

CRITICAL ESTIMATES OF JONATHAN SWIFT
DURING THE VICTORIAN ERA

By

JAMES NEAL ELLIOTT

Bachelor of Arts

Central State College

Edmond, Oklahoma

1959

Submitted to the
faculty of the Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
July, 1966

OKLAHOMA
STATE UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

JAN 26 1967

CRITICAL ESTIMATES OF JONATHAN SWIFT
DURING THE VICTORIAN ERA

Thesis Approved:

Floyd Douglas

Thesis Adviser

Donald Wilbur

J. W. Boyer

Dean of the Graduate School

627030

PREFACE

That Jonathan Swift is one of the greatest writers of English literature is now an accepted fact. Somewhat overlooked is his eclipse in the nineteenth century. Although many scholars have commented in general concerning the backgrounds of the two ages, none have, to my knowledge, tried to put Swift in the Victorian frame of references in an attempt to better understand why he was so unpopular. That is the purpose of this work, although by no means does it pretend to be an exhaustive study of all attitudes. What I have attempted to do is take certain Victorian aspects -- optimism, anxiety, practicality, etc. -- and contrