote two months before she died, these words: "With friendship and esteem possessed, I ne'er admitted love a guest."

What insult and mockery if Stella had been his wife! It is also worthy of note, from the verses that Stella addressed to Swift, that the thought of marriage with him did not cross her mind.

If she cherished such a hope in her youth, and it is highly probable that she did, that illusive hope was dispelled as early as 1704. That year, one Tisdal appears as a suitor for her hand. He writes to Swift as her acknowledged guardian. In Swift's reply he inquires as to his income and future prospects.

Tisdal writes again—I suspect, at the suggestion of Stella—hinting that he was jealous of Swift himself being a rival for her hand. This was the crucial test of the nature of Swift's affection for her. In his reply to Tisdal, Swift admires her as the best of womankind; but declares, upon the honour of a Christian and gentleman, that he has no intention of ever marrying her.

Stella now knew her fate. Swift encouraged the suit of Tisdal; Stella rejected it. She preferred being the confidant and companion of the brilliant Swift, rather than the wife of the commonplace Tisdal

Who will venture to say that she was wrong? Who will dare to say that she was not infinitely happier in being the friend of Swift than the wife of Tisdal?

I think the story is told with too much pity for Stella. It was not a sorrowful life. It was not a sad destiny, to be the star to such a man as Swift. She was "his good angel, his other self," and Swift has given to her immortality.

Another argument against the marriage theory is that the name she signed to her will was Esther Johnson—I believe she had no other. She adds "Spinster." If she was really married to Swift, why should she burden her conscience a month before death with a deliberate, gratuitous, and hypocritical lie, by describing herself as an unmarried person, when there was no necessity for her so doing?

The assertors of the marriage tell us that the object of the ceremony was to clear her character in after ages; but, if she was married, she is here trying to mystify posterity by adding "Spinster."

Another indirect proof against this mythical marriage is to be found in Swift's letters to his friends Worrell, Stopford, and old Sheridan, where he always persists in calling Stella not wife, but "friend."

There is proof also in the beautiful prayers which he composed for Stella, and read at her death-bed, in the presence of Mrs. Dingley. The following is a quotation from the second prayer:

"O all-powerful Being, the least motion of whose will can create or destroy a world, pity us, the mournful *friends* of thy distressed servant, who sink under the weight of her present condition, and the fear of losing the most valuable of *our friends*."

The following quotation is from the third prayer:

"Forgive the sorrow and weakness of those among us, who sink under the grief and terror of losing so dear and useful *a friend*."

Another quotation will close this negative evidence.

One Sunday evening at midnight, in the dreary Deanery of St. Patrick's, sat the aged Swift in agony, writing these words:

"This day being Sunday, January 28, 1727–8, about eight o'clock at night, a servant brought me a note, with an account of the death of the truest, most virtuous, and *valuable friend* that I, or perhaps any other person, ever was blessed with. She expired about six in the evening of this day, and as soon as I am left alone, which is about eleven at night, I resolve, for my own satisfaction, to say something of her life and character."

He writes in agony until past midnight, and then he says, "his head aches, and he can write no more." Two nights after he resumes the pen, and goes on to say: "This is the night of the funeral, which my sickness will not suffer me to attend. It is now nine at night, and I am removed into another apartment that I may not see the light in the church, which is just over against the window of my bedroom."

More pathetic words than these were never written. That burial night was the darkest night in the life of Swift. That night, when the grave closed over Stella, "darkness and despair closed over Swift."

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? Simply this: If Swift was married to Stella, then,

either these poems, letters, and prayers which I have quoted are forgeries, or Swift is the most hypocritical and blasphemous villain the world has ever known.

Believe the latter who will; I, for one, cannot.

I have now endeavoured to prove my contention that Stella was not the daughter of Sir William Temple's steward, and that Swift was not married to Stella. Whether I have succeeded I must leave to the judgment of my readers to decide.

We shall now leave the story of Swift and Stella to consider the history of Swift's connection with Vanessa.

SWIFT AND VANESSA.

Vanessa was a beauty of the Dutch type. "A white witch," as Swift called her, with "a baby face," somewhat masculine in her ways. Swift represents "Pallas as mistaking her for a boy." She was clever, impulsive, and imperious. An apt scholar, talked French, read philosophy, learned Swift's maxims, and applied them cleverly. Brilliant in conversation, an art critic, kept behind the age in dress, sympathised with Swift's political views, and flattered him. Such was Vanessa.

It is impossible to know the exact time when Swift became aware of the fact that Vanessa really loved him. Had he been an ordinary man, as soon as he became conscious of Vanessa's love, and felt that he could not reciprocate it, he would have crushed it instantly. But Swift was no ordinary man. The keen sensitivity of his nature—for with

all his cynicism he had a generous heart—would not allow him to do this suddenly, but gently, and in his own way. This was where Swift erred, but it was an error of judgment, not of heart. He judged Vanessa by the standard of Stella. She, too, had entertained feelings for him which he could not reciprocate. As soon as she discovered this she gladly accepted his friendship instead of love. Swift, doubtless, thought that Vanessa would make the same compromise "when she was convinced that there was the same necessity."

All that was required was a distinct understanding. He anticipated that this would be arrived at in due time. Swift had miscalculated; the character of Vanessa was very different from that of Stella. It is difficult to find the exact word of censure that will apply with perfect exactness to this error of Swift's. "Philandering" is the best that occurs to us at the moment. However, be this as it may, we must proceed with our narrative.

Swift refused at first to treat her love seriously, believing it to be only a girlish fancy that would soon pass away. Time drifted on, and so did Vanessa's love.

As soon as Swift thoroughly realised that her love was no youthful fancy, but had the "consistency and dignity of truth," he at once became serious, and told her the conditions on which alone they could have intercourse and communion with one another. At the beginning of this chapter, I hinted at a secret key which could alone unlock the mystery of his connection with these illustrious ladies. Swift's

settled conviction was that there should be "unlimited friendship" among the sexes, excluding the thought of love.*

This was what Swift offered to Vanessa—not love, but unlimited friendship. This she accepted as the condition of their intercourse, as is proved by her correspondence with him during the whole course of her after life.

Every student of Swift knows that Swift's correspondence with Vanessa, and his poem to her, are the only reliable and authentic evidence extant from which we can form a correct judgment of his conduct towards her. This, however, is not the evidence on which some of Swift's illustrious biographers of this century have formed their judgment. Sir Walter Scott, whom I absolve from all malignity against Swift, unfortunately and unwittingly, for want of time, accepts Sheridan's representation of the tragical but mythical interview between Swift and Vanessa, when he left the Abbey in fury, remounted his horse, and rode back to Dublin. Lord Jeffrey in *The Edinburgh Review*, criticises Sir Walter's "Life of Swift," but accepts his verdict on this point, and animadverts on what he is pleased to call Swift's infamous conduct to Vanessa. Lord Macaulay accepts Lord Jeffrey's verdict, and Thackeray adopts Lord Macaulay's judgment as at once safe, fashionable, infallible, and final.

* Swift entertained then what would even now be called very advanced opinions regarding the intellectual capabilities and rights of woman.

What I censure in these writers is, that they should, without *hesitation*, have adopted the erroneous opinion of Swift's *original* biographers, who had not sufficient *material* to form a correct judgment upon the subject. I protest against such conduct as cruelly unjust and monstrously unfair. In order, therefore, to form a correct judgment regarding this painful episode in the life of Swift, I must be allowed to quote from the correspondence that passed between Swift and Vanessa, which, be it remembered, was not in the hands of Swift's original biographers.

In June, 1713, Swift leaves London for Dublin, to be installed as Dean. After the installation ceremony, he retires to Laracor, and writes to Vanessa thus:

July 8, 1713.

I stayed but a fortnight in Dublin, very sick, and returned not one visit of a hundred that were made to me, but all to the Dean, and none to the Doctor. I am riding here for life, and I think I am somewhat better.

I told you when I left England I would endeavour to forget everything there, and would write as seldom as I could. I did, indeed, design one general round of letters to my friends, but my health has not yet suffered me. I design to pass the great part of the time that I spend in Ireland here, in the cabin where I am now writing; neither will I leave the kingdom till I am sent for, and if they have no farther service for me, I shall never see England again.

So go to your Dukes, and Duchesses, and leave me to Goodman Bumford, and Patrick Dolan, of Clanduggan. Adieu.

Only three short months previous to the writing of this letter Swift had received from Vanessa the confession of her love:

Vanessa, not in years a score,
Dreams of a gown of forty-four.

One of his lessons she had learned well—that true friendship has no reserve, and that every one should have the courage of their opinions, and that

> Common forms were not designed
> Directors to a noble mind.

Swift's maiden pupil replied:

> I'll let you see,
> My actions with your rules agree.

She told her love, and fairly argued it out.

It has been thought, that because Swift at that moment did not break off all connection with her, he must have given her encouragement. I have already stated that Swift offered her not love but unlimited friendship, and I have quoted this letter, the first which he wrote to her after this compact, to prove that he was faithfully keeping to it.

"I told you," he says, "when I left England I would endeavour to forget everything there, and that I would write as seldom as I could."

This does not sound as the language of one who had given her encouragement as a lover. Swift adds:

"If they"—the Ministry—"have no further need for me, I shall never see England again."

What an insult these words would have been, if he had given her encouragement as a lover!

The Ministry, however, had need of Swift, and that quickly, to settle Cabinet quarrels. Accordingly, Swift starts immediately for London. Shortly after his arrival, Vanessa throws herself on him for assistance and advice, and for guidance in her studies.

Swift renews the friendship. Vanessa now distinctly understands and conforms to Swift's conditions of companionship.

There is now no evidence of obstreperous love on her part. If it exists, it is subdued.

Time passes, and with it the Harley Government. Bolingbroke has become Premier. The Queen has died, and Swift has retired to Letcombe. From that place he writes to Vanessa thus:

"Who told you I was going to Bath? No such thing. When I am fixed anywhere, perhaps I may be so gracious to let you know; but I will not promise. Adieu."

Not a word of love here, nor anything savouring of it; nothing but friendship.

Vanessa now proposes to go to Ireland to look after her estate near Dublin. Swift writes the following letter to dissuade her from going:

Aug. 12, 1714.

I had your letter last post, and before you can send me another I shall set out for Ireland. I must go and take the oaths, and the sooner the better. If you are in Ireland when I am there I shall see you very seldom. It is not a place for any freedom, but it is where everything is known in a week and magnified a hundred degrees. There are rigorous laws that must be passed through, but it is probable that we may meet in London in winter; or, if not, leave all to fate, that seldom comes to humour our inclinations. I say all this out of the *perfect esteem* and *friendship* I have for you.

Can anything be franker or more manly, more reasonable or judicious, than this letter? There is no attempt here at the renunciation of any old love,

but "a decided check to the growth of new." He tells her that Ireland is a place of gossips, where everything is magnified a hundredfold; and, therefore, if she is there when he is, he will see her seldom, as he wishes to avoid even the appearance of anything that might give them an opportunity of using the tongue of slander either against himself or her. And all this out of the perfect esteem and friendship he has for her.

Vanessa replies: "You once had a maxim which was to act what was right and not mind what the world would say. I wish you would keep to it now. Pray what can be wrong in seeing and advising an unhappy young woman? I cannot imagine. You cannot but know that your frowns make my life unsupportable. You have taught me to distinguish, and then you leave me miserable. Now all I beg is, that you will for once counterfeit, since you cannot otherwise, that indulgent friend you once were, till I get the better of these difficulties."

She pleads here for a continuation of friendship, not love. Swift had not refused to be her friend, as the following letter evinces:

> I will see you in a day or two, and, believe me, it goes to my soul not to see you oftener. I will give you the best advice, countenance, and assistance I can. . . . . I did not imagine you had been under difficulties; I am sure my whole fortune should go to remove them. I cannot see you to-day, I fear, having affairs of my own place to do; but pray think it not want of friendship or tenderness, which I will always continue to the utmost.

But out of the "perfect esteem and friendship"

he had for her he tells her that he can see her seldom, and gives his reason. She ignores this, and cleverly quotes his own maxim, and follows it with tragic literalness: "Act what is right, and not mind what the world says." True, Vanessa, some things are lawful but not expedient. Swift had tried the experiment with Stella, and both of them had felt the sharp tongue of scandal, and he had no wish to repeat it.

Vanessa, however, would not be dissuaded from going to Ireland. Go she would, and go she did. It seems that Swift had an interview with her shortly after her arrival. In a letter he sent her he concludes thus: "I have rode a tedious journey to-day, and can say no more, nor shall you know where I am till I come, and then I will see you. A fig for your letters and messages. Adieu." It is evident that Swift is getting slightly irritated at her injudiciousness and unreasonableness. He has an interview with her, tries to bring her to reason, likely enough scolds her for breaking the *conditions*, which they had agreed to in London, as to their *future intercourse*, and that, if she would be judicious and reasonable, he would see her as often as he could, and advise her regarding the affairs of her estate, which appear to have been in a mess. This interview seems to have been useless, as shortly afterwards Swift receives the following extraordinary letter:

> You bid me be easy, and you would see me as often as you could. You had better have said as often as you could get

the better of your inclination so much, or as often, as you remembered there was such a one in the world. If you continue to treat me as you do, you will not be made uneasy by me long It is impossible to describe what I have suffered since I saw you last. I am sure I could have borne the rack much better than those killing words of yours. Sometimes I have resolved to die without seeing you more; but those resolves, to your misfortune, did not last long. For there is something in human nature that prompts one so to find relief in this world. I must give way to it, and beg you would see me, and speak kindly to me, for I am sure you would not condemn any one to suffer what I have done, could you but know it. The reason I write to you is because I cannot tell it to you should I see you; for, when I begin to complain, then you are angry, and there is something in your looks so awful that it strikes me dumb. Oh! that you may but have so much regard for me left, that this complaint may touch your soul with pity. I say as little as ever I can; did you but know what I thought, I am sure it would move you, and believe that I cannot help telling you this and live.

Poor Vanessa! it is impossible not to pity her. A woman's "tenderness, a woman's passion, beating against the loneliness, the self-absorbed loneliness of genius." It is equally impossible not to pity Swift. I have quoted from his letters to show that he gave her no encouragement. His first letter to her from Laracor was cold; his next from Letcombe was friendly; his third was dignified and judicious; his last one was curt and testy.

Vanessa's first and second letters were reasonable enough. Her letter of October 19th asks for Swift's advice and friendship; but in her letter of November 4th, only three weeks after her previous one, she asks for Swift's love. Between these two last letters Swift had only seen her once, and that was to scold her, and to promise that if she was only judicious

and reasonable, he would see her as often as he could. We can, therefore, understand Swift's feelings when he received her last letter containing this sudden and unexpected burst of passionate but injudicious love. I am afraid that Vanessa was a vain and imperious young lady, who foolishly imagined that her youth, her fortune, and beauty, were certain to captivate the Dean. She seems not to have understood him like Stella, nor to have dreamt that it was irritating for a man, especially a man like Swift, to be loved without a particle of comprehension.

Swift wished to retain her as a friend; she wished to attain him as a husband. What could Swift do? What could any man have done who did not wish to marry?

Swift tried everything which the ingenuity of a good man could suggest, short of marriage, to soothe and comfort her, and bring her to reason. He alternately humoured and flattered, petted and scolded her; paid compliments to her intellectuality and to her literary tastes; promised her his friendship and literary confidences; told her to take exercise, to ride or to walk, to read diverting books, not to fly from company, but to mingle in society, and not to sit on a stool moping by the fire, with her head upon her hands. This calmed her, and for a while things went smoothly on. He begins, shortly, to write jestingly to her:

"One would think that you were in love by dating your letter 20th August, by which means I have received it a month before it was written."

As time wears on he adroitly tries to direct her love into another channel. He introduces another dean to her as a suitor for her hand, one Winter by name; but Vanessa evidently thought that his love was as cold as his name, for she rejected him scornfully. Another suitor came forward, and offered her his hand, one Price by name; but no, Vanessa will not accept him at any price, although afterwards he became Bishop of Meath, and latterly Archbishop of Cashel.

She preferred the friendship of Swift to the love of these men. With all Swift's cordiality of friendship, he acts cautiously and visits her seldom, to prevent the tongue of scandal. Yet, with all his caution, an unpleasant rumour arises, of which Vanessa writes him. Swift replies, with characteristic coolness, "that is just what he had long foreseen, and it must be submitted to."

Time drifts on until 1719, when, to please and humour her, Swift revises his famous poem, "Cadenus and Vanessa," which he wrote in 1713, when Vanessa confessed to him her youthful love. It was written by Swift, in his generous way, to appease the feelings of the young maiden whose love he had refused. It might well be entitled "Vanessa's Apologia." I need hardly say that it was written, at first, for Vanessa's use only. It was written as a touching "In Memoriam" of the history of her love, in a form that might be most pleasing to her.

But, as the love episode had passed through many phases since then, this new edition brought it, as it

were, up to date. I shall quote the parts that bring out most strikingly the origin and success of her love:

> But what success Vanessa met,
> Is to the world a secret yet.
> Whether the nymph, to please her swain,
> Talks in a high romantick strain;
> Or whether he at last descends
> To act with less seraphick ends;
> Or, to compound the business, whether
> They temper love and books together;
> Must never to mankind be told,
> Nor shall the conscious muse unfold.

That stanza which speaks of the success of her love is new, and it has given rise to much adverse criticism.

Lord Orrery, that deceitful sycophant, who threw flowers before Swift, and stones after him, has interpreted it in the vilest way which malignity could suggest.

> But what success Vanessa met,
> Is to the world a secret yet.

Orrery, to his eternal disgrace, interprets these words to the dishonour of Vanessa. It goes without saying, this interpretation is utterly false. Even the late Edinburgh Reviewers, Lords Jeffrey and Macaulay, and the other "unrivalled truth-crushers" of that age—Swift's implacable enemies, all of them—even they gave up that interpretation as utterly untenable, and admitted, with a frankness that did them honour, that the Swift and Vanessa episode is absolutely pure.

Remember for whom the poem was meant. It

was written for the private use of Vanessa *only*. Would the Dean insult her by reminding her of her dishonour?

Remember by whose desire this poem was published. Not by the desire of Swift; but by the desire of Vanessa herself. Would she knowingly publish that to the world, if it hinted at her dishonour? Utterly impossible. It must be confessed, however, that this unfortunate stanza has been the cause of much difficulty to nearly all of Swift's biographers.

What, then, is the true interpretation of it? We must again use the key. At the renewal of their intercourse, after the confession of her love, Swift, we remember, offered not love, but unlimited friendship.

She accepted this as the condition of their intercourse; but all the while she had hoped that, ultimately, she might possess him as a lover and a husband.

Swift's shrewdness must have seen this. On one occasion he even hints, with a bluntness that was almost rude, that her pretended troubles were affectation to obtain his companionship.

That was likely enough. But Swift had a strong suspicion, all along, that even her love was largely made up of affectation, and wanted sincerity. In that he was perfectly mistaken. This suspicion might arise in his mind, not unnaturally, from the fact that after a lengthened calm, Vanessa periodically would break out in her letters into a wild

gust of passionate love, without anything having occurred during the interval to account for its force and suddenness.

Alas! there might have been another cause, that Swift knew not of, to account for the sudden warmth of some of her letters, apart altogether from his theory of insincerity.

In a letter which Swift sent to her, of date 5th July, 1721, we find this passage: "Without health, you will lose all desire of drinking your coffee and become so low *as to have no spirits.*"

Perhaps these words might suggest a meaning to the conscience of Vanessa which did *not* enter into Swift's thoughts.

However, be this as it may, in 1719, when this poem was revised, and the stanza in question added, Swift was satisfied that her love to him had been constant and sincere. He now seems to have made a "kind of compromise." He would add to his friendship affection—not desire, not marriage. His affection must still be Platonic. This was the secret that was to be known only to themselves, not to the world.

Swift once asked a pungent question which bears on the point now: "Why cannot two men love the same woman without one or other of them trying to possess her person and carry her away as his booty?"

Swift's idea of affection towards the opposite sex was high and pure. His conception of true love was not animalism. "Not quick beatings of the heart;

stormy waves of hope; delight in a beautiful face; sweet imaginings—all which disturb that deep ocean calm which is the true image of pure human love." Swift refused to recognise any essential difference between the love of man to man, and the love of man to woman. He knew that the latter generally led to passion, but he held that "this was not necessary—simply a folly of the heart, which the head could rectify."

Swift's ideal of love was founded not on Animalism, but on Intellectualism. This is the secret, I believe, why the world has judged cruelly Swift's conduct with these ladies, because they did not understand him. They have judged Swift by themselves. They have forgotten what he himself said to Varina, "That he was no common lover."

After the revision of this poem there was a new lease of intimacy between them, of a tenderer nature than mere intellectual friendship—affection, excluding all thought of marriage. Indeed, Swift's strange maxim was, that no man ever married from reason, and that violent friendship was more lasting than violent love. With this understanding things now go smoothly on, hysterically broken, only now and then, by a burst of passion from Vanessa, which Swift smooths and calms.

At other times, in his remonstrances with her, he rises into a kind of sublime pathos, and appeals to her better judgment thus: "Shall you who have so much honour and good sense act otherwise to make Cadenus and yourself miserable? Settle your

affairs, and quit this scoundrel Island, and things will be as you desire." Occasionally he gets angry, and complains bitterly of her injudiciousness; nor need we wonder at his confusion on having the following document delivered to him in the Deanery when entertaining company:

"I believe you thought I only rallied when I told you the other night that I would pester you with letters. Once more I advise you, if you have any regard for your own quiet, to alter your behaviour quickly"—that is, that he should visit her oftener, although she had herself written to him, "that the tongue of scandal was busy" with them, both—"for I have too much spirit to sit down contented with this treatment. Pray think calmly of it. Is it not better to come of yourself than to be brought by force? and that perhaps when you have the most agreeable engagement in the world; for when I undertake anything I don't love to do it by halves."

To the eternal honour of Vanessa be it known, however, that in the wildest paroxysm of her passionate love she always exculpates Swift from being the cause of her misery. The following is very touching:

"Oh," she exclaims, "how have you forgot me? You endeavour by severities to force me from you. Nor can I blame you; for with the utmost distress and confusion I behold myself the cause of uneasy reflections to you. Yet I cannot comfort you, but here declare that 'tis not in the power of time or

accident to lessen the inexpressable passion which I have for you."

"This remarkable and decisive passage proves," says Sir Walter Scott, "that it was the unrequited passion of Vanessa, not the perfidy of Cadenus, which was the origin of their mutual misery; for she states Swift's unhappiness as arising from her love, and declares herself at the same time incapable of abating her affection."

Time drifts on, and at last the end comes. Vanessa sends Cadenus another passionate love-letter. He replies to this outburst, as he had often done before, by calm advice, and ends the last letter he ever sent to her by this never-to-be-forgotten prayer, "that she would not make herself or him unhappy by imaginations." The last sentence of Swift's last letter made it plain to Vanessa beyond the shadow of a doubt that her life-long struggle to possess him as a husband had been absolutely futile.

In exculpating Swift from all blame we cannot but feel painfully for poor Vanessa. If we can believe the great master of fiction, Sir Walter Scott, the last scene was a tragic one. He tells, and powerfully tells, a story which, if true, would convict Swift of monstrous inhumanity, and compel me to believe the very worst that was ever spoken of him by his greatest enemies. Sir Walter would have us to believe that at last Vanessa wrote to Stella asking an explanation of the connection that existed between Swift and herself. "Stella, in reply," so runs Sir Walter's story, "informed her of her marriage with

the Dean, and full of the highest resentment against Swift for having given another female such a right in him as Miss Vanhomrigh's enquiries implied, she sent him her rival's letter of interrogation. . . . Every reader knows the consequence. Swift, in one of those paroxysms of fury to which he was liable, both from temper and disease, rode instantly to Marley Abbey. As he entered the apartment the sternness of his countenance, which was peculiarly formed to express the fiercer passions, struck the unfortunate Vanessa with such terror that she could scarce ask whether he would not sit down. He answered by flinging a letter on the table, and instantly leaving the house, mounted his horse and returned to Dublin. When Vanessa opened the packet she only found her own letter to Stella. It was her death-warrant. She sank at once under the disappointment of the delayed, yet cherished hopes, which had so long sickened her heart, and beneath the unrestrained wrath of him for whose sake she had indulged them. How long she survived this last interview is uncertain, but the time does not seem to have exceeded a few weeks."

I am glad, not merely for Swift's sake but for the sake of humanity itself, that this story is another scandalous myth. From whom did Sir Walter get the story? From young Sheridan, the comedy writer, the most unreliable authority, the most inaccurate of all Swift's biographers. Sheridan has painted this alleged scene with a bold hand and a big brush. If truth be spoken, Sheridan, like Sir

Walter himself, often embellished his pages with pure fabrication. Such is this story, written, be it remembered, *sixty years after* the event which it professes to narrate.

An important question arises here. If Stella really wrote a letter to Vanessa, why was this document not found amongst her other letters and papers which she desired her executors to publish after her death? I am suspicious about this letter. I should like to know who ever saw it? But, even granting that Vanessa received this alleged letter, and granting that Stella did make to her a confession of her marriage to Swift, why was this important, authoritative, and damaging discovery against Swift kept a secret from the world for years afterwards in the hands of his enemies? That does look suspicious.

Is this story, then, a deliberate fabrication of Sheridan's? No. He got it substantially from Lord Orrery. Sheridan, however, added to it, embellished it, enlivened it, and has thus made it an altogether different story. Orrery's account is that Vanessa wrote not to Stella but to Swift, not to ascertain the nature of his connection with Stella, but to ascertain point-blank whether he really intended to make her his wife? Swift carried his reply to her in person, when the scene occurred which Sheridan and Sir Walter have so graphically depicted.

Lord Orrery describes the letter that Vanessa sent to Swift as "a very tender one." It had been obliging if his lordship had informed us when and where he had seen this "tender letter." Strange, is

it not, that this "tender letter" should have had the effect of rousing Swift into a paroxysm of passion, which caused him to ride instantly to Vanessa and enact the scene of violence which Orrery alleges he did?

Was Lord Orrery present at this alleged interview? No. Just Swift and Vanessa. Therefore we must receive with caution an account of an interview when no third party was present, more especially from such a man as Lord Orrery. Who then informed his lordship? It was utterly impossible to have been Vanessa, for she was dead many years before he knew Swift. It is equally impossible to imagine that Swift could inform him. Who then was his lordship's informant? He quotes none. I, therefore, decline to accept his statement regarding that of which he personally knew nothing. But, even granting that he had been present at the pretended interview—knowing how untruthful his lordship is as a witness, how incapable he is as a biographer, and how malicious he is as a man—I would still decline to accept his statement without the support of the strongest collateral evidence.

Therefore, as Orrery was not present at the alleged interview himself, and has produced no evidence in support of his statement, I dismiss his lordship's story as incredible.

It is highly probable, however, that Vanessa, in her infatuation, sent Swift a letter which, from its nature, might arouse his suspicion that its warmth was caused by something else than love. After

Vanessa's messenger had delivered the missive into Swift's hand, to test his suspicion, it is just possible that Swift might call for his horse, ride to Marley Abbey, enter Vanessa's parlour unannounced, and find her in a state unfit to receive him, or any other human being; that, disgusted at the sight, he might indeed turn upon his heel, and without speaking a word, might leave the Abbey, remount his horse, gallop back to his Deanery, and never see her more. Amidst much uncertainty, this at least is sure, that Swift's connection with Vanessa was broken by him, at last, abruptly and in anger.

Sir Walter Scott's next assertion, which is also taken from Sheridan, is, that on hearing of Vanessa's death Swift "retreated in an agony of self-reproach and remorse into the South of Ireland, where he spent two months without the place of his abode being known to any one." This account of Swift's hurried flight, on the news of Vanessa's death, is notoriously untrue. Instead of Swift quitting the house, as Sheridan says, "without letting any mortal know to what part of the world he had gone," we find him, some time before he started on his journey, writing to Mr. Cope*: "I have for some years intended a Southern journey, and this summer is fixed for it, and I hope to set out in ten days." He also sends a message to Dr. Jinny, who had promised to be his companion, as to the day he would start, and as to his intention of paying a visit to the Bishop at Clonfert.

* 11th May, 1723.

states, upon what authority I know not, "that Vanessa, like Ariadne, devoted herself to Bacchus." It is difficult now to verify a story of a century and a half ago; but if true, might it not tend to dispel the last gleam of that aureole of brightness which he once threw around this brilliant girl? Poor Vanessa was like the moth which is attracted to the blazing light, flutters around it, and is at last consumed. Is it quite fair to blame the light for that?

On the authority of Lords Orrery, Jeffrey, and Macaulay, for generations the world has unjustly believed that the story of Swift's marriage with Stella was the cause of Vanessa's death, and that his cruel refusal to acknowledge that marriage to the world was the cause of Stella's death. But I have proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Swift was not married to Stella, and that this marriage story is a scandalous myth. Therefore, the heaviest indictment against the character of Swift falls to the ground.

After all, it matters nothing to any human being whether Swift was married to Stella or engaged to Vanessa; but it does matter—matters much—whether the name of a great and good man is to go down the ages branded with eternal ignominy at the bidding of three arrogant literary lords, who, unhappily for the cause of truth and justice, have gained the world's credulous ear.

If I have been successful in clearing the innocent "from the imputation of guilt," I shall feel that my work has not been in vain.

CHAPTER IV.

SWIFT: THE MAN OF SOCIETY.

DURING his residence in London Swift mingled in brilliant society. His position as a Church dignitary gave him entrance, and his charming personality welcome, to the Royal Palace, where Queen Caroline, when Princess of Wales, would invite him twice a week. In that strange Journal to Stella—"the most wonderful that ever threw light on the history of a man of genius"—we see Swift moving in the brilliant society of a century and a half ago more vividly than any of his contemporaries could. In the early morning we see him hurrying away to transact State business at the breakfast-table of St. John. At noon in the Court of Requests, turning away from a lord to speak to the meanest of his acquaintances. In the afternoon chattering over a cup of tea with the Duchesses of Hamilton and Ormond, bantering Lady Masham and teasing Lady Betty Germain, the play-mate of his Dublin Castle days. In the evening leaving the gay and luxurious dinner-table of the Premier to sup with Congreve, to crack brilliant jokes, and then hurrying home to write, with the same pen, a Royal Speech to be read from the

Throne, and a beggar's ballad to be sung from the street. Not only does this strange Journal give us a vivid picture of Swift, but of all his contemporaries. Queen Anne and her courtiers, powerful statesmen, warriors, poets, men of wit, and men of fashion relive again, and we mingle with them, which makes it for us one of the most fascinating periods in our history. In that gay throng Swift mingled, and was the greatest of them all. I must leave this Royal and aristocratic circle to trace Swift's connection with yet more illustrious companions—the men who have given to the Augustan age of English literature enduring fame.

The first is

ADDISON.

Addison, Swift's friend, was a wit, a scholar, a statesman, a poet, a charming writer, and an excellent Christian, but a little too fond of wine. Had it not been for this little peccadillo, Joseph Addison would almost have been faultless. Like the most of great men's, his career was a chequered one. His first intention was to enter the clerical profession. Charles Montague, who had a high idea of his talents, interfered. "The State," he said, "could not at that time spare to the Church such a man as Addison. I am called an enemy of the Church; but I will never do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it." Charles Montague was wrong. Addison would have made an admirable Bishop,

proach him. Next day no less a man than the Chancellor of the Exchequer is despatched by the Premier as his ambassador to negotiate with Addison, whom he found lodged in a garret, up a rickety flight of stairs, in Haymarket—a circumstance over which old Samuel Johnson makes merry. Addison at once undertook the task. When the "Campaign" was finished, he carried it to Godolphin for his approbation. Lord Macaulay hints that the poem was no great affair.* Anyhow, it served its purpose. The Premier and the nation received it with rapturous applause. The celebration of the Blenheim victory was at least a victory for Addison. It at once vaulted him into a Commissionership worth £200 per annum, with the promise of better to follow. And better did follow, and that rapidly, as all the world knows. Does some reader ask what has this to do with Swift? Much, my reader, much. It was Swift that made this victory for Addison possible. It was Swift that, indirectly, dragged Addison from his garret to be a Secretary of State. It was Swift that first taught Ministers of State that literature was a formidable engine of political warfare. Three years before the "Campaign" was called for, Swift had written a pamphlet that created a furore in the nation. It created "a stream of tendency" that compelled the Ministry of that day to change their tactics. It was this identical pamphlet that made Lord Somers and this same Lord Halifax Swift's

* It pleases us less, on the whole, than the "Epistle to Halifax." Macaulay's "Essays," page 332.

me fall in so with the Ministry; but I love him still as much as ever, though we seldom meet."

Swift had proved that he loved him still by using his powerful influence on his behalf with the Tory Government at the downfall of the Whigs a month before, so that he was suffered to retain the Keepership of the Records in the Tower, an Irish place worth £400 a year.

In January, 1710–11, Swift says: "I called at the coffee-house, where I had not been in a week, and talked coldly awhile with Mr. Addison. All our friendship and dearness are off; we are civil acquaintance, talk words, of course, of when we shall meet, and that's all. Is it not odd?" I think he might fairly have asked, after what he had done for him, Is it not ungrateful? Many such entries follow; but on September 14, 1711, the record is: "This evening I met Addison and Pastoral Philips in the Park, and supped with them in Addison's lodgings. We were very good company, and I yet know no man half so agreeable to me as he is. I sat with them till twelve."

Addison was one of the most inveterate club men of his day. He established Button's; there was his throne, there met his little senate, and there he gave them nightly laws. Although he bowed the knee with reverence and admiration before the genius of Swift, yet he could brook no brother poet near his throne. Strange, is it not, that Addison should passionately desire to be immortalised as a great poet —which he was not—rather than as a great prose-

writer, which he was. With Swift he frequented the Scribblers' Club, composed of the greatest wits and statesmen of the day. But to see Addison at his best you must see him with Swift alone; but few had that privilege. It is on record that when Swift and Addison conversed together, neither of them desired a third.

Addison, like Swift, was loving and beloved, and had a tender conscience. When Addison lay a-dying he sent for Gay, told him that he had done him an injury, which was unknown to Gay, and asked his pardon. It is recorded by Lord Warwick, that Addison was peevish, and jealous, and fickle in friendship. This at least we know, that with the exception of a short interruption caused by politics, the friendship of Jonathan Swift and Joseph Addison was strong and steadfast to the close of life.

It is one of the most pleasing memories in the life of Addison, that when Queen Anne died, and the Tory Administration gave place to the Whig, no sooner had Addison arrived at Dublin Castle, as Secretary of State, than he went direct to the Deanery of St. Patrick's to shake hands with Swift, his great but fallen rival.

Swift and Addison had much in common. Both were brilliant prose writers. Both were famous humorists. Both were compassionate and kind. Both had innumerable detractors. Both had immense fame, and left behind them, when they died, a pure and unsullied name. Yet how different!

Swift was a fiery comet; Addison, a gentle star; Swift, a fury; Addison, calm and serene; Swift, stemming the Mississippi of falsehood and misrepresentation; Addison, gently floating down the stream; Swift lived in storm; Addison in sunshine; Swift was soured by disappointment; Addison was radiant with prosperity; Swift burned with *sæva indignatio* against oppression and wrong; Addison with a quiet protest accommodating himself to the things that were; Swift had a contempt for the opinion of humanity; Addison had a passion for its applause; Swift died alone in the dreary Deanery of St. Patrick's, surrounded by strangers; Addison in Holland House, surrounded by his wife, the Countess and her son, Lord Warwick, who had come to see how a Christian could die. How strange the irony of fate!

Swift "a king, able to rule in any time or empire"; Addison fit to grace the Bench of Bishops; yet Swift goes to Ireland as a Dean, and Addison as a Minister of State.

Another of Swift's literary friends was

STEELE.

Steele loved Swift and venerated Addison. Pope says that they used to play a little upon Dick Steele, but he always took it good-naturedly. He was a charming writer, but a rollicking, reckless fellow, generally deep in debt and drink. Johnson declared to Boswell that no man was perfectly happy in the present unless drunk. If that assertion is correct—

which we doubt—then Steele must frequently have been supremely happy. Swift, in his Journal, informs Stella that Dick was governed by his wife Prue. She might rule him in some things; but she had little control over his drinking propensities, as is evident from the following characteristic notes:

MY DEAR PRUE,

Your pretty letter, and so much good nature and kindness, which I received yesterday, is a perfect pleasure to me.

I am, dear Prue, a little in drink; but at all times

Your faithful Husband,

RICHARD STEELE.

DEAR PRUE,

If you do not hear from me before three to-morrow afternoon, believe I am too fuddled to observe your orders; but, however, know me to be

Your most faithful and affectionate

RICHARD STEELE.

I am very sick with too much wine last night.

In another note he excuses his coming home, "invited to supper to Mr. Boyle's."

"Dear Prue," he says, on this occasion, "do not send after me, for I shall be ridiculous."

Swift loved and clung to him, and protected him until his recklessness and dissoluteness estranged him, and his scurrility and ingratitude disgusted him. Thackeray says that Swift shrank away from all affections, sooner or later. These words are not true. Harley, Bolingbroke, Pope, and scores of others were his staunchest friends, between whom, during a long life, not a cloud intervened to mar their affection—an affection which even death could not sever. It

is true that the friendship between Swift and Steele was broken; but that was not Swift's fault, but Steele's, which the following letter proves:

To MR. ADDISON.

May 13th, 1713.

I was told yesterday, by several persons, that Mr. Steele had reflected upon me in his *Guardian*; which I could hardly believe, until, sending for the paper of the day, I found he had in several parts of it insinuated, with the utmost malice, that I was author of *The Examiner*; and abused me in the grossest manner he could possibly invent, and set his name to what he had written. Now, sir, if I am not the author of *The Examiner*, how will Mr. Steele be able to defend himself from the imputation of the highest degree of baseness, ingratitude, and injustice? Is he so ignorant of my temper and of my style? Has he never heard that the author of *The Examiner* (to whom I am altogether a stranger) did, a month or two ago, vindicate me from having any concern in it? Should not Mr. Steele have first expostulated with me as a friend? Have I deserved this usage from Mr. Steele, who knows very well that my Lord Treasurer has kept him in his employment, upon my entreaty and intercession! My Lord Chancellor and Lord Bolingbroke will be witnesses how I was reproached by my Lord Treasurer upon the ill returns Mr. Steele made to his lordship's indulgence, etc.

Swift forgave Steele's ingratitude, but never forgot it. A great deal too much has been made of this quarrel, and Swift has been unjustly blamed for it. Swift and Steele were not the only two literary men who quarrelled in that age. Thackeray might have told us that Addison, his favourite, quarrelled with Pope, and Pope lampooned Addison; but Swift remained to the end the friend of both. Shortly after this Steele was again unfortunate in rousing the wrath of the great Dean. Steele wrote a political

CONGREVE.

William Congreve, literary dandy, was another of Swift's friends. He was one of the most polite, pleasing, and well-bred men of all Swift's acquaintance. Swift had a deep regard and affection for him. They were both educated at the same old School of Kilkenny, and also at the same College in Dublin. From the University Congreve went to the Middle Temple in London to study law, which, fortunately for himself, he soon renounced and took to the writing of comedy. His first play, *The Old Bachelor*, had the good fortune to attract the notice of Charles Montague, Lord Halifax, who posed as the Whig patron of literary men, and who at once provided for him. To this Swift refers in his Satire:

> Thus Congreve spent in writing plays,
> And one poor office, half his days,
> While Montague, who claim'd the station,
> To be Mæcenas of the nation,
> For poets open table kept,
> But ne'er considered where they slept.
> Himself as rich as fifty Jews,
> Was easy though they wanted shoes;
> And crazy Congreve scarce could spare
> A shilling to discharge his chair,
> Till prudence taught him to appeal
> From Pæan's fire to party zeal;
> Not owing to his happy vein,
> The fortunes of his latter scene,
> Took proper principles to thrive,
> And so might every dunce alive.

This is too severe of Swift, for Montague and the Whig Government provided for Congreve in a handsome manner. His life was a triumph from the

In his preface to "The Four Last Years of Queen Anne" Swift says: "I preserved several of the opposite party in their employments who were persons of wit and learning, especially Mr. Addison and Mr. Congreve. Mr. Steele might have been safe enough if his continually repeated indiscretions and a zeal mingled with scurrilities had not forfeited all title to lenity." In his Journal to Stella, of date 22nd June, 1711, the record is: "I saw Will Congreve attending at the Treasury, by order, with his brethren the Commissioners of the wine licenses. I had often mentioned him with kindness to the Lord Treasurer, and Congreve told me that after they had answered to what they were sent for, my Lord called him privately and spoke to him with great kindness, promising his protection, etc. The poor man said that he had been used so ill of late years that he was quite astonished at my Lord's goodness, etc., and desired me to tell my Lord so, which I did this evening, and recommended him heartily. My Lord assured me that he esteemed him very much, and would be always kind to him; that what he said to him was to make Congreve easy, because he knew people talked as if his Lordship designed to turn everybody out, and particularly Congreve, which indeed was true, for the poor man told me he apprehended it. As I left my Lord Treasurer I called on Congreve, knowing where he dined, and told him what had passed between my Lord and me; so I have made a worthy man easy, and that is a good day's work."

of Ancestors at Fleetdutch; it is well enough, and shall be printed in two or three days, and if you read those kind of things this will divert you. It is now between ten and eleven, and I am going to bed."

Swift and Congreve were ever bosom friends. Not only did Swift introduce Congreve to Lord Oxford, recommend him heartily, and keep him in office, but made the Premier ask him to dinner.

At last, when Congreve died, Swift writes thus to Pope:

Dublin, February 13th, 1728–9.

This renews the grief for the death of our friend, Mr. Congreve, whom I loved from my youth, and who, surely, beside his other talents, was a very agreeable companion. He had the misfortune to squander away a very good constitution in his younger days, and I think a man of sense and merit like him is bound in conscience to preserve his health for the sake of his friends, as well as of himself. Upon his own account I could not much desire the continuance of his life under so much pain and so many infirmities. Years have not hardened me, and I have an addition of weight on my spirits since we lost him, though I saw him seldom; and possibly, if he had lived on, should never have seen him more. I do not only wish, as you ask me, that I was unacquainted with any deserving person, but almost that I never had a friend.

In these letters we have humanity and tenderness. Who after this will say that Jonathan Swift was not a tender-hearted man?

In the list of Swift's friends we must not forget the name of

GAY.

A good-natured, generous-hearted fellow, careless of money and fame, very witty, very sincere, very

In reference to this advice, Thackeray says: "I know of few things more conclusive as to the sincerity of Swift's religion than his advice to poor John Gay to turn clergyman, and look out for a seat on the Bench." Why not? Thackeray hints that the author of *The Beggar's Opera* had not clerical qualifications. Clerical fiddlesticks! What had that to do with the appointment of a Bishop a hundred and fifty years ago? Gay would have made as good a Bishop as nine-tenths of those that were appointed during the first half of last century. After all, Swift did not intend this to be taken seriously. Sydney Smith might have applied his remark to England as well as Scotland. Thackeray cannot have read the letter, or he never would have interpreted it so. If he had read the previous paragraph he would have found Swift's real advice to Gay:

> I am of opinion (says Swift), if you will not be offended, that the surest course would be to get your friend, who lodged in your house, to recommend you to the next Chief Governor who comes over here, for a good Civil employment, or to be one of his secretaries, which your Parliament men are fond of, when there is no room at home.

It is more generous, I think, to accuse Thackeray of ignorance of this paragraph, than of unjust misrepresentation, or incapacity to discern a joke. In this same letter Swift replies to Gay's invitation to visit England, who had given a glowing description how his old friends would receive him:

> What can be the design of your letter [asks Swift] but malice, to wake me out of scurvy sleep, which, however, is better than none? I am toward nine years older since I left

last settled, and in the list I was appointed Gentleman Usher to the Princess Louisa, the youngest princess, which, upon account that I am so far advanced in life, I have declined accepting; and I have endeavoured, in the best manner I could, to make my excuses by a letter to Her Majesty. So now all my expectations are vanished, and I have no prospect but in depending wholly upon myself and my own conduct.

You remember you were advising me to go into Newgate to finish my scenes the more correctly. I now think I shall, for I have no attendance to hinder me.

Swift replies:

I entirely approve your refusal of that employment* and your writing to the Queen. I am perfectly confident you have a keen enemy in the Ministry—Sir Robert Walpole; God forgive him, but not till he puts himself in a state to be forgiven. I have known Courts these thirty-six years, and know they differ; but in some things they are extremely consistent. First, in the trite old maxim of a Minister's never forgiving those he hath injured. Secondly, in the insincerity of those who would be thought the best friends. Thirdly, in the love of fawning, cringing, and tale-bearing. Fourthly, in sacrificing those whom we really wish well to a point of interest or intrigue. Fifthly, in keeping everything worth taking for those who can do service or disservice.

* Swift in his epistle to Gay asks:

How could you, Gay, disgrace the Muse's train
To serve a tasteless Court twelve years in vain?
Fain would I think our female friend[1] sincere,
Till Bob[2], the Poet's foe, possessed her ear.
Did female virtue e'er so high ascend
To lose an inch of favour for a friend?
Say, had the Court no better place to choose
For thee, than make a dry nurse of thy Muse?
How cheaply had thy liberty been sold,
To squire a Royal girl of two years old;
In infant strings her infant steps to guide,
Or with her go-cart amble, side by side?

[1] The Countess of Suffolk. Vol. viii. p. 114.
[2] Sir Robert Walpole.

the first night of it, in great uncertainty of the event, till we were very much encouraged by overhearing the Duke of Argyle, who sat in the next box to us, say: "It will do, it must do; I see it in the eyes of them." This was a good while before the first act was over, and so gave us ease soon; for the Duke, besides his own good taste, has a more particular research than any one now living in discovering the taste of the public. He was quite right in this, as usual; the good nature of the audience appeared stronger and stronger every act, and ended in a clamour of applause.

The Beggar's Opera was accepted and produced by Rich, then manager of Covent Garden Theatre. The unprecedented run it had, caused Swift to remark that "it made Gay *rich*, and Rich *gay*."

Says Cowper to Unwin, in 1783: "What can be prettier than Gay's ballad (or rather Swift's, Arbuthnot's, Pope's, and Gay's) in the—'What d'ye call it'—''Twas when the seas were roaring'? I have been well informed that they all contributed." This statement is not incompatible with Pope's, that *The Beggar's Opera, quâ* Opera, was really wholly Gay's. It is not unlikely that the four living together in the same villa might contribute to this ballad, which, being one of the finest in the English language, I shall quote:

'Twas when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind,
A damsel lay deploring,
All on a rock reclined;
Wide o'er the foaming billows
She cast a wistful look,
Her head was crowned with willows,
That trembled o'er the brook.

Twelve months are gone and over,
And nine long tedious days.

I wish you had £100 a year more for horses [he continues]. I hope, when you are rich enough, you will have some little economy of your own in town and country, and be able to give your friend a pint of wine, for the domestic season of life will come on. I writ lately to Mr. Pope, I wish you had a little villa in his neighbourhood; but you are yet too volatile, and any lady, with a coach and six horses, would carry you to Japan.

In another letter Swift writes:

If your ramble was on horseback, I am glad of it, on account of your health; but I know your arts of patching up a journey between stage coaches and friends' coaches, for you are as arrant a cockney as any hosier in Cheapside. One clean shirt, with two cravats and as many handkerchiefs, make up your equipage, and, as for nightgown, it is clear from Homer that Agamemnon rose without one. I have often had it in my head to put it into yours that you ought to have some great work, or scheme, which may take up seven years to finish, besides two or three under ones, that may add another thousand pounds to your stock, and then I shall be in less pain about you. I know you can find dinners; but you love twelvepenny coaches too well, without considering that the interest of a whole thousand pounds brings you but half-a-crown a day.

This half-crown calculation recalls a story related by Pope, which illustrates a peculiar phase of Swift's humour. Says Pope:

Dr. Swift has an odd, blunt way that is mistaken by strangers for ill nature. 'Tis so odd that there is no describing it but by facts. One evening Gay and I went to see him. You know how intimately we were all acquainted. On our coming in, "Hey-day, gentlemen," says the Doctor; "what's the meaning of this visit? How come you to leave all the great lords, that you are so fond of, to come hither to see a poor Dean?" "Because we would rather see you than any of them." Ay, any one that did not know you so well as I do might believe you. But since you are come, I must get some supper for you, I suppose."

his character by one or two quotations. Sometimes the Duchess wrote the postscript in Gay's letters to Swift; at other times she wrote to him without Gay.

In answer to a conjunct letter of theirs, Swift replies to Mr. Gay: "Your situation is an odd one. The Duchess is your treasurer, and Mr. Pope tells me you are the Duke's." The next part is written to the Duchess:

MADAM,

Since Mr. Gay affirms that you love to have your own way, and since I have the same perfection, I will settle that matter immediately, to prevent those ill consequences that he apprehends. Your Grace shall have your own way in all places, except your own house and the domains about it. I will, likewise, out of my special grace allow you to be in the right against all human kind except myself, and to be never in the wrong but when you differ from me. You shall have a greater privilege in the third article of speaking your mind, which I shall graciously allow you now and then to do even to myself, and only rebuke you when it does not please me. Pray, Madam, have you a clear voice, and will you let me sit at your left hand, at least within three of you? for of two bad ears my right is the best. My groom tells me that he likes your park, but your house is too little. Can the parson of the parish play at backgammon and hold his tongue? Is any one of your women a good nurse, if I should fancy myself sick for four and twenty hours? How many days will you maintain me and my equipage? When these preliminaries are settled, I must be very poor, very sick, or dead, or to the last degree unfortunate, if I do not attend you at Amesbury; for I protest you are the first lady that I ever desired to see since the First of August, 1714.* I dislike nothing in your letter but an affected apology for bad writing, bad spelling, and a bad pen, which you pretend Mr. Gay found fault with; wherein you affront Mr. Gay, you

* The day of Queen Anne's death, when all hope of more preferment was lost.

Swift sometimes amusingly uses this imperiousness to Gay. In reply to a letter of Gay's, Swift says:

> You are the silliest lover in Christendom. If you like ——, why do you not command her to take you? If she does not, she is not worth pursuing. You do her too much honour. She has neither sense nor taste if she dares to refuse you, though she had ten thousand pounds.

In another of his letters Swift commands Gay to walk more and eat less; and in his Journal he says to Stella: "Gay and I walk in the Park, he to make himself lean, and I to make myself fat." Indeed, all the poets of the Augustan age, except Pope and Swift, who can hardly be called a poet, were fat. Poor Gay died young and suddenly. Pope writes to Swift thus:

> December 5th, 1732.
>
> One of the nearest and longest ties I have ever had is broken, all on a sudden, by the unfortunate death of poor Mr. Gay. An inflammatory fever carried him out of this life in three days. He asked of you a few hours before, when in acute torment. Good God! how often are we to die before we go off this stage? In every friend we lose a part of ourselves, and the best part. God keep those we have left. Few are worth praying for, and one's self least of all.

This letter Swift refused for five days to open, from a strange inner consciousness that it foreboded evil.

Gay was interred with all the pomp of a peer of the realm in Westminster Abbey, the burial-place of our mighty dead. The Duke of Queensberry erected for him a splendid monument.

Like Swift's, the happiest period of Pope's life was when struggling for fame. After having gained it they were not satisfied. Johnson says that "Pope's first work in life was making verses, and his last was improving them." That masterpiece of man, "The Dunciad," was written by Pope at Swift's request. Pope, writing to Dr. Sheridan, in 1728, says that "The Dunciad" had never been writ but at Swift's request and for his deafness; "for had he been able to converse with me, do you think I had used my time so ill?"

How much of "The Dunciad" was really Swift's we can never know. This, however, we do know, that Pope had the gift of appropriation—the faculty of picking other men's brains.

Pope writes to Swift: "The inscription to 'The Dunciad' is now printed and inserted in the poem. Do you care I should say anything further how much that poem is yours? since, certainly, without you it had never been."

Of course Swift, who had a supreme contempt either for literary or any other kind of fame, and who sent his own writings into the world anonymously, did not wish his name flaunted before the world as an assistant writer of "The Dunciad." None knew that better than Pope. Swift, in his next letter to Pope, ignores the question entirely. There can be no doubt, however, that during Swift's stay with Pope he not only suggested but taught the little wasp of Twickenham how to use his sting with effect against the Grub Street critics. Swift warned Pope not to

are too misanthropical to be the conception of Pope. Swift, however unjust, was sincere in his hatred of the world as a whole. Pope's hatred of the world was affectation and a mere mimicry of Swift. Pope hated individuals; Swift hated the world, but loved individuals. "O, if the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots, I would burn my travels." But, however Swift and Pope hated the world, they loved each other with a love strong as death. In all history there is nothing finer than the love they bore for one another. They had much in common. Swift was the greatest prose satirist, and Pope the greatest poetic satirist, of all times. It is a high privilege to listen to them, as they talk to each other in their letters, or at their club, or the dinner-table. Their letters to each other are delightful. I shall endeavour to arrange a few extracts from those letters in the form of a dialogue.

POPE.—I look upon a friend in Ireland as upon a friend in the other world, whom, properly speaking, I believe constantly well disposed toward me, and ready to do me all the good he can in that state of separation, though I hear nothing from him, and make addresses to him very rarely. A Protestant divine cannot take it amiss that I treat him in the same manner with my patron saint.*

SWIFT.—You are an ill Catholic, or a worse geographer, for I can assure you Ireland is not Paradise, and I appeal, even to any Spanish divine, whether addresses were ever made to a friend in hell or purgatory.

POPE.—At Button's it is reported you are gone to Hanover. Others apprehend some dangerous State treatise from your retirement, and a wit, who affects to imitate Balzac, says that the Ministry was like those heathens of old, who received their oracles from the woods. I whisper that you have gone to meet

* Pope was a Roman Catholic.

friends in England, I am in the right to keep myself here. "Non sum qualis eram."* I left you in a period of life when one year does more execution than three of yours, to which, if you add the dulness of air, and of the people, it will make a terrible sum. I have no very strong faith in your pretenders to retirement; you are not of an age for it, nor have gone through either good or bad fortune enough to go into a corner, and form conclusions *de contemptu mundi fuga Sæculi*,† unless a poet grows weary of too much applause as Ministers do of too much weight of business.

POPE.—My friendships are increased by new ones; yet, no part of the warmth I felt for the old is diminished. Aversions I have none, but to knaves; for fools I have learned to bear with, and such I cannot be commonly civil to, for I think those men are next to knaves who converse with them.

The top pleasure of my life is one I learned from you, both how to gain and how to use the freedom of friendship with men much my superiors. To have pleased great men, according to Horace, is a praise; but not to have flattered them, and yet not have displeased them, is a greater.

SWIFT.—Your notions of friendship are new to me. I believe every man is born with his quantum, and he cannot give to one without robbing another. I very well know to whom I would give the first place in my friendship; but they are not in the way. I am condemned to another scene, and therefore I distribute it in pennyworths to those about me, and who displease me least, and should do the same to my fellow-prisoners if I were condemned to jail. I can likewise tolerate knaves much better than fools, because their knavery does me no hurt in the commerce I have met with them; which, however, I own is more dangerous, though not so troublesome as that of fools. I have often endeavoured to establish a friendship among all men of genius, and would fain have done it. They are seldom above three or four contemporaries, and if they would be united would drive the world before them.

POPE.—After so many dispersions and so many divisions, two or three of us may yet be gathered together, not to plot,

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* "I am not what I was."

† Concerning the contempt of the world and the retirement from public business.

never make me easy as you promise. It must be Riches, which answers all descriptions. I am glad she visits you; but my voice is so weak that I doubt she will never hear me.

POPE.—Dr. Arbuthnot is, at this time, ill of a very dangerous distemper. He bids me tell you (and I write this by him) he lives or dies your faithful friend, and one reason he has to desire a little longer life is the wish to see you once more.

SWIFT.—Dr. Arbuthnot's illness is a very sensible affliction to me, who, by living so long out of the world, have lost that hardness of heart contracted by years and general conversation. I am daily losing friends, and neither seeking nor getting others. Oh! if the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots in it, I would burn my travels; but, however, he is not without fault, I pray God, protect him, for he is an excellent Christian, though not a Catholic.

POPE.—I am sorry poor P——* is not promoted in this age, for certainly, if his reward be of the next, he is of all poets the most miserable. My name is as bad a one as yours, and hated by all bad people, from Hopkins and Sternhold to Gildon and Cibber.

SWIFT.—Take care the bad poets do not outwit you, as they have served the good ones in every age, whom they have provoked to transmit their names to posterity. Mavius is as well known as Virgil, and Gildon will be as well known as you if his name gets into your verses; and as to the difference between good and bad fame it is a perfect trifle.

POPE.—I have often imagined to myself that, if ever all of us meet again—after so many varieties and changes; after so much of the old world and old man is altered, scarce a single thought of the one, any more than a single atom of the other, remains just the same.—I have fancied, I say, that we should meet like the righteous in the Millennium, quite in peace, divested of all our former passions, smiling at our past follies, and content to enjoy the kingdom of the just in tranquility.

SWIFT.—To hear boys like you talk of Millenniums and tranquility! I am older by thirty years, Lord Bolingbroke by twenty, and you but by ten, than when we last were together. And we should differ more than ever—you coquetting a maid of honour, my Lord looking on, to see how the gamesters play, and

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* Ambrose Philips.

giddiness would not alone have done it, if that unsociable, comfortless deafness had not quite tired me. And I believe I should have returned from the inn if I had not feared it was only a short intermission, and the year was late, and my license expiring. Surely, beside all other faults, I should be a very ill judge to doubt your friendship and kindness. But it has pleased God that you are not in a state of health to be mortified with the care and sickness of a friend. Two sick friends never did well together. Such an office is fitter for servants and humble companions, to whom it is wholly indifferent whether we give them trouble or not. The case would be quite otherwise if you were with me. You could refuse to see anybody. And here is a large house where we need not hear each other, if we were both sick. I have a race of orderly, elderly people of both sexes at command, who are of no consequence, and have gifts proper for attending us; who can bawl when I am deaf, and tread softly when I am only giddy and would sleep.

POPE.—The inscription to The Dunciad is now printed and inserted in the poem. Do you care I should say anything further how much that poem is yours, since certainly without you it had never been?

Swift's next letter does not reply to this question, being principally a lamentation over the death of poor Congreve.

POPE.—It pleases me that you received my books at last; but you have never once told me if you approve the whole or disapprove of some parts of the commentary. It was my principal aim, in the entire work, to perpetuate the friendship between us, and to show that the friends or the enemies of one were the friends or enemies of the other. If in any particular anything be stated or mentioned, in a different manner from what you like, pray tell me freely, that the new edition, now coming out here, may have it rectified.

SWIFT.—You were so careful of sending me The Dunciad that I have received five of them, and have pleased four friends. I am one of everybody who approve every part of it, text and comment, but am one abstracted from everybody in the happiness of being recorded your friend, while wit, and humour, and politeness shall have any memorial among us.

POPE.—I hope as you do that we shall meet in a more durable and more satisfactory state; but the less sure I am of that, the more I would indulge it in this.

SWIFT.—If it please God to restore me to my health, I shall readily make a third journey; if not we must part as all human creatures have parted.

POPE.—God forbid that I should expect you to make a voyage that would in the least affect your health.

Neither would I change you, my absent friend, for the best present friend round the globe.

SWIFT.—I look upon you as an estate from which I receive my best annual rents, although I am never to see it.

Among his last letters Swift writes to Pope: "I have nobody now left but you. Pray be so kind as to outlive me, and then die as soon as you please; but without pain, and let us meet in a better place."

In his correspondence, whether with Ministers of State or men of literature, Swift's letters are the cleverest and best. There is an unmistakable manly ring about them—a touch, to be sure, of domineering and conscious superiority, but withal full of brilliant wit and practical wisdom. Even his cynicism is softened with quaint humour. A wonderful intermingling of severity and tenderness appears. "Drown the world," writes Swift to Pope. "I am not content with despising it. I would anger it if I could;" but adds pathetically, "Oh, if the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots I would burn my Travels."

Time and space forbid further quotation from this glorious record of a bygone age. We have made these quotations, not merely because they are pleasing and delightful reading, but as illustrative of certain

phases of Swift's character which otherwise could not have been portrayed so vividly.

Although Swift loved Pope mightily, he disliked his pettiness, his vanity, and want of generosity. Pope has been severely blamed for his mean trickery in publishing the "Miscellany." This condemnation is too severe. I should rather be inclined to ascribe it to Pope's inordinate vanity that every fragment of his literary work, even to his letters, should be published.

A shrewd thinker remarks it was well that the latter intercourse of Pope and Swift became no closer than it was. The sudden breaking away of Swift from Pope, in *1727*, may have deeper meaning than that which Swift assigned. Swift, however, was never deceitful, either in praise or blame, and the praise that he bestows upon him proves that he never had any distrust of Pope.

Thackeray says that "Swift taught Pope mischief." He never said a truer thing.

One striking characteristic of Swift was his mastery over the spirits of men. He conceived a daring scheme—daring even for his brilliant intellect—that one or two geniuses combined could drive the world before them. Swift did it. By force of genius he became for a time the dictator of the politics of England.

Apart from politics, however, let us trace the working of this scheme in literature. He writes the "Tale of a Tub," perhaps the severest prose satire in any language. Not satisfied with that, he writes

And so obliging that he ne'er obliged,
Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
And sit attentive to his own applause.
While wits and templars every sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise.
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep if Atticus were he?

Pope adds, significantly: "Addison, after I sent him that, treated me very civilly ever afterwards." Need we wonder? Pope truly said: "Satire's my weapon."

Another at whom Swift took offence was Lady Suffolk, the supposed mistress of George II. Says Leigh Hunt: "She had offended Pope by not doing something for Swift, which, according to the Dean and his friends, she had led him to believe she would."

Pope accordingly satirised her thus:

Yet Chloe sure was formed without a spot:
Nature in her then erred not, but forgot.
With every pleasing, every prudent part,
Say, what can Chloe want? She wants a heart.

Another with whom Swift quarrelled was Thomas, Earl of Wharton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whose character he portrays thus:

The Earl, by the force of a wonderful constitution, has some years passed the greatest climacteric, without any visible effects of old age, either on his body or his mind, and in spite of a continual prostitution to those vices which usually wear out both. Whether he walks, or whistles, or swears, or talks bawdy, or calls names, he acquits himself in each beyond a Templar of three years' standing. With the same grace, and in the same style, he will rattle his coachman in the midst of the street, where he is Governor of the Kingdom; and all this is without consequence, because it is in his character, and what everybody expects. The ends he attains by lying appear to be

Born with what e'er could win it from the wise,
Women or fools must like him, or he dies.
Though wondering Senates hung on all he spoke,
The club must bawl him master of the joke;
Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot, too,
Then turn repentant, and his God adores
With the same spirit that he drinks and wh—s.

Says Lord Macaulay: "Wharton was the most universal villain that I ever knew."

Swift, it would seem, had a misunderstanding with James Bridges, Duke of Chandos, about the time he received the dukedom, or, as the Dean puts it at the beginning of an epigram:

James Bridges and the Dean had long been friends;
James is beduked—of course, their friendship ends.
And sure the Dean deserved a sharp rebuke,
From knowing James, to boast he knows the Duke.

Pope once more espouses Swift's side, and satirises the place and person of the Duke thus:

At Timon's villa let us pass a day,
Where all cry out what sums are thrown away:
Who but must laugh the master when he sees
A puny insect shivering at a breeze.

I think these quotations sufficiently prove that to quarrel with Swift was to quarrel with Pope. As satirists, Swift and Pope were the greatest in ancient or modern times. Rome had its Horace and Juvenal; France had its Boileau and Voltaire; but Great Britain had its Swift and Pope. "The influence of their satire was subtle and far-reaching," says Hannay.

the King, Queen, and Prince crowned me with laurel. You are a very ignorant man; you do not know the figure his name and yours will make hereafter. I do, and will preserve all the memorials I can that I was of your intimacy, "Longo sed proximus intervallo." I will not quarrel with the present age; it has done enough for me in making and keeping you my friends. Do not you be too angry at it. It has done and can do neither of you any manner of harm as long as it has not and cannot burn your works; while those subsist you will both appear the greatest men of the time in spite of Princes, and Ministers, and the wisest in spite of all the errors you may please to commit. Adieu.

Pope writes thus to the Earl of Orrery regarding Swift:

My sincere love for this valuable, indeed incomparable, man will accompany him through life, and pursue his memory, were I to live a hundred lives, as many of his works will live which are absolutely original, unequalled, unexampled. His humanity, his charity, his condescension, his candour, are equal to his wit, and require as good and true a taste to be equally valued.

Such was the admiration and love which this illustrious band of literary brethren bore for one another; nothing grander appears in history.

Pope died in 1744.

Bolingbroke, in Pope's last illness, stood by his chair, and leaning upon it, wept like a child. Shortly before he died, he rose at midnight in delirium, and went to his study and commenced to write. How sad to think that at that moment his friend Swift was, if not a raving madman, at least an imbecile in the dreary Deanery of St. Patrick!

BOLINGBROKE, the brilliant St. John, should naturally, here, have followed Pope as another of

from the charges of a freethinker in its irreligious sense:

> For since the truth of Christianity is as evident as matters of fact, on the belief of which so much depends, ought to be, and agreeable to all our ideas of justice, these freethinkers [such as he had described] must needs be Christians on the best foundation—on that which St. Paul himself established; I think it was St. Paul: "Omnia probate, quod bonum est tenete."

This letter goes far to show the probable nature of the religious conversation over the port and Burgundy. The brilliant St. John was an audacious profligate, but was no fool nor hypocrite. He knew better than to contradict himself before such a man as Swift, who on one occasion told him that he renounced his philosophy because his life belied it. If Bolingbroke was a hypocrite, that alternative equally defends Swift. Thackeray seems not to have known that Bolingbroke, during his boon companionship with Swift, was not the bold speculator in Atheistical argument that he afterwards became, when he retired from politics and power. It was only after his death that his religious views became thoroughly known. Says Johnson: "The coward left half-a-crown to a hungry Scotchman" [Mallet] "to pull the tricker after he was dead." I contend, therefore, that the supposed conversation over "Pope's port or St. John's Burgundy" is highly improbable; and that Mr. Thackeray's reflection on Swift's religious sincerity is, at once, unworthy and unwarrantable.

Thackeray failed to interpret himself to his audience, is it any wonder that he failed to interpret Swift?

I have lingered over the story of Swift's illustrious literary friends and contemporaries, not merely because it is pleasing and a high privilege to mix in such brilliant company, and to listen to such wit and wisdom, but because we can trace through their intercourse with Swift many striking phases of his character which otherwise it would have been impossible for us to have portrayed so vividly. I have also lingered over the story of Swift's bosom friends, who knew him best and longest, to show how *they* worshipped and adored him; and that it should be left to such men as Lord Jeffrey, Lord Macaulay, and Mr. Thackeray—Whigs, all of them—to discover and proclaim to the world, a century after Swift is in his grave, that he was "the epitome of everything that is vile and contemptible in human nature"—an outrageous slander!

This Partridge was a cobbler, and one of a fraternity of quacks who professed to know physic, blood-letting, and astrology. They lived a life of sheer imposture, and were consulted by the credulous, the superstitious, and the ignorant, in high as well as in low society. They were acute enough to keep within the strict letter of the law, and felt safe. Swift, however, was determined to crush them, and he did it most effectually by overwhelming with ridicule the ablest and most plausible of them all. Swift launches his prediction under the *nom de plume* of Bickerstaff, a name which his eye caught on a signboard above the door of a smithy, to which he added the surname of Isaac. With inimitable coolness, precision, and caution, he declares that his only aim is to rescue the sublime art of astrology from a few mean, illiterate traders between us and the stars, who import a yearly stock of nonsense, lies, folly, and impertinence, which they offer to the world as genuine from the planets, though they descend from no greater height than their own brains He next, with admirable gravity, compares his predictions with theirs, and calls private friends to prove that all his predictions for last year, such as the miscarriage at Toulon, and the loss of Admiral Shovel, had been foretold by him, to the day and hour, with unerring certainty. He now begins to predict with a kind of apology.

My first prediction is but a trifle, yet I will mention it to show how ignorant those sottish pretenders to astrology are in their own concerns. It relates to Partridge the almanac-maker.

as hard as he can knock. I open the window, and ask who is there and what he wants.

"I am Ned the sexton," replies he, "and come to know whether the doctor left any orders for a funeral sermon, and where he is to be laid, and whether his grave is to be plain or bricked?"

"Why, sirrah," says I, "you know me well enough; you know I am not dead, and how dare you affront me after this manner?"

"Alack a day, sir," replies the fellow, "why, it is in print, and the whole town knows you are dead. Why, there is Mr. White the joiner is but fitting screws to your coffin. He will be here with it in an instant; he was afraid you would have wanted it before this time."

"Why, sir," says I, "you shall know to-morrow to your cost that I am alive and like to be."

"Why, it is strange, sir," says he, "that you should make such a secret of your death to us, that are your neighbours. It looks as if you had a design to defraud the Church of its dues; and let me tell you, for one that has lived so long by the heavens, that is unhandsomely done."

"Hist, hist," says another rogue that stood by him, "away, Doctor, into your flannel gown as fast as you can, for here is a whole pack of dismals coming to you with their black equipage, and how indecent it will look for you to stand frightening folks at your window when you should have been in your coffin for these three hours."

In short, what with undertakers, embalmers, joiners, sextons, and your d—d clergy hawkers upon a late practitioner in physic and astrology, I got not one wink of sleep that night, nor scarce a moment's rest ever since. But I will keep my temper and proceed with the narrative. I could not stir out of doors for the space of three months after this, but presently one comes up to me in the street:

"Mr. Partridge, that coffin you was last buried in I have not yet been paid for."

"Doctor," cries another dog, "how do you think people can live by making graves for nothing? Next time you die you may even toll the bell yourself for Ned."

A third rogue tips me by the elbow and wonders how I can have the conscience to sneak abroad without paying my funeral

or their lives in their hands. At length one of the gang, Ebenezer Elliston by name, was traced to his lair, caught, tried, and executed. Swift shrewdly foresaw that the execution would have little effect on the fraternity to whom the culprit belonged; that they would witness the execution with stoical indifference, and, enveloping themselves in the confidence of secrecy, would pursue their nefarious work with redoubled energy. Accordingly, on the morning of the execution, a broadsheet was published, entitled, "The last speech and dying words of Ebenezer Elliston, published at his desire for the common good." Ebenezer says that he is not so much sorry for the offence he has given to God and the world as for the bad success of his villainies in bringing him to this untimely end. "I am now going to suffer," he says, "the just punishment for my crimes prescribed by the law of God and man." In order to atone for the crimes he has committed against God and society, he has resolved before he dies to assist the officers of justice in detecting the crimes of others. Accordingly he says: "I have left with an honest man —and, indeed, the only honest man that I was ever acquainted with — the names of all my wicked brethren, the present places of their abode, with a short account of the chief crimes they have committed. . . . I have likewise set down the names of those we call our setters, of the wicked houses we frequent, and of those who receive and buy our stolen goods. I have solemnly charged this honest man, and have received his promise upon

oath, that whenever he hears of any rogue to be tried for robbing or housebreaking, he will look into his list, and if he finds the name there of any thief concerned, to send the whole paper to the Government. Of this I hereby give my late companions fair and public warning, and hope they will take it."

As Elliston was known to have been a man of education, and as the confession showed such knowledge of the ways of thievery, it was not doubted by the fraternity but that it was genuine, and that Elliston had betrayed them. This publication struck alarm into the hearts of the boldest malefactors. In a week the streets were clear of the fraternity. The gang had fled from the city in terror and dismay. Swift, therefore, by a practical joke, performed that which the Lord Lieutenant and his law officers had been powerless to accomplish.

Another humorous incident in the life of Swift is vividly portrayed. In the year 1724, the physicians made application to Parliament to prevent apothecaries dispensing medicines without the prescription of a physician.

The apothecaries, knowing Swift's power as a politician, requested him to write and present a petition in their behalf against the Bill then pending in Parliament. Swift complied, although he was really in favour of the Physicians' Bill, when the following petition was printed and dispersed in the Court of Requests, to the infinite merriment of the physicians and to the consternation of the apothecaries:

Being called upon by several retailers and dispensers of drugs and medicines about town, to use our endeavours against the Bill. In regard of our common interest, and in gratitude to the said retailers and dispensers of medicines which we have always found to be very effectual, we presume to lay the following reasons before the public against the said Bill.

Our practice, which consists chiefly in outward applications, having been always so effectual that none of our patients have been obliged to undergo a second operation, excepting one gentlewoman, who, after her first burial, having burdened her husband with a new brood of posthumous children, her second funeral was by us performed without any farther charges to the said husband of the deceased. And we humbly hope that one single instance of this kind, a misfortune owing merely to the avarice of the sexton in cutting of a ring, will not be imputed to any want of skill or care in our company. We hope it will be considered that there are multitudes of necessitous heirs and penurious parents, persons in pinching circumstances with numerous families of children, wives that have lived long, many robust aged women with great jointures, elder brothers with bad understandings, single heirs of great estates, whereby the collateral line are for ever excluded, reversionary patents, and reversionary promises of preferments, leases upon single lives, and play-debts upon joint lives, and that the persons so aggrieved have no hope of being speedily relieved any other way than by the dispensing of drugs and medicines in the manner they now are—burying alive being judged repugnant to the known laws of this kingdom.

That frequent funerals contribute to preserve the genealogies of families, and the honours conferred by the Crown, which are no where so well illustrated as on this solemn occasion—to maintain necessitous clergy; to enable the clerks to appear in decent habits to officiate on Sundays; to feed the great retinue of sober and melancholy men who appear at the said funerals, and who must starve without constant and regular employment. Moreover, we desire it may be remembered that, by the passing of this Bill, the nobility and gentry will have their old coaches lie upon their hands, which are now employed by our company. And we farther hope that frequent funerals will not be discouraged, as it is by this Bill proposed, it being the only method left of carrying some people to church.

We likewise humbly presume that the interest of the several trades and professions which depend upon ours may be regarded; such as that of hearses, coaches, coffins, epitaphs, and bell-ropes, stone-cutters, feathermen, and bell-ringers, and especially the manufacturers of crapes, and the makers of snuff, who use great quantities of old coffins, and who, considered in the consumption of their drugs, employ the greatest number of hands of any manufacture of the kingdom.

We may imagine with what amazement, if not amusement, the apothecaries listened to the reading of this petition, the most humorous ever penned.

I shall give an illustration of Swift's humour in poetry. Swift had a supreme contempt for soldiers. As a class, he thought the men were grossly immoral, and the officers, in spite of their fine clothes and gay chatter, were an idle, selfish, and illiterate set of men. Accordingly Swift satirises a captain, who arrives on a visit to Sir Arthur Acheson's, in a humorous poem, entitled "The Grand Question Debated." With consummate irony Swift pictures the captain's arrival at the Castle gate (with his regiment), in all his pride and glory, and his insolent, brainless chatter at the dinner-table:

At last comes the troop, by word of command,
Drawn up in our court, when the Captain cries stand;
Your ladyship lifts up the sash to be seen,
For sure I had dizen'd you out like a queen.
The Captain, to show he is proud of the favour,
Looks up to your window and cocks up his beaver;
His beaver is cocked, pray, madam, mark that,
For a Captain of Horse never takes off his hat,
Because he has never a hand that is idle,
For the right holds the sword, the left holds the bridle.
Then flourishes thrice his sword in the air,
As a compliment due to a lady so fair.

He goes on to picture sarcastically the Captain's absurd behaviour at table:

To shorten my tale; for I hate a long story,
The Captain at dinner appears in his glory;
The Dean and the Doctor* have humbled their pride,
For the Captain's entreated to sit by your side.
And because he's their betters you carve for him first;
The parsons for envy are ready to burst.
The servants, amazed, are scarce ever able
To keep off their eyes as they wait at the table;
And Molly and I have thrust in our nose,
To peep at the Captain in all his fine clo'es.
Dear madam, be sure he's a fine spoken man,
Do but hear on the clergy how glibe his tongue ran;
And madam, says he, if such dinners you give,
You'll ne'er want for parsons as long as you live.
I ne'er knew a parson without a good nose,
But the D——'s as welcome wherever he goes.
Mister Curate, for all your grave looks, I'm afraid,
You cast a sheep's eye on her ladyship's maid;
I wish she would lend you her pretty white hand
In mending your cassock and smoothing your band;
For the Dean was so shabby, and looked like a ninny,
That the Captain supposed he was curate to Jinny.
Whenever you see a cassock and gown,
A hundred to one but it covers a clown;
Observe how a parson comes into a room,
. . . . me, he hobbles as bad as my groom.
A scholard when just from his college broke loose,
Can hardly tell how to cry bo to a goose;
To give a young gentleman right education,
The army's the only good school in the nation.

Swift was the greatest humorist of all time. The humorous stories ascribed to Swift would fill a volume. Many of these are apocryphal. Sir Walter Scott and Sheridan have inserted many of

* Doctor Jinny, a clergyman of a neighbouring parish.

SWIFT: THE APHORISTIC PHILOSOPHER.

Aphorisms are the generalised expressions of many human experiences, as doctrines are the crystallised form of the faith of many souls.

Aphorisms will be the literature of the future. "I fancy," says Johnson, "mankind may come in time to write all aphoristically, except in narration; grow weary of preparation and connection and illustration, and all those arts by which a big book is made."

I have thought it worth while to collect a series of aphorisms from the writings of Swift, and have arranged them alphabetically that the work of reference may be an easy one.

These aphorisms exhibit Swift as a polished courtier and man of letters; as aristocrat and democrat; as humorist and joker; as satirist and punster; as a gay roysterer and grave divine; as a practical politician and sententious moralist.

APHORISMS.

DESIRE OF ADULATION.

Love of flattery in most men proceeds from the mean opinion they have of themselves; in women, from the contrary.

PLATONIC AFFECTION.

Violent friendship is much more lasting, a
much engaging as violent love.

THE NECESSITY THAT THE POET SHOULD H
AN AIM.

I do not call him a poet that writes for his div
sion any more than a fiddler who amuses himse
with a violin.—Vol. v. p. 242.

ANCIENTS.

Your business is not to steal from them, but to
improve upon them and make their sentiments your
own; for though I light my candle at my neighbour's
fire, that does not alter the property, or make the
wick, the wax, or the flame, or the whole candle less
my own.—Vol. v. p. 248.

MATRIMONIAL ANGLING.

The reason why so few marriages are happy is
because young ladies spend their time in making
nets, not in making cages.—Vol. v. p. 458.

ANTICIPATION AND RETROSPECTION.

When we desire or solicit anything, our minds
run wholly on the good side or circumstances of it;
when it is obtained, our minds run wholly on the
bad ones.

APPARITIONS.

One argument to prove that the common rela-
tions of ghosts and spectres are generally false, may

be drawn from the opinion held that spirits are never seen by more than one person at a time.

THE CONDESCENSION OF ASPIRATION.

Ambition often puts men upon doing the meanest offices; so climbing is performed in the same posture with creeping.

INTELLECTUAL ASSIMILATION.

If another man's reason fully convinces me it becomes my own reason.

SOCIAL ATTRACTION.

Few are qualified to shine in company; but it is in most men's power to be agreeable.

AUTOCRACY.

Arbitrary power is the natural object of temptation to a prince.—Vol. v. p. 460.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEGINNINGS.

The weakest hand can open a floodgate to drown a country which a thousand cannot stop.

STATE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

Religion seems to have grown an infant with age, and requires miracles to nurse it, as it had in its infancy.

HIGH BREEDING.

Good manners is the art of making every reasonable person in the company easy, and to be easy ourselves.

passion should never prevail over reason.—Vol. v. p. 95.

BARRENNESS OF CONTROVERSY.

Argument, as usually managed, is the worst sort of conversation; as it is generally in books the worst sort of reading.

MONOPOLY OF CONVERSATION.

It is not a fault in company to talk much; but to continue it long is certainly one.—Vol. v. p. 238.

COVETOUSNESS.

A wise man ought to have money in his head, but not in his heart.

CRITICS.

They are at best but the drones of the learned world, who devour the honey, and will not work themselves; and a writer need no more regard them than the moon does the barking of a little senseless cur.—Vol. v. p. 7.

THE RARITY OF LITERARY CULTURE.

A man of letters out of the three professions is almost a prodigy.—Vol. v. p. 109.

THE ENERVATING EFFECTS OF MORAL DEGRADATION.

Nothing more unqualifies a man to act with prudence than a misfortune that is attended with shame and guilt.

THE PREPONDERANCE OF HUMAN EVIL.

All the virtues that have ever been in mankind are to be counted upon a few fingers; but their follies and vices are innumerable, and time adds hourly to the heap.

THE DULNESS OF FALSEHOOD.

As universal a practice as lying is, and as easy a one as it seems, I do not remember to have heard three good lies in all my conversation, even from those who were most celebrated in that faculty.

THE DISADVANTAGES OF FANATICISM.

Violent zeal for truth has a hundred to one odds to be either petulancy, ambition, or pride.

THE SOCIAL FAVOURITE.

A nice man is a man of nasty ideas.

RETICENCE OF FEELING.

Conceal your esteem and love in your own breast, and reserve your kind looks and language for private hours.—Vol. v. p. 135.

FREETHINKERS.

Ignorance and vice are two ingredients absolutely necessary in the composition of those you generally call Freethinkers, who, in propriety of speech, are no thinkers at all.—Vol. v. p. 106.

INTRACTABLENESS OF GENIUS.

Men of great parts are often unfortunate in the management of public business, because they are apt to go out of the common road by the quickness of their imagination.

SIGN OF GENIUS.

When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign—that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.

SPONTANEITY OF GENIUS.

Flowers of wit ought to spring, as those in a garden do, from their own root and stem, without foreign assistance.—Vol. v. p. 248.

GESTURE.

Action in one that speaks in public is the same thing as a good mien in ordinary life.—Vol. v. p. 157.

THE BURDEN OF GRATITUDE.

Nothing is so great a discouragement to generous persons as the fear of being worried by acknowledgments.—Vol. xi. p. 237.

CLERICAL GRAVITY.

Levity is the last crime the world will pardon in a clergyman.—Vol. v. p. 113.

THE INGREDIENTS OF HAPPINESS.

Riches are nine parts in ten of all that is good in life, and health is the tenth.

HESITATION.

It is a miserable thing to live in suspense; it is the life of a spider.

HYPOCHONDRIA.

Imaginary evils soon become real ones by indulging our reflections on them.

THE POWER OF THE IDEAL.

Fiction has mighty advantages over truth, because imagination can build nobler scenes than fortune or nature will be at expense to furnish.

THE POWER OF ILLUSION.

Fading and insipid do all objects accost us that are not conveyed in the vehicle of delusion.

FOLLY OF IMPIETY.

Those who are against religion must needs be fools; and therefore we read that of all animals God refused the first-born of an ass.

INGRATITUDE.

He that calls a man ungrateful, sums up all the evil that a man can be guilty of.—Vol. v. p. 5.

MEANNESS OF FEMALE INTELLECT.

A very little wit is valued in a woman, as we are pleased with a few words spoken plain by a parrot.

THE INADEQUACY OF LAW.

Laws are like cobwebs, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through.

THE POWER OF A FUTURE LIFE.

There are two kinds of immortality—that which the soul really enjoys after this life, and that imaginary existence by which men live in their fame and reputation. The best and greatest actions have proceeded from the prospect of the one or the other of these.—Vol. v. p. 166.

THE IMPERMANENCE OF LIFE.

There is nothing constant in this world but inconstancy.—Vol. v. p. 8.

MAKING THE BEST OF LIFE.

A man duly wise creams off nature, leaving the sour and the dregs for philosophy and reason to lap up.

DESIRE OF LONGEVITY.

Every man desires to live long, but no man would be old.

NECESSITY OF RESPECT TO LOVE.

Without mental cultivation it is impossible to acquire or preserve the friendship and esteem of a wise man, who soon grows weary of acting the lover and treating his wife like a mistress, but wants a reasonable companion and a true friend through every stage of life.—Vol. v. p. 134.

EVILS OF MARRIAGE.

Matrimony has many children—repentance, discord, poverty, jealousy, sickness, spleen, loathing.

THE ADVANTAGES OF MARTYRDOM.

The clergy are not beloved in any nation where Christianity is the religion of the country. Nothing can render them popular but some degree of persecution.

THE USES OF MATURITY.

The latter part of a wise man's life is taken up in curing the follies, prejudices, and false opinions he had contracted in the former.

THE OBSERVATION OF NEUTRALS.

A stander-by may sometimes see more of the game than he that plays it.—Vol. v. p. 4.

HUMAN NEED.

Complaint is the largest tribute Heaven receives, and the sincerest part of our devotion.

RELIGIOUS NARROWNESS.

God's mercy is all over His works; but divines of all sorts lessen that mercy too much.

VALUE OF OATHS.

You may force men by interest or punishment to say or swear they believe, and to act as if they believed; you can go no further.

PLAGIARISM.

Barren wits take in the thoughts of others in order to draw forth their own, as dry pumps will not play till water is thrown into them.—Vol. v. p. 248.

LATENT POWER.

Although men are accused for not knowing their own weakness, yet perhaps as few know their own strength. It is in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner knows not of. —Vol. v. p. 459.

SELF-PRESERVATION.

Self-love, as it is the motive to all our actions, so it is the sole cause of our grief.

PROCRASTINATION.

Virtue in old age is a sacrifice to God of the devil's leavings.

INVENTIVE PRODUCTIVITY.

The greatest inventions were produced in the times of ignorance; as the use of the compass, gunpowder, and printing; and by the dullest nation, as the Germans.

DUTIES OF THE PULPIT.

The two principal branches of preaching are, first to tell the people what is their duty, and then to convince them that it is so.—Vol. v. p. 95.

SARTOR RESARTUS.

The universe is a large suit of clothes, which invests everything; the earth is invested by the air, the air is invested by the stars, and the stars are invested by the primum mobile.

FEMALE SCANDALS.

A knot of ladies, got together by themselves, is a very school of impertinence and detraction, and it is well if those be the worst.—Vol. v. p. 138.

SEPARATION OF A MAN AND HIS WORKS.

Sometimes I read a book with pleasure and detest the author.

SKELETON SERMONS.

Abstracts, abridgments, and summaries are admirable expedients for being very learned with little or no reading.—Vol. v. p. 249.

THE SHOP.

For a man to talk of his own trade, or business, or faculty is a great breach of good manners.

SOLITUDE.

A wise man is never less alone than when he is alone.—Vol. v. p. 7.

PHILOSOPHY IN SORROW.

Reflect upon what you have left, and not upon what you have lost.—Vol. xi. p. 296.

GOD CHOOSES THE WEAK THINGS.

The richest minerals are ever found under the most ragged and withered surface of earth.

THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF THOUGHT.

Imagination is the womb of things; memory is the grave.

INDEPENDENCE OF THOUGHT.

It may be prudent in me to act sometimes by other men's reasons, but I can think only by my own.

TREASURES IN EARTHEN VESSELS.

It is not impossible to be very fine and very filthy.—Vol. v. p. 136.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

The Christian religion, in the most early times, was proposed to the Jews and heathens without the article of Christ's divinity.

INFLUENCE OF TRIFLES.

Small causes are sufficient to make a man uneasy when great ones are not in the way; for want of a block he will stumble at a straw.

THE SELF-INFLICTION OF HUMAN UNHAPPINESS.

The miseries of man's life are all beaten out on his own anvil.

CHAPTER VI.

SWIFT: THE NATIONALIST.

IN August, 1714, Swift left England and returned to Ireland—"The Scoundrel Island"—amidst a storm of unpopularity: "an old man battered with the storms of State."

The Tory Government, in which he was the mainspring, fell because they could not be trusted to maintain the Protestant succession.

Swift had to share their misfortune and suspicion. Indeed, it was mooted, and generally believed, that Swift, with Oxford and Bolingbroke, the late Premiers, would be tried for treason. The Whig Government, however, were chary of attacking a clergyman after the experience of their encounter with Sacheverell, whose persecution, a few years before, turned them out of office.

Swift, however, more than once was mobbed by the citizens as he walked the streets of Dublin. The Whigs had cleverly but unjustly managed to make the words Tory and Jacobite synonymous terms, and, knowing what a power he had been in the late

Government, they suspected him to be deeply concerned in the plot to bring in the Pretender.

Mistaken judgment. The Irish Protestants did not know their best friend. When the nation and the Ministry were equally divided in opinion as to who should be King, Jonathan Swift, more than any other man, prevented James Stuart from occupying the throne of England. He had other enemies, however, than political. He had deafness and giddiness and other troubles besides. His dancing attendance so long at the Court in England, along with the exorbitant installation fees as Dean, had plunged him deep in debt, which to him was synonymous with the devil. His Archbishop was captious and unfriendly; his chapter and choir were rebellious; his deafness and giddiness he could not conquer; but, with a firm hand and determined will, he speedily reduced his debt, his Archbishop, his chapter, and his choir* to subjection. He had other troubles of a more delicate kind, which we have elsewhere considered.

His life at this time was miserable in the extreme, and his mind occupied with perfect trifles—*La Bagatelle*, as he called them. He writes to Pope: "*Non sum qualis eram.* I left you in a period of life when one year does more execution than three of yours, to which if you add the dulness of air and of the people, it will make up a terrible sum."

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* "My amusements are defending my small dominions against the Archbishop and endeavouring to reduce my rebellious choir. *Perditur hac inter misero Lax.*"—*Letter to Bolingbroke.*

To Bolingbroke he writes: "I am forced to play at small game, to set the beasts here a-maddening, merely for want of better game."

In another letter he says: "You know how I loved both Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, and how dear the Duke of Ormond is to me, and do you imagine I can be easy while their enemies are endeavouring to take off their heads?"

For the first half-dozen years of his banishment in Ireland Swift wrote nothing of political importance. He interfered nothing with politics, except they were brought to his door by local quarrels. His whole time was devoted to literature, and to the devout and conscientious discharge of duties appertaining to the office of his sacred calling as Dean of St. Patrick's.

Stories innumerable have been circulated to the contrary. I have examined these with minute care. All of them are apocryphal; not one of them has a respectable pedigree. Nothing was more abhorrent to the nature of Swift than irreverence in the performance of sacred duties. I know that the world will hardly believe the statement, yet, nevertheless, it is true that Swift, in the highest sense, was a devout and deeply religious man. This, at least, is certain, that he preached in St. Patrick's Cathedral the cardinal doctrines of Christianity.

Thackeray, however, tells us that the sermons of Swift might have been preached from a Jewish synagogue; they had not a Christian characteristic. In this matter, however, I prefer to accept the

constantly at prayers and at the sacrament, yet he appeared to neglect both, as he was at home when others were at church; and when he went to prayers in his family, the servants assembled at the appointed hour, as if it were by stealth, without any notice from a bell or any other call except the striking of a clock; so that Dr. Delany was for six months in his family before he suspected him of this unfashionable practice."

Thackeray condemns Swift for thus praying by stealth in a crypt of St. Patrick's Deanery.

Mr. Thackeray appears not to be well versed in religious literature. As a Christian, was he ignorant of his Divine Master's instructions, which Swift obeyed, "To enter into his closet, and shut the door, and pray to his Father in secret"? Swift might have his doubts as to the minor doctrines of Christianity, but it is proved beyond doubt, from the prayers that he composed for Stella on her death-bed, as well as from his printed Sermons, that he not only believed, but preached in St. Patrick's Cathedral with intense conviction, the essential doctrines of our most Holy Faith. Swift also paid great attention to the musical part of the service, although he himself did not know one note of music, and was conscientious in the selection of his choir.

Lady Carteret, the wife of the Lord Lieutenant, on one occasion sought the appointment as Vicar Choral for some person in whom she felt an interest. Swift's reply was thoroughly characteristic: "Upon my conscience, madam, if you applied to me for a

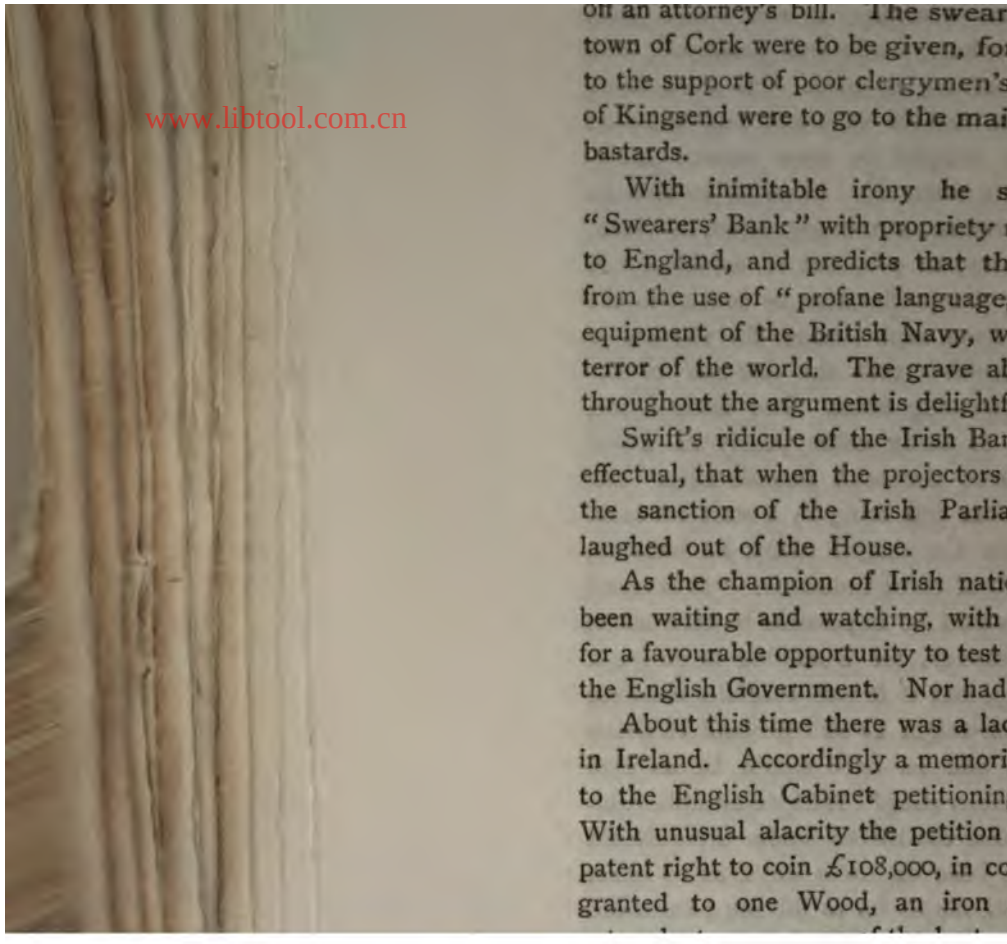
"The Universal Use of Irish Manufactures." It proved a dangerous explosive. It was addressed to the passions of the people as well as to their reason, The pamphlet was written in an inflammatory style, yet full of wisdom. In a few clear and pungent sentences, intelligible to the meanest capacity, he points out what Ireland's commercial wrongs are, and how far they can be met and mastered by themselves. With startling audacity he tells them to reject and renounce everything wearable that comes from England; to close their markets against that nation, and to burn everything that came from it except its coals. Daring as this proposal to boycott was, it was not treasonable, but what the Irish had a perfect right to do, if they were so minded.

The pamphlet, however, had another and more daring proposal still. After a fierce and bitter onslaught against English tyranny, it proposes that Ireland should appeal to Government either for independence or indemnity for its commercial wrongs.

The uproar and danger caused by this proposal was tremendous. It at once set Ireland and Walpole's Government in a blaze.

The pamphlet was condemned as seditious, factious, and virulent. The printer was arrested. At the trial an extraordinary scene occurred. The jury acquitted the culprit; the judge refused to accept their verdict and sent them back to reconsider it. Again they acquitted the prisoner, and again the Chief Justice refused the verdict and sent them back to reconsider it. Nine times was this disgraceful

He saw, however necessary such an institution was in a prosperous country, it was worse than useless in Ireland when trade was paralysed, and where there was nothing to bank. He maintained that it would be a source of fraud and mischief to the nation, and helpful to none except stock-jobbers, whom Swift detested. In order to ridicule the scheme, Swift writes an amusing paper, in which, with mock solemnity, he proposes to establish "A Swearers' Bank." Its profits were to consist in the fine of a shilling from each swearer for the use of an oath. He calculates that the one-half of the Irish nation are swearing souls. The army alone, he says, dispense as many oaths yearly as would produce one hundred thousand pounds nett. The fairs of this kingdom will bring in a vast revenue. The oaths of little Connaught alone, he believes, amount to upwards of three thousand. "It is true," he says, "that it would be impossible to turn all of them into ready money, for a shilling is so great a duty on swearing, that if it was carefully exacted, the common people might as well pretend to drink wine as to swear, and an oath would be as rare among them as a clean shirt." With inimitable coolness he proposes that the militia under arms should be exempted from fines on these days, as to exact it from them would simply be to fill the pawnshops with muskets and swords, and rejoice the hearts of Papists and other disaffected persons to see our militia swear themselves out of their guns and swords. Nor shall advantage be taken of any man's swearing



off an attorney's bill. The sweari
town of Cork were to be given, for
to the support of poor clergymen's
of Kingsend were to go to the mair
bastards.

With inimitable irony he su
"Swearers' Bank" with propriety n
to England, and predicts that the
from the use of "profane language,"
equipment of the British Navy, wo
terror of the world. The grave ab
throughout the argument is delightfu

Swift's ridicule of the Irish Ban
effectual, that when the projectors c
the sanction of the Irish Parliar
laughed out of the House.

As the champion of Irish natio
been waiting and watching, with
for a favourable opportunity to test
the English Government. Nor had

About this time there was a lac
in Ireland. Accordingly a memoria
to the English Cabinet petitioning
With unusual alacrity the petition w
patent right to coin £108,000, in co
granted to one Wood, an iron

The crisis had now come, and Swift embraced it eagerly, and, by his masterly tactics, secured another victory for the independence of Ireland. Swift pointed out in clear and forcible language, easily understood by peer and peasant, that the grant was a Ministerial job. That the coinage of £108,000 was not required by the necessities of Ireland, but was required only for the necessities of William Wood, who had to recoup himself for a bribe of £10,000 to the Duchess of Kendal, mistress of George I., who had exerted her influence to obtain the patent right of coinage. That it had been obtained without consulting Ireland's Parliament or Ireland's Lord Lieutenant, and was, therefore, an insult to the Irish nation. Swift used many instruments of attack to rouse the nation against the patent: ballads, broadsheets, pamphlets, and Drapier's Letters. His ballads, seasoned with all the bitterness and pungency of his wit, were sung in aristocratic drawing-rooms and in rowdy gin-shops; in the crowded streets, and in dens of thieves. In the sale of broadsheet literature the flying stationers did a roaring business, whilst the minor pamphlets and Drapier's Letters were scattered broadcast over Ireland.

Swift knew by experience—the best of all schools—how efficacious this kind of Grub Street literature was in impressing on the will of many the will of one. The "Drapier's Letters," written a hundred and sixty-five years ago, although not of permanent literary value, yet, if measured by their results, still occupy, and deservedly occupy, the first place in

political literature. Hawkins Brown says "that the are the most perfect pieces of oratory ever compose since the days of Demosthenes." Swift had or advantage over Demosthenes — his inimitable w and humour. It is evident that Swift meant to giv Ireland a more important deliverance than from th copper coin of Wood. This is unmistakably prove from the Drapier's following questions: "Were no the people of Ireland," he asks, "born as free a those of England? Are they not the subjects of th same king? Am I a freeman in England, and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the Channel?"

These questions vibrated throughout the kingdom. Ireland was in a blaze. Clubs were formed to champion Irish nationality. The English Government recalled the Duke of Grafton, the Lord Lieutenant, whom Walpole characterised as "a fair weather pilot, who knew not what to do in a storm."

Lord Carteret was sent over to take the helm as Lord Lieutenant. On his arrival he found that another letter had been issued by the Drapier, pointing out, in burning words of indignation, the gross injustice of legislating for Ireland in a Parliament in which she had *no representative*; and that Ireland's high offices of trust were filled with Englishmen, and not Irishmen. "But," says the Drapier, "the remedy is in your own hands. . . . . By the laws of God and nature, of nations, and of your own country, you are, and ought to be, as free a people as your brethren in England." He goes on to say:

"All government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery," though, he adds, with bitter irony, "eleven men, well armed, will certainly subdue one single man in his shirt."

Although Lord Carteret privately sympathised with the sentiments, yet officially, as Lord Lieutenant, he was bound to take action against the manifesto. Accordingly a proclamation was issued, denouncing the letter and offering a reward of three hundred pounds for the discovery of the author. The printer was arrested and imprisoned. The Lord Lieutenant was one of the few who knew well who the author was. The day after the proclamation was issued there was a levee in the Castle. Swift had been invited, and he went. Abruptly entering the state-room, and pushing his way through the gay crowd, he never stopped until he reached the presence of Lord Carteret, and, with a stern face and a voice of thunder that paralysed the titled courtiers, exclaimed:

"So, my Lord Lieutenant, this is a glorious exploit that you performed yesterday, in issuing a proclamation against a poor shopkeeper whose only crime is an honest endeavour to save his country from ruin. You have given a noble specimen of what this devoted nation is to hope for from your government."

The Lord Lieutenant, with mild countenance and gentle voice, and apt quotation, replied, in the words of Virgil:

"Res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt

moliri." (Hard fortune, and the newness of my reign, compel me to such measures.)

This put Swift and the gay courtiers at their ease, and thus ended this strange scene.

Shortly after this, Swift went to the Castle to have an interview with the Viceroy. His lordship was engaged, and Swift had to wait for a little in an antechamber. To amuse himself, he wrote on the window with his diamond ring these words:

> My very good lord, 'tis a very hard task,
> For a man to wait here, who has nothing to ask.

His lordship, as he came in, observed these lines, and cleverly wrote under them:

> My very good Dean, few people come here,
> Who have nothing to ask, or nothing to fear.

As danger became imminent, Swift manfully threw off all disguise and came boldly forward as the champion of Irish nationality.

Sir Walter Scott relates two anecdotes to illustrate Swift's bold, stern, and uncompromising temper at this crisis. The first anecdote, says Sir Walter, is well known. A servant, named Robert Blakeley, whom he entrusted to copy out and convey to the press the Drapier's Letters, chanced one evening to absent himself without leave. His master charged him with treachery, and upon his exculpation, insisted that at least he neglected his duties as a servant because he conceived his master was in his power.

"Strip your livery," he commanded, "begone

from the Deanery instantly, and do your worst to revenge yourself that you dare."

The man retired, more grieved that his master doubted his fidelity than moved by his harsh treatment. He was replaced at the intercession of Stella; and Swift afterwards rewarded his fidelity by the office of verger in the Cathedral of St. Patrick's.

Sir Walter's other anecdote is, that while Harding, the printer, was in jail, Swift actually visited him in the disguise of an Irish country clown. Some of the printer's family or friends, who chanced to visit him at the same time, were urging him to earn his own release by informing against the author of the Drapier Letters. Harding replied steadily that he would rather perish in jail before he would be guilty of such treachery and baseness. All this passed in Swift's presence, who sat beside them in silence, and heard with apparent indifference a discussion which might be said to involve his ruin. He came and departed without being known to any one but Harding.

Such are Sir Walter's graphic stories, admirably told, only they are not true. I have quoted them as specimens of innumerable stories that have been related of Swift, equally graphic and apocryphal.

However, the crisis between England and Ireland has now reached its climax. Shortly before the bill against the printer of the Drapier's Letters was presented before the Grand Jury, Swift issued a masterly address to the citizens of Dublin, clearly pointing out the importance of the verdict which some of their number as jurors would be called upon to give. He

When he visited the provinces, he was received like a sovereign prince.

"He became," said Lord Orrery, "the idol of the people of Ireland to a degree of devotion that in the most superstitious country scarcely any idol ever attained."

Swift received this worship with supreme contempt.

We have now seen how Swift stepped into the arena of Irish politics at the decisive moment, and how with tremendous power he had hurled back Ireland's rage and wrongs against the English Government, until Walpole was paralysed, his Lord Lieutenant recalled, his Government measure withdrawn, and the copper scheme blasted. Swift, however, would not rest satisfied with even that victory.

The next battle Swift fought was for the Irish tenantry against the tyranny of the Irish landlords. Swift makes a heavy indictment against them. "Every squire, almost to a man," he says, "is an oppressor of the clergy; a racker of his tenants; a jobber of all public works; very proud, and generally illiterate." He declares "that the detestable tyranny and oppression of landlords are visible in every part of the kingdom." In the present miserable state of Ireland, Swift accuses the landlords of rack-renting—exactly the same complaint which has been brought against them in our own day.

"Another great calamity," says Swift, "is the exorbitant raising of the rents of lands. . . . A gentleman thinks he has but indifferently improved his estate if he has only doubled his rent-roll.

dealers in the several branches of building have found out all the commodious and inviting places for erecting new houses, while 1,500 of the old ones, which is a seventh part of the whole city, are said to be left uninhabited and falling to ruin."

Again, in one of his Drapier Letters, he ridicules the exodus of the Irish aristocracy to London. He asks what it is that induces the gentry of Ireland, who have lost all regard for their own country further than upon account of the revenues they receive from it, to be preceded by thousands and neglected by millions, to be wholly without power, figure, influence, honour, credit, or distinction, in a foreign country, "when they might live with lustre in their own, and that at less than half the expense which they strain themselves to make, without obtaining any one end, except that which happened to the frog when he would needs contend for size with the ox"?

Strange to say that, although Swift spoke and wrote against them severely, yet his personal influence with them was great. He often acted as mediator between the landlords and their tenantry. He did what our present Government, to their honour, recently did—he prevailed upon many of the Irish landlords to modify their legal rights, and to act not only justly, but generously, towards their poor and oppressed tenantry. I shall give an illustration of how great Swift's influence was, even with the owners of land. In 1737 he wrote to an alderman of London regarding the extortionate

illiterate that Swift's irony and sarcasm was as "the pricking of a needle against a stone wall." The forefathers of this squire, it is said, "had made themselves rich by Church lands, with the deepest sense that their undertaking was of the most pious character. His son set himself to ponder how to retain these lands with an underlying sense of practical piety," to whom Swift wrote thus:

SIR,—. . . I took some pains in providing and advising about your education; but since you have made so ill use of my rules, I cannot deny that, according to your own principles, your usage of me is just. You are wholly out of my danger; the weapons I use will do you no hurt, and to that which would keep nicer men in awe you are insensible. A needle against a stone wall can make no impression. Your faculty lies in making bargains; stick to that. Leave your children a better estate than your father left you; as he left you much more than your grandfather left him. Your father and you are much wiser than I, who gave among you fifty years' purchase for land, for which I am not to see one farthing. This was intended for encouragement to a clergyman to reside among you, whenever any of your posterity shall be able to distinguish a man from a beast. One thing I desire you will be set right on: I do not despise all squires. It is true that I despise the bulk of them. But pray take notice that a squire must have some merit before I shall honour him with my contempt, for I do not despise a fly, a maggot, or a mite. If you send me an answer to this, I shall not read it, but open it before company, and in their presence burn it, for no other reason but the detestation of bad spelling, no grammar, and a pertness which proceeds from ignorance and an invincible want of taste. I have ordered a copy of this letter to be taken, with an intention to print it, as a mark of my esteem for you; which, however, perhaps I shall not pursue, for I could willingly excuse our two names from standing in the same paper, since I am confident you have as little desire of fame as I have to give it you.

Another battle Swift fought was for the Irish

clergy their slaves and vassals, until the day of judgment, under the load of poverty and contempt." Accordingly he resolved to have no more commerce with persons of such prodigious grandeur, who, he feared, in a little time would expect him to kiss their slipper.

Through his powerful and indefatigable influence he overthrew the Modus Bill directed against the Church's influence. He also struggled to maintain the Test Act, as in his opinion it was the only barrier between the Church and its destruction. Of all the enemies of the Church, he detested most the Non-conformists. He clearly foresaw that their aim was a subversion of Episcopacy, and predicted that one day they would overthrow the Church altogether as a national institution of Ireland. How true his prognostications have proved history now tells. It was a conspiracy between the Commons and the landlords to defraud the Church of the Tithe of Agistment, that caused Swift to write the keenest of his satires—the most demoniacal ever written by man.

As I stroll the City, oft I
See a building large and lofty,
Not a bow-shot from the College,
Half the globe from sense and knowledge;
By the prudent Architect
Placed against the Church direct,
Making good my Grandam's jest,
Near the Church—you know the rest.
Tell us what the pile contains?
Many a head that holds no brains.

It is touching to note that Swift's keenest political battle was in defence of the Church that he loved so well.

These, then, were the three great wrongs of Ireland: The tyranny of the English Government; the tyranny of the Irish landlords against the tenantry; and the political conspiracy to overthrow the Church.

Against these evils Swift protested powerfully, to the terror of the English Government, the Irish squires, and the Church's ecclesiastical conspirators.

It is sad to turn from Swift's public to his private life.

No preferment; no triumph; no friend except Stella, could calm the demoniacal side of his nature. She could charm away the demon spirit for a time, but that was never for long. Listen to his conversations, or open his letters to Pope and Bolingbroke anywhere, and it is the same wail of misery. No sooner does he get the Deanery of St. Patrick's than we hear him say to Harley: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in H—." No sooner is his installation to the Deanery over, than, refusing to receive or repay the visits of the nobility and gentry, he flies away to Laracor, and writes to Vanessa that he prefers the earthen floor of the Vicarage, and the camp bed, "to the great Deanery House which they say is mine." Pope writes to congratulate him, and says: "I look upon a friend in Ireland as upon a friend in the other world, whom, properly speaking, I believe constantly well-disposed towards me, and ready to do

by profession a clergyman, by occupation a schoolmaster." He was a famous scholar, fiddler, quibbler, punster, and rhymester, whose verses were not always of the cleanest. He had made Swift's acquaintanceship in Dublin shortly after his installation as Dean of St. Patrick's. Sheridan was then master of a famous school in Dublin, which, through Swift's patronage, soon became the largest and most flourishing in the kingdom. Sheridan's income from it was £1,200 a year. There was a strong affinity between Dean Swift and Dr. Sheridan; indeed, he might have been called Swift's "Sherry," as his son Tom was called Johnson's "Sherry." The first time that Sheridan met Swift at dinner in the Deanery, when the company broke up at night, Swift, in his usual ironical way, said, "I invite all here present to dine with me next Thursday, except Mr. Sheridan," but with a look which expressed that the invitation was made wholly on his account. This friendship was cemented by Stella, who gave the Doctor the preference to all the Dean's other friends. Swift's acquaintanceship in Ireland was principally among men high in rank, to whose preferment he had himself contributed in his days of power, such as the Primate, the Archbishop of Dublin, the Lord Chancellor, Bishop Sterne, etc.

Sheridan, who had little or no access to that circle, introduced Swift to his own, which included brilliant scholars and men of wit, among whom Swift could be free and easy, and sportive when in the mood. In this society for years Swift spent most of

retired for a time to rest from the fickle applause of the Irish nation, and to finish and polish his "Gulliver," which was to give him enduring fame.

For years Swift's illustrious literary and political friends in England had been plying him with invitations to visit them, and such invitations as any man might justly be proud of. Arbuthnot writes:

> The hope of seeing once more the Dean of St. Patrick's revives my spirits. I cannot help imagining some of our old chiefs met together like mariners after a storm. For God's sake, do not tantalise your friends any more. I can prove by twenty unanswerable reasons that it is absolutely necessary that you should come over to England. I believe, indeed, it is just possible to save your soul without it, and that is all. I have only one fear, that when you come over you will be so much coveted and taken up by the Ministry, that unless your friends meet you at their tables they will have none of your company. This is really no joke; I am quite in earnest. Your deafness is so necessary a thing that I almost begin to think it an affectation. I remember you used to reckon dinners; I know already half a year's dinners where you are already bespoke.

At last Swift yielded, and in the spring of 1726 he crossed the Channel to visit his English friends. He took up his residence at Twickenham Villa with Pope, and Gay, and Arbuthnot. What a company! Swift, the greatest wit of all time; Pope, the greatest satirist; Arbuthnot, the greatest humorist; and Gay, the greatest laugher.

From the banks of the Severn, in July, 1726, Lord Bolingbroke writes "to the three Yahoos of Twickenham," as he calls them, and ends his letter thus: "Adieu, Jonathan,* Alexander,† John,‡ mirth be with you."

* Swift. † Pope. ‡ Gay.

From this villa Swift went to dine with the Premier, Sir Robert Walpole. The Primate of all Ireland had written to acquaint Walpole that the Dean of St. Patrick, the most dangerous political agitator in the three kingdoms, was about to visit England, and warned Walpole "to keep a watchful eye over him." This is the way in which the Premier watched the dangerous Dean—he invited him to dinner. I wish that Swift had treated this invitation as his friend Pope once treated a Royal invitation.

To Martha Blunt he writes that he "had the honour of being invited to Court, but the grace to stay away."

At the dinner-table a remark of Swift's was cruelly, I shall not say wilfully, misconstrued, and re-echoed afterwards by the Whigs in such a way as did much to damage his political consistency. To understand the purport of the remark which Swift made, it is necessary to know that shortly before this a bitter libel had appeared against the Premier, which he erroneously attributed to Gay.

Through this suspicion, Gay had lost the friendship of Walpole and the favour of the Queen. The Premier, however, had recently received information which satisfied him that he had been mistaken in his surmise, and that poor Gay was in no way to blame.

In allusion, therefore, to this episode of Gay's, Swift took occasion to remark at the Premier's dinner-table, that "when great Ministers heard an ill thing of a private person who expected some

favour, although they were afterwards convinced that the person was innocent, yet they would never be reconciled." As the word Gay was not mentioned, it is possible that the observation may have appeared ambiguous to some of the guests at table who had not heard of Gay's misadventure; but there can be no doubt that Walpole distinctly understood the remark to have reference to Gay, and not to Swift himself; yet he affected to understand that the observation referred to Swift, and was mean enough to circulate the report that Swift had apologised to him with the view of currying favour at Court. Even granting that the Premier had misapprehended Swift's remark, he was speedily undeceived at their next meeting. As it was impossible to discuss the affairs of Ireland in the presence of guests at a dinner-table, Swift asked and obtained a private interview with the Premier. It has been alleged that at this interview Swift sold himself to the Court, and the price of his apostasy was to be high ecclesiastical preferment. This is a heavy indictment, but what are the facts?

The first point that tells in Swift's favour is the alacrity and graciousness of Walpole in granting the interview. He sent a message through Peterborough to Swift that he would be glad to receive him any morning, except on Tuesday or Thursday, his two public days.

This, I contend, goes far to show that Walpole could hardly have anticipated that Swift at this interview with him would cry "peccavi," and sell

detested bribery in any shape or form. Through life he preferred principle to expediency. We know for fact that it was his Church principles that prevented him rising and sitting down a mitred peer in Parliament.

Swift, in his days of poverty, refused Harley's bribe, and declared that on principle he could not be a writer in any man's hire. He also rejected Bolingbroke's dazzling offers of high preferment during his ephemeral Premiership, because he could not consistently support his policy. Such was Swift concerning bribes.

What was Walpole's character as to this? It is notorious that he was the most inveterate briber of any Prime Minister that ever held the helm of State. He made no secret of it. He boldly declared that he had to bribe as a matter of high expediency, and that in all his political experience he had yet never known a man to refuse a bribe in gold, nor women either, except *one*, and she took *diamonds*.

Such were the characters of the two men who alone were present at the interview. It is highly probable, therefore, that Walpole offered preferment to Swift on certain *implied conditions* which he declined. This view is borne out by two passages in Swift's correspondence. "I have had," he writes to Sheridan, "the fairest offer made me of a settlement here that one can imagine, within twelve miles of London, and in the midst of my friends; but I am too old for new schemes, and especially such as would bridle me in my freedom."

delicate manner—for Walpole knew his man too well to presume to do it in any other way—offered Swift the living near London, hinting, probably, that other and higher preferment would be his if deserved.

Swift, on high principle, rejects the offer, feeling, as he writes to Sheridan, "that it would bridle him in his freedom." *

Whether this conjecture is not almost as conclusive as certainty, I leave to the judgment of my readers to determine.

From this villa Swift also went to visit the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline. Her Royal Highness affected to be a literary lady, and set up for a patroness of men of genius, men of wit, and men of literature. Hearing of Swift's arrival in London, she immediately sent him an invitation to visit her. Of this Swift gives the following account to Lady Betty Germain in 1732:

"Her present Majesty heard of my arrival, and sent at least nine times to command my attendance before I would obey her, for several reasons not hard to guess, and among others, because I had heard her character from those that knew her well. At last I went, and she received me very graciously."

Swift was no sooner ushered into the Royal presence than he exclaimed:

"Your Royal Highness sent last year to see a wild boy from Germany, and now you have sent to see a wild dean from Ireland."

* Sheridan's "Life of Swift," p. 258.

Swift replies: "I look upon this to be the greatest event that can ever happen to me; but all my preparations will not suffice to make me bear it like a philosopher nor altogether like a Christian. . . . Nay, if I were now near her, I would not see her; I could not behave myself tolerably, and should redouble her sorrow. Judge in what a temper of mind I write this. The very time I am writing, I conclude the fairest soul in the world has left its body. . . . I have been long weary of the world, and shall for my small remainder of years be weary of life, having for ever lost that conversation which could only make it tolerable. I fear while you are reading this you will be shedding tears at her funeral."

They were all mistaken. The blow was not yet to fall. Swift at last resolved to take his departure for Ireland. Accordingly he went to take leave of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, who at parting promised to send him some medals at Christmas, and he promised to send her some silk plaids from Ireland.

On Swift's return to Dublin he found the city of his birth *en fête* to welcome him. His ship was signalled in the Bay. The Corporation, the gentry, and the leading citizens went out in wherries to the ship to welcome him. The harbour was gay with bunting; the bells were rung; bonfires were kindled, and processions formed to escort the Irish patriot to his home. It was like the reception of a sovereign prince or conquering hero. What a contrast to the

voyage to Brobdingnag. Seamen say it's capital, and as true nautically as Shakespeare is when he undertakes to use sea terms. Mr. Planta took down the volume, and read the passage. One sentence in it runs thus: "It was a very fierce storm, the sea broke strange and dangerous. We hauled off upon the lanyard of the whip-staff, and helped the man at the helm." "When he was done," says the Ambassador, "all admired the passage under the new view and commendation of it which Mr. Canning had given us. He himself said nothing for a few moments, but sat silent. Then, as if in reverie, he uttered in a low tone, yet very distinctly, the words: 'And helped the man at the helm, and helped the man at the helm,' repeating them. It seemed as if the helm of the Foreign Office, with all its anxieties, had suddenly shot into his mind, clouding for a moment his social ease. His familiar friends of the circle bantered him a little on the fancy. He declared off, and only said it was a fine passage."

After reading this narrative, I examined the passage, which I had not read since my student days. Being chaplain of a famous yachting club, and having had less or more experience in yachting for many years, I was puzzled to understand how Swift could possibly know, and apply so accurately, nautical terms. I was suspicious of this, as I have long been of Shakespeare's accuracy in geography; but where or how Swift had got help there was nothing to show. Recently, however, being in the Advocate's Library, at Edinburgh, in search of documents

We hauled off upon the lanyard of the whip-staff and helped the man at the helm.	Stand by to haul off above the lanyard of the whip-staff and help the man at the helm.
We would not get down our topmast, but let all stand, because she scudded before the sea very well, and we knew that the topmast being aloft the ship was the wholesomer and made better way through the sea, seeing we had sea room.	Shall we get down our topmasts? No, let all stand; she scuds before the sea very well; the topmast being aloft, the ship is the wholesomest and maketh better way through the sea, seeing we have sea room.
We got the starboard tacks aboard; we cast off the weather bowlings, weather braces and lifts; we set in the lee braces and hauled them tight and belayed them, and hauled over the mizen, and hauled forward by tack to windward, and kept her full and by as near as she would lie.	Get the starboard tacks aboard, cast off our weather braces and lifts; set in the lee braces and haul them taut and belay them, and haul over the mizen tacks to windward, and keep her full and by as near as she would lie.

It is not a little curious that none of Swift's critical biographers, Johnson, Jeffrey, or Macaulay, the three famous literary detectives of pilfered articles, should have discovered this, and that we should be indebted for the discovery probably to some unknown naval student, who, in his preparation to pass into the Royal or merchant navy, knowing nothing of "Gulliver," but attracted by the charming nautical description, left his mark of admiration there.

To say, however, that "Gulliver" is not original because Swift borrowed these hints from Sturmy, would be as absurd as to say that "Sartor Resartus"

degraded human nature with Yahoos. "As for the moral, I think it is horrible, shameful, unmanly, blasphemous; and giant and great as this Dean is, I say we should hoot him." Had Mr. Thackeray been conversant with the brutal times in which Swift lived and wrote, or even with the times in which he himself lived, it might have modified the severity of his judgment. Had Mr. Thackeray never heard of the Burkers of his time?—murderers for the sake of body selling. Even within the last few months has not all Europe been paralysed with horror at the atrocious crimes committed in the very centre of civilisation? To compare such monsters in human shape with the inferior animals is a libel on the brute creation; yet Thackeray is greatly shocked at Swift for comparing such specimens of humanity to Yahoos.

This morbid, sentimental, maudlin philanthropy is almost becoming a nuisance in this age.

Meantime, with the pleasing anticipation of again visiting England next spring, Swift is keeping up a brisk correspondence with his literary friends, Pope, and Gay, and Arbuthnot, and his political friends, Bolingbroke, and Pulteney, and Peterborough, and with his Court friends, Mrs. Howard, with an occasional message to her Royal mistress. From the following paragraph, in a letter which he sent to the Royal favourite before he started for England, we can judge of Swift's familiarity with the Princess: "I desire you will order Her Royal Highness to go to Richmond as soon as she can this summer, be-

and means—so the story goes—to whisper into the ears of his Royal mistress that, were he Premier, he would undertake to secure to her the settlement she demanded. The Queen instantly replied by quoting to Walpole's confidante the language which the late Premier had used regarding her when Princess of Wales: "Go," said Her Majesty, "and tell Sir Robert that the fat A— B— forgives him."*

Shortly afterwards, through the Queen's well-known ascendency over the King, Sir Spencer Compton is dismissed as incapable to a seat in the House of Lords, with the title of Earl Wilmington, and Sir Robert reinstated as firm as ever in his old seat as Premier.

All power is now concentrated in the hands of Walpole and the Queen. Had the Tories got into power at this time, Swift had died an English bishop and not an Irish dean; but that was not to be, nor did he now greatly care. His infirmities were gathering around him. Those whom he had wished to please were either in their grave or near it. About this time his old enemies, worse than political deafness and vertigo, attacked him with overwhelming power. To crown all, he receives crushing news from Ireland that Stella was at the point of death. Swift's cup of sorrow was now full. Overwhelmed with grief one day, on pretence of urgent business, he suddenly stole away from Twickenham to London, and with a disordered head and a sad heart, buried himself in lodgings there.

* Sheridan's "Life of Swift," p. 266.

perquisites of living long; the last act of life is always a tragedy at best; but it is a bitter aggravation to have one's best friends go before one. . . . I do profess, upon my salvation, that the distressed and desperate state of our friend makes life so indifferent to me, that I do not think it worth the time to struggle. . . . To what advantage? Why, to see the loss of that person, for whose sake only life was worth preserving. . . . What have I to do in the world? I am able to hold up my sorry head no longer.

It would appear from the following note that immediately after Swift's sudden departure from Twickenham to London, Pope and Arbuthnot had tracked his steps and traced him to his London lair.

Pope writes to Sheridan:

Upon pretence of some very unavoidable occasions he went to London four days ago, where I see him as often as he will let me. . . . His physician and friend, Dr. Arbuthnot, assures me he will soon be well. . . . I will not leave him a day until I see him better.

After Swift's illness had abated, he gathered together his belongings to take his departure for Ireland. Just as he was on the eve of starting, he received from Mrs. Howard, the King's mistress and the Queen's favourite, the following note: "I insist upon your taking no resolution to leave England till I see you, which must be here, for the most disagreeable reason in the world, and the most shocking: I dare not go to you. Believe nobody who talks to you of the Queen, without you are sure the person likes both the Queen and you." This appeal was quite in vain. Nothing would induce him to stay. He clearly foresaw that so long as Walpole was at the helm of State, hope there was none, either for himself

or Ireland. He had therefore resolved to have do with England and English politics for ever. Bef his departure he took leave of the Queen in a pol note to Mrs. Howard, apologising for not doing so person in the following passage: "I am infinite obliged to you for all your civilities, and shall reta the remembrance of them during my life. I hope yo will favour me so far as to present my most humb duty to the Queen, and to describe to Her Majes my sorrow that my disorder was of such a kind as t make me incapable of attending her, as she wa pleased to permit me. I shall pass the remainder o my life with the utmost gratitude for Her Majesty' favours."

Swift now leaves England for ever.

He takes his departure for what he called "miser able Dublin, in wretched Ireland."

Strange enough, on his journey home he recovered his hearing. Pope and Gay, who had been watching every stage of his homeward journey with anxious hearts and sad, no sooner heard of this, than they wrote him a conjoint letter, in which they con- gratulated him, adding jocularly: "No doubt your ears knew well there was nothing worth hearing in England."

Swift reached Holyhead just in time to be too late for the packet, which had left for Dublin a few hours before his arrival. Here, in a little smoky room, he had for a week to possess his soul in patience, the shipmaster waiting for better weather and a better supply of passengers. What a contrast

this little room must have appeared to him from the luxurious study of Twickenham.

Pope and Gay, in their conjoint letter, inform Swift that "the maid of the house writes us word that, while you were there, you were busy for ten days together writing continually. . . . By a scrap of paper left in this smoky room, it seemed as if the book you were writing was a most lamentable account of your travels." Through the diligence of Dr. Craik, an old class-fellow of my own, one of the most accomplished Greek scholars of the age, is the world of letters indebted for the discovery of this little book, which is one of the most interesting and important contributions to literature of the present century. It is impossible to doubt that Byron's diary at Ravenna is but a weak imitation of it. The little diary is a picture in miniature of Swift's perfect misery. It paints him, and doubtless with faithfulness, as tired of himself and his surroundings.

Yet it has its comical side. I shall make a few quotations in illustration of this phase of his character.

"Not a soul is come to Holyhead yet, except a young fellow, who smiles when he meets me, and would fain be my companion; but it has not come to that yet. He is forced to wear a shirt three days, and has not a clean cravat. He dares not send his linen to be washed in fear of being called away in half an hour. He cannot read at night, and has no books to read in the day. Nor has he any subject at present in his head to write on. He lives at great expense without one comfortable bite or sup."

and was in his nightgown, he received a letter from one, Whelden by name, telling him that he had found out the longitude. Swift returned his letter with a characteristic answer under it, that he had too much of the longitude already by two projectors, whom he encouraged, one of whom was a cheat, and the other cut his own throat; as for himself, he thought he had a mind to deceive others or be deceived himself.

Thus the diary goes on in an endless but interesting jumble. All this, he says, is to divert thinking.

What strange vagaries passed through his mind during those lonely days of his waiting! Sometimes he thinks of the King's mistress, and of her Royal mistress the Queen; at other times of Walpole and Bolingbroke; of Pope and Gay; but oftenest of poor Stella and of wretched Ireland, at the thought of which he exclaims:

> Remove me from this land of slaves,
> Where all are fools and all are knaves;
> Where every fool and knave is bought,
> Yet kindly sells himself for nought.
> Where Whig and Tory fiercely fight;
> Who's in the wrong, who in the right?
> And when their country lies at stake,
> They only fight for fighting's sake;
> Where English sharpers take the pay,
> And then stand by to see fair play.
> Meanwhile the Whig is always winner,
> And for his courage gets—a dinner.

At last the ship set sail, and after contending with fierce waves and storms, Swift reached safely

part, as all human creatures have parted." And then, as if he had a presentiment that they would never meet again in this world, he adds, pathetically: "I have often wished that God Almighty would be so easy to the weakness of mankind as to let old friends be acquainted in another state; and if I were to write a Utopia for heaven, that would be one of my schemes."

After Swift's arrival, the first sad duty that fell to his lot was for three months to watch over the flickering life of Stella, who for three-and-thirty years had watched over him with a devotion unparalleled in all history. The end soon came, and with a suddenness that was unexpected.

Lord Macaulay says "that literature had saved his health and his reason." It was so with Swift. To drown care, to forget himself and his great sorrow, he betakes himself to literature and to right the wrongs of Ireland.

Swift had done much for Ireland, but there was yet much to do, and, if it could be done at all, he alone of all men could do it. Yet he was neither an Irish "agitator nor an Irish theorist." His political vision was too clear and his judgment too sound for that. Swift had a supreme contempt for anything that was treasonable. He clearly foresaw that the regeneration of Ireland must be accomplished by force of conviction and not by force of arms.

Accordingly, in the most honourable manner, Swift laid the wrongs of Ireland before the Queen in person, and her Premier, but without avail. After

his second interview with Walpole, Swift's conviction was that so long as Sir Robert remained at the helm of State, hope there was none for Ireland.

At this crisis Bolingbroke and Pulteney tried hard to get Swift's co-operation to turn Walpole and his Whigs out of office.

Swift writes to Sheridan: "They have a thousand schemes in which they would have me engage, but I like none of them." To his clear vision they were all Utopian. This was the state of matters when Swift left England in disgust to watch over the death-bed of Stella. Mrs. Howard, the Queen's favourite, still hinted at Walpole's overthrow, Swift's promotion, and Ireland's regeneration. After Stella's death, however, Swift writes to her peremptorily, "I will engage in Court squabbles no more." It was now Swift's settled conviction that so long as the Whigs remained in power the fate of Ireland was sealed. Where, then, was Swift to look for help for Ireland's regeneration? Not to her Lord Lieutenant; not to the members of the Irish Parliament—these were only slaves grovelling at the feet of English power; but to the Irish themselves. Accordingly with grim earnestness, with mocking humour, and with biting satire, Swift preached to them the doctrine of independence.

He appeals to them in the name of Ireland's wrongs. He paints to them Ireland's woes in colours that will never fade. He draws a terrible picture of what Ireland might seem to a stranger, and ends thus:

My heart is too heavy to continue this irony longer; for it is manifest that whatever stranger took such a journey would be apt to think himself travelling in Lapland or Iceland rather than in a country so favoured by nature as ours, both in fruitfulness of soil and temperature of climate. The miserable dens, and dirt, and dwellings of the people, the general desolation in most parts of the kingdom, the old seats of the nobility and gentry all in ruins, and no new ones in their stead; the families of farmers, who pay great rents, living in filth and nastiness, upon butter-milk and potatoes, without a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house as convenient as an English hog-stye to receive them. These may, indeed, be comfortable sights to an English spectator who comes for a short time only to learn the language and return back to his own country, whither he finds all his wealth transmitted. *Nostra miseria est.*

To the Dean of Emly Swift writes: "There is not an acre in Ireland turned to half its advantage; yet it is better improved than the people; and all those evils are the effects of English tyranny—so your sons and grandchildren will find to their sorrow."

In another paper, full of grim humour and bitter satire, Swift says: "I confess myself to be touched with a very sensible pleasure when I hear of a mortality in any country parish or village, where the wretches are forced to pay for a filthy cabin and two ridges of potatoes treble the worth; brought up to steal and beg for want of work; to whom death would be the best thing to be wished for."

He goes on: "The people are the riches of a nation; not so in Ireland." Accordingly he crowns this bitter reflection by what seemed to be "the last effort of his despair and genius," his *modest proposal* for the utilisation of Irish children to enrich the nation. There is nothing like it in the realm of

rather recommend buying the children alive than dressing them hot from the knife, as we do roasting pigs. . . . I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance. For it would greatly lessen the number of Papists, with whom we are yearly overrun, being the principal breeders of the nation, as well as our most dangerous enemies. . . . Again, the maintenance of a hundred thousand children from two years old and upwards cannot be computed at less than ten shillings apiece per annum, the nation's stock will be increased fifty thousand pounds per annum, beside the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

"Some persons of desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people who are aged, diseased, or maimed; and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day rotting by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can reasonably be expected. And as to the young labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition; they cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment to a degree that, if at any time accidentally hired to

then realised that the fate of Ireland was sealed. The Countess of Suffolk, the King's favourite, still held out hope, and for a time Swift persevered. He appealed, protested, suggested. It was of no avail; Walpole was at the helm. "It was only crying to deaf ears." Enraged at the *indifference of the Irish themselves*, as much as at the tyranny of their English masters, he writes to Francis Grant: "I have done some small services to this kingdom, but I can do no more. I have too many years upon me, and have too much sickness. I am out of favour at Court, where I was well received during two summers six or seven years ago. The governing people here do not love me; for as corrupt as England is, it is a habitation of saints in comparison of Ireland. We are slaves, and knaves, and fools."

Although after this Swift did many patriotic acts for Ireland, this letter marks the close of his career as an Irish politician. The political battle which he had fought for Ireland "so long and so bravely must now pass to other hands."

the window of my bedroom." What a world of pathos in these simple words! When the grave closed over Stella, darkness and despair closed over Swift. After that night he was never heard to mention the name of Stella.

In the dreary Deanery Swift is now alone, with nothing to remind him of Stella but a lock of her hair. After his death it was found in a secret repository, with the simple superscription in Swift's handwriting: "Only a woman's hair." What intense pathos under the mask of cynicism! "Only the memory of a woman's love, of a life's devotion—only that and nothing more."

Swift now renounces all public dinners, and lives in the great Deanery house the life of a recluse. Lives in sullen silence like a fallen King. To Windar he writes: "I am as much a monk as any in Spain. I eat my morsel alone like a King."

No friend, no triumph could calm the demoniacal side of his nature. One would think that the remembrance of past victories would have calmed his troubled spirit. His life had not been failure, it had been one of struggle, but victory. In England, by the satire of his merciless pen, he had mauled the Whigs, and crushed the wits. In Ireland the rabble, who at first hissed, at last cheered him. The clergy and gentry, who at first received him coldly, at last vied with each other to do him honour. Walpole, the Premier, who at first treated him with indignity, was at last compelled, in deference to Swift, to recall his Lord Lieutenant and cancel his

Swift's life, which he never DIVULGED to a human being, and which heroically he carried with him in silence to the tomb. These were the secret stings that often goaded him to fury.

After the death of Stella, Swift's melancholy deepened, and his chronic rage increased. The people among whom he lived, and for whom he did so much, he utterly despised. He detested all classes, from the Lord Lieutenant to the meanest beggar. There is no parallel to such hatred of a people in all history, "unless it be Juvenal's hatred of the Egyptians and Dante's detestation of the people of Pisa." Yet Swift's hatred was different from theirs. His hatred was mingled with divine pity. This was the secret of his patriotism and his sympathy towards them. He declined to accept the title of Patriot, which the Irish nation, with acclamation, bestowed upon him.

To Pope he writes: "I do profess, without affectation, that your kind opinion of me as a patriot, since you call it so, is what I do not deserve; because what I do is owing to perfect rage and resentment, and the mortifying sight of slavery, folly, and baseness about me, among which I am forced to live."

Ireland was to him a place of banishment—a wretched, dirty dog-hole, a prison, but good enough to die in.

To Sheridan he exclaims: "When I die, carry my flesh and bones to Holyhead, for I will not lie in a country of slaves."

I find myself disposed every year, or rather every month, to be more angry and revengeful; and my rage is so ignoble, that it descends even to resent the folly and baseness of the enslaved people among whom I live. I knew an old lord in Leicestershire, who amused himself with mending pitchforks and spades for his tenants gratis. I have higher ideas left, if I were nearer to objects on which I might employ them. . . . Yet I love *la bagatelle* better than ever, for, finding it troublesome to read at night, and the company here growing tasteless, I am always writing bad prose or worse verses, either of rage or raillery, whereof some few escape to give offence or mirth, and the rest are burnt. . . . I am forced to play at small game, to set the beasts here a-madding, merely for want of better game. "Tentanda vice est qua me quoque possim."* . . .

He goes on:

I built a wall five years ago, and when the masons played the knaves, nothing delighted me so much as to stand by while my servants threw down what was amiss. I have likewise seen a monkey overthrow all the dishes and plates in the kitchen, merely for the pleasure of seeing them tumble and hearing the clatter they made in their fall. I wish you would invite me to such another entertainment; but you think as I ought to think, that it is time for me to have done with the world; and so I would if I could get into a better before I was called into the best, and not die here in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole. I wonder you are not ashamed to let me pine away in this kingdom, while you are out of power.

How strange that even Swift's friends, who had known him best and longest, should only half understand him! Bolingbroke interpreted the last sentence literally, which Swift meant ironically. Accordingly, next year, Lord Bolingbroke procured for Swift a living near London. The offer might be partly made through selfishness on the part of Bolingbroke. He was still waiting and watching anxiously with

* New ways I must attempt my grovelling name,
To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame.

Before the passing bell begun,
The news through half the town is run.
Oh, may we all for death prepare;
What has he left? and who's his heir?
I know no more than what the news is;
'Tis all bequeathed to public uses.
To public uses; there's a whim;
What had the public done for him?
Mere envy, avarice, and pride;
He gave it all, but first he died.
And had the Dean in all the nation
No worthy friend, no poor relation?
So ready to do strangers good,
Forgetting his own flesh and blood.

From Dublin soon to London spread,
'Tis told at Court—the Dean is dead;
And Lady Suffolk,* in the spleen,
Runs laughing up to tell the Queen.
The Queen, so gracious, mild and good,
Cries, Is he gone? 'Tis time he should.
He's dead, you say; then let him rot;
I'm glad the medals were forgot.†

I promised him, I own, but when?
I only was the Princess then;
But now, as consort of the King,
You know 'tis quite another thing.
Now Chartres, at Sir Robert's levée,
Tells with a sneer the tidings heavy;
Why, if he died without his shoes,
Cries Bob, I'm sorry for the news.

Here shift the scene to represent
How those I love my death lament.
Poor Pope will grieve a month, and Gay
A week, and Arbuthnot a day.

* Mrs. Howard, at one time a favourite with the Dean.

† Which the Dean expected and was promised in return for a small present he sent to her when Princess of Wales. The medals were to be sent in four months, but never came.

old general, the Duke of Schomberg. The Duke was drowned in Ireland, and was buried under the altar of St. Patrick's Cathedral. Swift wrote Lord Carteret to ask Lord Fitzwalter and his wife—the surviving relatives of the late Duke—to send him £50 to erect a monument to his memory, or he would do it at his own expense. "And if for an excuse," says Swift, "they pretend they will send for his body, let them know it is mine, and rather than send it, I will take up the bones, and make of it a skeleton, and put it in my registry office, to be a memorial of their baseness to all generations." The request was refused. Swift was indignant, and at once ordered a monument to be erected, out of the Cathedral funds, to the memory of the great Duke. Swift, in the inscription which he caused to be engraved on the monument, reflected severely on the penuriousness and ingratitude of his surviving relatives. Considering how the famous Dutch general was related to the King of Prussia, this rash act on the part of Swift might have led to serious consequences. Swift gives a graphic description of this episode in a letter to Lord Bolingbroke :

MY LORD,—You are to know that this kind of procedure is a practice I have followed some years ; for if a tradesman cheats me, I put him immediately into a newspaper, with the bare matter of fact, which the rogues are grown so afraid of that they are often ready to fall on their knees for pardon. I began this scheme with a long record upon a large piece of black marble in my own cathedral, on the north side of the altar, whereon I put a Latin inscription, which I took care to have published in seven London newspapers. The grand-daughter of the old Duke of Schomberg would not send me the £50 to

myself; but, sir, he is a madman possessed with the devil. I renounce him."

Accordingly Swift, in his speech of thanks, vindicated himself against what he called Lord Allen's insolent, false, scandalous, malicious, and, in a particular degree, perfidious charge; acknowledged himself author of the Drapier's Letters; declared that he was no Jacobite or traitor to the Protestant Succession, although, with many wise and good men, he thoroughly opposed many actions of the Government as being diametrically opposed to the best interests both of England and Ireland. He at the same time gave his lordship an undesirable immortality in that stinging satire called "Traulus." He frankly admits his lordship's madness, although not sufficient to excuse his mischief.

Positive and overbearing,
Changing still and still adhering,
Spiteful, peevish, rude, untoward,
Fierce in tongue, in heart a coward;
Reputation ever tearing,
Ever dearest friendship swearing;
Judgment weak and passion strong,
Always various, always wrong;
Provocation never waits,
Where he loves or where he hates;
Talks whatever comes in his head,
Wishes it were all unsaid.
Hence the mean and sordid soul,
Like his body rank and foul;
Hence that wild suspicious peep,
Like a rogue that steals a sheep;
Hence he learned the butcher's guile,
How to cut your throat and smile.

On several other occasions was his lordship

my scorn upon the opinion I had of her justice, her taste, and good sense; especially when the last of those letters, whereof I have just received the original from Mr. Pope, was signed with my name; and why I should disguise my hand, which you know very well, and yet sign my name, is both ridiculous and unaccountable. . . . I am sensible that I owe a great deal of this usage to Sir Robert Walpole.

Swift's biographers have been greatly exercised in discovering the forger of the letters. Sir Walter Scott blames Pilkington. Mr. Crocker blames Barber. I think it is more likely to have been some of Walpole's hirelings. There can be no doubt that Walpole tried every conceivable artifice to destroy Swift's influence with the Queen. Swift indignantly resented this injury, and in some of his satirical poems has given to Walpole an unenviable immortality.

In Swift's epistle to Gay he satirises Walpole thus:

I knew a brazen Minister of State
Who bore for twice ten years the public hate.
In every mouth the question most in vogue
Was, When will they turn out this odious rogue?
A juncture happened in his highest pride;
While he went robbing on, old master* died.
We thought there now remained no room to doubt;
His work is done; the Minister† must out.
The Court invited more than one or two:
Will you, Sir Spencer? or, will you? or you?
But not a soul his office durst accept;
The subtle knave had all the plunder swept;
And such was then the temper of the times,
He owed his preservation to his crimes.

* King George I. † Sir Robert Walpole.

A pamphlet in Sir Bob's defence
Will never fail to bring in pence;
Nor be concerned about the sale,
He pays his workmen on the nail.
A prince the moment he is crowned
Inherits every virtue round.
As emblems of the Sovereign power,
Like other bubbles in the Tower;
Is generous, valiant, just, and wise,
And so continues till he dies;
His humble senate this professes
In all their speeches, votes, addresses;
But once you fix him in the tomb
His virtues fade, his vices bloom;
And each perfection wrong imputed
Is fully at his death computed.
The loads of poems in his praise,
Ascending make one funeral blaze.
As soon as you can hear his knell,
This God on earth turns devil in H—;
And lo his Ministers of State,
Transformed to imps, his levée waits;
Where in the scenes of endless woe,
They ply their former arts below.

. . . . . .

Then, poet, if you mean to thrive,
Employ your muse on kings alive;
With prudence gathering up a cluster,
Of all the virtues you can muster,
Which, formed into a garland sweet,
Lay humbly at your monarch's feet;
Who, as the odours reach his throne,
Will smile and think them all his own.

. . . . . .

Your garland in the following reign,
Change but the names, will do again.

. . . . . .

Two bordering wits contend for glory,
And one is Whig, and one is Tory.

. . . . . .

of his fortune. He writes imploring the Dean to pay him a visit, and on Lord Mayor's day to see a show of his own making. Swift sent him a very touching reply declining the invitation.

About this time a young clergyman, Pilkington by name, and his wife wormed themselves into an intimacy at the Deanery. Mrs. Pilkington was young, bright, witty, and had a knack of versifying. She composed a short poem or two in praise of the Dean, which he accepted. Pilkington was anxious to settle in London. Accordingly Swift, in his generous way, gave him a letter of introduction to Bolingbroke, Carteret, Pope, the Lord Mayor, and others, all of whom, for Swift's sake, befriended and helped him. The Lord Mayor appointed him as his chaplain and was kind to him beyond measure. Pilkington and his wife, however, turned out to be a worthless pair, a disgrace to all who had patronised them. Bad they must have been when even Bolingbroke* wrote to Swift complaining of their shameless immorality.

Another of Swift's *protégées*, whom he recommended to the same set of patrons, was Mrs. Barber, the Irish poetess, on whose behalf the three forged letters were sent to the Queen in Swift's name. She turned out better than the Pilkingtons. Yet, doubtless it

* Bolingbroke, in his letter to Swift, asks: "What are you doing? Good, I am sure. But of what kind? Pray, Mr. Dean, be a little more cautious in your recommendations. The fellow wants morals, and, as I hear, decency sometimes."

Dean entered, the Serjeant advanced to him with great haughtiness and said:

"Doctor Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, I am Serjeant Bettesworth."

"Of what regiment?" answered Swift.

"Oh, Mr. Dean," said Bettesworth, "we know your powers of raillery. You know well enough that I am one of His Majesty's Serjeants-at-Law."

"What then, sir?"

"Why then, sir, I am come to demand of you whether you are the author of this poem"—producing it—"and these villainous lines on me?" at the same time reading them aloud with great emphasis and much gesticulation.

"Sir," said Swift, "it was a piece of advice given to me in my early days by Lord Somers never to own or disown any writing laid to my charge, because if I did this in some cases, whatever I did not disown afterwards would infallibly be imputed to me as mine. Now, sir, I take this to have been a very wise maxim, and as such have followed it ever since; and I believe it will hardly be in the power of all your rhetoric, as great a master as you are of it, to make me swerve from that rule."

After a very angry parley, Bettesworth began "to raise his voice," and give such indications of violence that Worrel, with some of his guests and menservants, rushed into the room, and in a somewhat summarily manner the Serjeant and his footman suddenly found themselves on the street in terror and dismay. The news of the outrage spread like wildfire. The citizens

has them not; and you can sustain any machine in a furred gown."

Another incident happened this year, which Swift took more seriously to heart than the mad freak of Bettesworth—Lord Bolingbroke retired to the South of France. This interrupted for a time their brilliant correspondence, which to both of them had been a source of profound pleasure.

About this time he drew the following tremendous picture of the Day of Judgment as a satire upon the paltry bickerings of the sects:

> While each pale sinner hung his head,
> Jove, nodding, shook the heavens, and said:
> "Offending race of human kind,
> By reason, nature, learning, blind;
> You who through frailty step'd aside,
> And you who never fell—through pride;
> You who in different sects were shamm'd,
> And come to see each other dam'd—
> So some folks told you; but they knew
> No more of Jove's designs than you.
> The world's mad business now is o'er,
> And I resent these pranks no more.
> I to such blockheads set my wit,
> I d—— such fools. Go, go, you're bit."

Paradoxical as it may appear, he who penned these terrible lines was a man of intense sensitivity of nature—divine in pity.

In 1735 Swift published his treatise on "The Art of Polite Conversation"—a severe satire on the namby-pamby talk of "polite society," which often annoyed and enraged Swift. It was dramatised, and acted in Dublin Theatre before crowded audiences

with great *éclat*. What a world of thought and labour Swift must have had in gathering and arranging the material for this extraordinary piece of satire!

I should here like to have reproduced Swift's vivid picture of an aristocratic dinner-party of a century and a half ago; but time and space forbid. I shall, however, quote a sentence or two to illustrate the style of talk.

The dinner is over. The ladies have retired to the drawing-room with great formality. The gentlemen are alone.

Lord Smart (to butler).—"Come, John, bring us a fresh bottle."

Colonel Aitwit.—"Ay, my lord, and pray let him carry off the dead men, as we say in the army" (meaning the empty bottles).

Lord Sparkish (to Mr. Neverout).—"Is not that bottle full?"

Neverout.—"Yes, my lord; full of emptiness."

Lord Smart.—"And, d'ye hear, John, bring clean glasses."

Colonel.—"I'll keep mine, for I think wine is the best liquid to wash glasses in."

And so on this small talk flows, and might flow for ever, did not sleep at last shut their eyes, and weariness their mouths. Such was a dinner-party a hundred and fifty years ago. Are they more intellectual now?

This year Swift also finished that admirable but comical satire entitled "Directions to Servants." It is the most whimsical piece of masterly irony that

Swift ever penned. It proves that he was not only conversant with the frivolities and inanities of aristocratic life, but also with the little trickeries, frauds, and falsehoods of domestic life. To describe it is impossible; it must be read. It even pleases the Edinburgh Reviewers, and that is saying much. I have only space for one of the directions: "When you find years coming on without hopes of a place at Court . . . I directly advise you to go upon the road, which is the only post of honour left you; there you will meet many of your old comrades, and live a short life and a merry one." Swift next instructs them how to behave themselves when led to the gallows.

"Such," says Taine, "are his directions to servants; he was relating what *he* had suffered."

One would have thought that a man like Swift would have treated domestics like children—ignorant and illiterate children—as altogether beneath his notice. But, no. He seems from this treatise to have studied their habits with as much enthusiasm and interest as Darwin did the habits of worms. What an omniscient master Swift must have been! One evening, at dinner with Lord Chesterfield, after the servants had retired, he said to his lordship: "That fellow," meaning the footman who had stood behind his chair and served him, "that fellow, since we sat down to dinner, has committed fifteen mistakes." Yet Swift was the kindest and most sympathetic of masters. His domestics adored him. Yet he never spared their faults. He rebuked them

in such comical ways that they never could forget the rebuke or be offended. At dinner one evening, in the Deanery, a joint had been overdone. He desired the butler to call the cook. The fat old woman instantly made her appearance in the dining-room in fear and trembling.

"Sweetheart," said Swift, "take this mutton down to the kitchen, and do it less."

In utter amazement, she stammered out, "Sir, that is impossible."

"Then, for the future," said Swift, "if you must commit faults, commit faults that can be mended."

There is another well-authenticated story, thoroughly characteristic of Swift's treatment of servants, related by Sir Walter Scott. The son of an Irish squire was one morning riding near his father's house at Kells, when he met a gentleman on horse-back reading. A little surprised, he asked the servant, who followed him at some distance, where they came from?

"From the 'Black Lion,'" answered the groom.

"And where are you going?"

"To heaven, I believe," rejoined the servant, "for my master is praying and I am fasting."

On further inquiry it proved that the Dean, who was then going to Laracor, had rebuked the man for presenting him in the morning with dirty riding-boots.

"Were they clean," answered the fellow, "they would soon be dirty again."

"And if you eat your breakfast," retorted the Dean, "you will soon be hungry again, so you shall proceed without it."

After the death of his old Presbyterian housekeeper, who (as Swift said) had been his "Walpole" for thirty years, his servants gave him trouble. The butler, for treating an old beggar-woman unkindly at the Deanery door, was dismissed by Swift with the most comical certificate ever written. The fellow went to London, and through the comicality of the certificate was engaged by Pope, and continued with him until Pope died.

Swift, however, knew how to encourage as well as rebuke servants. On one occasion, at an Irish inn where he was staying for a few days, he was struck by the intelligence and attention of a maid-servant. On his departure he gave her a guinea, and desired her to purchase some Irish stuff, meaning a dress of Irish manufacture. On his return to the inn a year afterwards, he desired the young maiden to show him what she had purchased with the guinea. She rushed out of the room, and instantly returned with an apronful of books. "Pray, sir," said the maid, "this was the best Irish stuff that I could find." It was a complete set of the Dean's works. Doubtless Swift must have been amazed, amused, and gratified.

The Dean took great pains to teach servants manners. On one occasion he received from a certain duke a present of game. The messenger, an Irish page-boy, when ushered into Swift's studio,

had made the presentation in rather a curt, awkward way.

"You ignorant Irish donkey," said Swift, "that is not the way to address a dignitary of the Church. Take my chair, you young rascal, and I will teach you manners."

The Dean, taking the game in his own hand, and advancing to where the boy sat, made a profound bow, and said:

"Your reverence, his grace the Duke of —— desired me to present you with his compliments and this game."

"Very well done, my boy," said the little page, addressing Swift; "here is a half-crown for you."

The Dean gave him a *crown*.

"Upon another occasion," says Sir Walter Scott, "Swift and some of his friends resolved to celebrate a classical 'Saturnalia' at the Deanery, and actually placed their servants at table, while they themselves attended them. The butler, who represented the Dean, acted his master to the life. He sent Swift to the cellar in quest of some particular wine, then affected to be discontented with the wine he brought, and commanded him to bring another sort. The Dean submissively obeyed, took the bottle to the sideboard and decanted it, while the butler still abused him in his own style. . . . When the tables were removed, the scene was reversed, an entertainment served up to the proper guests, and everything conducted by the very servants who had partaken of the 'Saturnalia' in an orderly and

respectful manner." "These anecdotes," says Sir Walter Scott, "serve to show that the Dean took a particular pleasure in observing this class of society, and explains the extraordinary insight which he obtained into their habits and character."

In the year 1737 Swift received the freedom of the City of Cork in a silver box, which he returned with the following haughty letter:

To THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE LORD MAYOR, ALDERMEN, SHERIFFS, AND COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORK.

GENTLEMEN,— . . . I could have wished, as I am a private man, that in the instrument of my freedom you had pleased to assign your reasons for making choice of me. . . . I cannot discover in the whole parchment scrip any one reason offered. Next, as to the silver box, there is not so much as my name upon it, nor any one syllable to show it was a present from your city. Therefore I have sent back the box and instrument of freedom to you, leaving to your choice whether to insert the reasons for which you were pleased to give me my freedom, or bestow the box upon some more worthy person whom you may have an intention to honour, because it will equally fit everybody.

One would naturally think that the citizens of Cork would have resented such cavalier treatment with indignation. But no, the Lord Mayor instantly replied in the following letter, which shows how Swift was adored even in the remote parts of Ireland:

"The many services," says the Lord Mayor, "that the public have received from you are the motives that induce us to make you one of our citizens; and as they will ever remain monuments to your glory, we imagined it needless to make any inscription on the box, and especially as we have no

precedents on our books for any such. But as so great and discerning a patriot merits all distinction that can be made, I have, by the consent and approbation of the council, directed the box to you, and hope what is inscribed upon it, although greatly inferior to what your merit is entitled to, will, however, demonstrate the great regard and respect we have for you, on account of the many singular services your pen and your counsel have done this poor country."

Was humble pie ever eaten by a corporation with such dignity and grace?

Thus ended this strange episode. Swift cared not a feather for this Irish homage, but accepted it to vex Walpole and his Government, especially the Primate of Ireland, Swift's implacable foe and Walpole's firm friend.

The last public act which Swift performed for Ireland was in the Exchange of Dublin, when he signed a petition to Government, and made a powerful speech against lowering the value of gold.

When the Act was passed and proclamation of it made, Swift ordered a black flag to be displayed from the steeple of the cathedral, and caused a dumb or muffled peal to be rung from the bells of St. Patrick's as a signal of national disaster.

The excitement of the mob was intense. The Primate of Ireland—a mere puppet in the hands of Walpole—had been active and influential in passing the Act, was in danger from the mob, and his palace had to be guarded by soldiers. At the Lord Mayor's

entertainment the Archbishop publicly charged Swift "with having inflamed the prejudices of the people."

"I inflame them?" retorted Swift. "Had I lifted up a finger, they would have torn you to pieces." This retort Swift afterwards expressed in poetry thus:

> At Dublin's high feast sat Primate and Dean,
> Both dressed like divines, with band and face clean.
> Quoth Hugh of Armagh, "The mob is grown bold."
> "Ay, ay," quoth the Dean, "the cause is old gold."
> "No, no," quoth the Primate, "if causes we sift,
> This mischief arises from witty Dean Swift."
> The smart one replied: "There's no wit in the case,
> And nothing of that ever troubled your Grace.
> . . . . . .
> It is a pity a prelate should die without law,
> But if I say the word, take care of Armagh."

Thus ended Swift's last interference with public affairs. These are specimens of the troubles which annoyed and enraged Swift, when there was no Stella to calm the troubled soul and charm away the demon spirit. Although Swift's life work was well-nigh ended, his fame continued and his name was still a power in the land. His influence was felt from the helm of state in England to the badging of beggars in Ireland.

Swift's immense popularity, however, could not prevent him from sinking into the vale of years. Some half-dozen years before this he had written:

> See how the Dean begins to break!

These words were now literally true. This year his eyes failed, his memory failed, his mind failed; he was but the shadow of his former self. His unsocial

deafness prevented him from going into society. From some strange vow or whim, which Johnson afterwards imitated, Swift refused the aid of spectacles. Consequently his only resource was writing at night what he burned in the morning. The usual concomitant evils of age, the loss of health, and the loss of friends Swift now felt keenly. He writes to his friend, Sir John Stanley: "As to myself, years and infirmities have sunk my spirits to nothing. My English friends are all either dead or in exile, or by a prudent oblivion have utterly dropped me, having loved this present world. And to this country I am only a favourite of my old friends the rabble, and I return their love because I know none else who deserve it."

During the last few years death had made sad havoc among his friends. Addison died in 1719, Stella in 1728, Congreve in 1729, Gay in 1732, Arbuthnot in 1734, Lady Masham in 1734, and the Earl of Peterborough in 1735. Bolingbroke had retired to France, and Pope alone remained, to whom he writes: "I have nobody now left but you. Pray outlive me, and then die as soon as you please, but without pain."

At this time, unsatisfactory as Swift's health was, his humour had not quite left him. He could still crack his jokes. To an old friend who had invited him to spend a few weeks at his country residence, Swift writes jestingly:

It is one good sign that giddiness is peculiar to youth, and I find I grow giddier as I grow older; and therefore, conse-

quently, I grow younger. If you will remove six miles nearer, I shall be content to come sponge upon you, as poor as you are; for I cannot venture to be half a day's journey from Dublin, because there is no sufficient medium of flesh between my skin and my bones, particularly in the parts that lie upon the saddle. Therefore be pleased to send me three dozen ounces of flesh before I attempt such a venture, or get me a six mile inn between this town and your house.

Alas! Swift's jestings are almost over. A few more jests, a few more letters, a few more kindly acts, a few more lamentations over his own state and that of Ireland, a few more prayers to be delivered from the evil to come, and his life work is done. The infirmities of old age are now gathering thick and fast upon him.

About the end of this year it became painfully visible to his friends that the gloom of melancholy was settling upon him.

It is sad to note that at each recurring birthday, when bells were ringing, and bonfires blazing, and the city illuminated in honour of her patriot Dean, Swift should retire to his closet to fast and pray, and to read the third chapter of Job, and in stifled sobs curse the day of his birth. Years before his death, his usual salutation at taking leave of his dearest friends who came to visit at the Deanery was characteristic of his eccentricity and deep-seated melancholy. "Good-bye," he said; "may God bless you. I trust that we shall never meet again."

The last pathetic letter that he ever wrote was to Mrs. Whitway:

I have been very miserable all night, and to-day extremely deaf and full of pain. I am so stupid and confounded, that I

covered it to have been "what medical science now recognises as 'Labyrinthine Vertigo'"; or, as it is sometimes called, in honour of the pathologist who discovered it, "La Maladie de Méniere," said to be one of the most awful maladies that is known to surgery.

In 1742 Swift's intellect became entirely clouded, and he ceased to be responsible. That year the Court of Chancery appointed for him guardians. He had yet at times lucid intervals; during one of these he wrote his last epigram. His attendants had taken him out for carriage exercise. When they came to the park, Swift saw a new building, and asked what it was designed for. To which Dr. Kingsbury answered:

"That, Mr. Dean, is the magazine for arms and powder, for the security of the city."

"Oh, oh," says the Dean, pulling out his note-book, "let me take an item of that. This is worth remarking. 'My tablets,' as Hamlet says, 'my tablet's memory put down that.'" Which produced the following epigram, the last he ever wrote:

Behold a proof of Irish sense,
Here Irish wit is seen;
When nothing's left that's worth defence,
They build a magazine.

Swift is now a confirmed lunatic. His reason gave way entirely; it was a total eclipse. He ceased to be responsible for his actions. "He was the Struldbrug his own fancy had foreboded." It is recorded that he paced his chamber ten hours a day, eating as he walked. He hated the very sight of humankind. If

to pay their homage, to take the last fond look of their patriot dean, and "to beg a hair of him for memory."

The city that gave him birth gave him sepulture. In obedience to his will, he was buried privately at midnight, without pomp, in St. Patrick's Cathedral. Over his grave is the terrible epitaph which he wrote himself:

Hic depositum est corpus
JONATHAN SWIFT, S.T.P.
Hujus Ecclesiæ Cathedralis
Decani.
Ubi sæva indignatio
Uterius cor Lacerare nequit.
Abi, viator,
Et imitare, si Poteris,
Strenuum pro Virili Libertatis vindicem.
Obiit Anno (1745):
Mensis (Octobris) Die (19);
Ætatis Anno (78).

After death, when his will was opened, it was found that he had bequeathed his whole fortune to build a lunatic asylum. Strange legacy, yet thoroughly characteristic of Swift—characteristic of his sympathy for those who, in after ages, were afflicted like himself—characteristic of his unselfishness—the recipients of his charity could never thank him—characteristic of his satire, the gift being emblematic of what the world needs.

CONCLUSION.

SWIFT: ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER.

SWIFT, born in poverty, educated on charity, by force of genius stepped forward to be the companion of kings, the leader of men, the guider of nations, and the instructor of mankind.

In person Swift was tall, portly, and commanding, with aquiline features, swarthy complexion, stern countenance, and eyes azure as the heavens, full of scrutiny and suspicion, and sparkling with mirth and mockery. He never laughed, seldom smiled, and when angry his scowl was awful. In manner abrupt, in step rapid, in voice imperious; his tone to everybody, even to Queen Caroline, was that of an acknowledged superior. No figure was better known to the London of a century and a half ago than that of Swift.

From boyhood Swift was ambitious and daring —the audaciousness of the youth investing his all in the purchase of the knacker's horse that he might enjoy a day's triumph over his schoolfellows, was characteristic of the man who left the house of the Whig Premier vowing vengeance; who treated the

Tory Ministry with "the petulance of a Royal mistress," the one day caressing and the next scolding them. "If we let these great Ministers," said Swift, "pretend too much, there will be no governing them."

Swift's start in life was sad. Without a father to guide him, with no pleasing memories of childhood, without an alma mater—"for Dublin University was hardly that to him"—he broke its rules, despised its men, and received his degree grudgingly, almost with pitying scorn. Swift was not a great scholar. "Indeed, the world's great men have not been great scholars, nor its great scholars great men."

From College he was ushered into the Temple family; at first to be Sir William's pupil, afterwards his secretary. At this time he was conscious of intellectual strength; but in what it lay as yet he did not quite know.

"The Battle of the Books" and the "Tale of a Tub" soon taught him that satire was his power. As a prose satirist Swift was the greatest of all time. His mission was to lash mankind, and he wielded the lash unmercifully.* He writes to Congreve:

> My hate, whose lash just Heaven has long decreed,
> Shall on a day make sin and folly bleed.

In the luxurious home of Temple, Swift, as an ambitious young man, had many opportunities which he improved. Here he saw the comings and goings of the great men whose movements were making part of the history of Europe. "Here, too, he laid the foundation of his literary and political renown."

* Rabelais' satire amuses us. Swift's satire angers us.

Indeed, his attitude towards politics was one of scepticism and pessimism. He was often sick to death of politics and everything appertaining to them. He was too great a genius to belong wholly to any party.

As an Irish politician, "he was a patriot under the guise of a cynic." He was as independent of the Irish masses as he was of the Irish classes. It has been well said that Swift was Ireland's truest patriot; her first, almost her last.

Great as Swift was as a *littérateur*, politician, and Irish nationalist, his personality was greater still. The magnetism of his intellectuality was powerfully felt by all who came into contact with him. Harley and Bolingbroke felt it; Pope and Addison felt it; Congreve and Gay felt it; Prior and Arbuthnot felt it. All of them came under the spell of his powerful intellect. His spirit has deeply imbued the politics and literature of Europe. He helped to form Voltaire, and Byron, and Carlyle. "It is the fate of genius to be more admired than loved." It was otherwise with Swift; his illustrious contemporaries not only admired but adored him, and clung to him to the end.

Swift's idiosyncrasies were strongly marked and very striking. I shall enumerate a few. In Swift there was much of the demoniacal element—that mystic something, that potency and energy, which Goethe tells us is in all great men. Stella and Vanessa felt its influence. Vanessa writes to Swift: "There is something so awful in your look at times that strikes me dumb." Again she writes: "What

marks are there of deity that are not to be found in you?"

Another feature of Swift's character was his boundless pride. He was not vain, he was too proud for that. Vanity, he says, was a mark of humility, not of pride. "I make no figure," he writes to Stella, "but at Court, when I affect to turn away from a lord to the meanest of my acquaintances." His boast through life was that he made proud dukes and lords pay him the first visit, and to procure his friendship compelled the titled slaves to stoop in proportion to their rank. This acting of dignity was one of Swift's pardonable weaknesses, which he foolishly mistook for independence.

Another idiosyncrasy in Swift was superstition. He writes to Vanessa: "I always draw up the bedclothes with my left hand, which is a superstition I have learned these ten years." This reminds us of Johnson numbering the lamp-posts and counting his steps from a given point to his dwelling, and always entering with his left foot first. After this, need we wonder that superstition has built the cathedrals of Europe?

Another phase of his character was benevolence. The first money he could call his own he gave out in small loans to the distressed but deserving poor, and thus saved two hundred families from ruin, and placed them in a comfortable way of life. He badged the city beggars, anticipating the organisation of charitable societies. For years he kept a levée in the Deanery, attended by the Lord Lieutenant

downwards; and in the lanes of Dublin he kept a "seraglio" of distressed old women. He named them partly from distinction and partly from whim. One was Cancerina, another Stumpeana, and a third Pollagowan, and so on. Stories innumerable are told how he helped these poor old creatures in many ways. To some he gave the wherewithal to open little shops, frequently visiting and purchasing from them trifling articles at three times their value. To others he gave money, never more than one piece at a time, and for that reason carried a pocketful of small silver coin of different value. Delany says "that Swift was munificent in his charities." These words are true. He founded some of the noblest charities, and did countless acts of generosity, secretly and delicately; lending money to Gay, giving it to Harrison, pensioning Mrs. Dingley, purchasing glebe lands at Laracor to enrich his successors, and at last bequeathing his all to build a madhouse. Benevolence was the secret of Swift's economy, "which fools mistook for avarice."

Swift often complained of ingratitude, but I believe that he owed more than he himself knew to the character which he had acquired for benevolence.

Swift has been denounced as a misanthrope; if he was, "he was one of the kindliest that ever lived;" he had a deep side of tenderness.

Bolingbroke and Oxford, who had been kind to him, though the one was in exile and the other in the Tower, he never mentioned without emotion.

Who can forget the scene of Sheridan's removal

from Dublin? In the little parlour, where with Sheridan he had spent so many pleasant hours, as the last picture was taken from the wall, Swift retired into a closet weeping like a child.

His likings and dislikings were often strange and startling.

He cared not for fame; he appraised it at its true worth—he knew it was only notoriety. When bells were ringing, and bonfires blazing, and processions marching to the sound of music in honour of his birthday, he scornfully refused to accept the proffered homage, retiring into his closet to curse and to pray. To him "it was an anniversary of unmitigated sadness."

He cared not for music. To Lady Carteret he writes: "I would not give sixpence for all the music in the universe."

He cared not for money; he never gave a thought to the money value of his works; "Pope and Mrs. Barber might have it and welcome." "If Heaven," he said, "had looked upon riches to be valuable, they would not have been given to so many scoundrels." One of the most memorable utterances of Swift was that a man should have money in his head but not in his heart. He himself "put not his trust in money, but put his money in trust."

He had no likings for translators. "I am a little angry," he said, "when those who have genius lay it out in translations."

He cared not for luxurious feeding. He would enjoy a herring with the Vans, or bacon and beans

with Addison, as much as he did turtle with the Premier. When Bolingbroke sent him the menu of a luxurious dinner, "Pooh!" replied Swift, "I care nothing for your bill of fare, send me a bill of your company."

His likings were as peculiar as his dislikings.

He liked love disguised.

The books he liked best were classical, historical, and biographical, in which, like Lord Eldon's sheep's-head, there was a deal of good confused eating.

He was fond of physical exercise. He enjoyed walking, but preferred riding, thinking it good for the liver and the brain. To Archbishop King he writes that he "rowed after health like a waterman, and rode after it like a postboy."

He adored the Church of England; "he not only worshipped in it, but worshipped it." Yet the one grand mistake of his life was going into the Church. The clerical robe was not for him; it impeded his career. As a religionist, Swift loved traditionalism, not rationalism. What creed meant to him we cannot quite know. This, at least, we do know, that he treated the Thirty-nine Articles as the whale did Jonah—swallowed, but could not digest them.

He loved purity.

Swinburne accuses Carlyle of indecency. Thackeray accuses Swift of indelicacy. Mistaken judgments. Swift never penned a line with the deliberate intention of pandering to lewdness, but to disgust the vicious with licentiousness. The very purity of Swift makes him appear, to the superficial, seemingly impure.

He loved to analyse the actions of humankind, and pry into their ways of life. His eye was keen and penetrating; he saw with perfect clearness not merely through the shams and subterfuges, but "through the degrading conditions of physical existence as well." The vision was not healthy; Shakespeare's description of Cassius fits Swift admirably:

> . . . He reads much,
> Is a great observer; and quite
> Looks through the deeds of men.

This was the secret of Swift's misanthropy.

He had intense sympathy with suffering humanity. This was the secret of his savageness.

Swift's dislikings were as emphatic as his likings. Swift was a good hater. He hated insincerity. He was never insincere himself. Even his dislike of humanity, although unreasonable, was sincere.

He hated hypocrisy. He was, as Bolingbroke said, "a hypocrite reversed." His adroit and nimble mind could quickly detect it in others. "I renounce your philosophy," he said to Bolingbroke, "because it is not your practice." He kept a calendar of friends, in which he classified them as "ungrateful, indifferent, and doubtful."

He cared not for public opinion; his contempt of it had a sort of grandeur in it. To Archbishop King he writes: "My comfort is that contempt in Ireland will have no sort of mortification for me."

He hated the country that gave him birth. Ireland he called "a scoundrel island," Dublin "a city of idiots."

He hated cant. Johnson's denunciation of cant

Listen to him:

"Drown the world; I am not content with despising it. I would anger it if I could. I never rise without finding life a more insignificant thing than it was the day before. Life is a ridiculous tragedy, a mad farce. It was never intended by God to be a blessing. The bad and the stupid are the best fitted for life. Our affections give us the finest kind of happiness and the greatest misery in the world. I almost wish that I never had a friend. Virtue is generally a misfortune."

The logical outcome of such doctrine who could tell? One thing seems certain, that Swift was born with a tendency to brain disease, the progress and subtle development of which can be traced with perfect accuracy through the whole course of his life — a life which began in mystery, continued in misery, and ended in madness. This, I think, explains and excuses much in his career which hitherto has been difficult to interpret.

Poor Swift! No one has been better known and less understood.

I have endeavoured to sift his life with diligence, to analyse it with sympathy, to interpret it with judgment; yet conscious am I of inability "to rise to the conception of such a character as Swift."

The contrasts that met in him are very striking, almost incredible:

Of humble birth—The companion of kings;
A dunce at school and college—"With the best brains in Europe;"

At first, Temple's slave—Afterwards, Temple's master;
In penury—The dispenser of Royal patronage;
Frugal in superfluities—Providing for the needy necessaries;
The reliever of indigence—The discourager of idleness;
A hater of humanity—A lover of individuals;
A staunch friend—A bitter foe;
A man of gigantic powers—A man of perfect trifles;
Grimly earnest—Satirical in mocking humour;
A fury in wrath—Divine in pity;
A Whig in politics—A Tory in Churchmanship;
With no distinctive creed—The Church's greatest champion;
With no distinctive politics—The dictator of the politics of England;
Without hypocrisy—An inverted hypocrite;
The applauder of genius—The scoffer of blockheads;
The helper of merit—The scourger of villains;
The idol of Ireland—The terror of England.

Such was Swift.

"There is but one thing under heaven to which a man should bow—Genius. There is but one thing to which a man should kneel—Goodness;" and so long as these gifts of mind remain the twin objects of human aspiration, the memory of Jonathan Swift will hold a permanent place in the Pantheon of universal literature.

THE END.

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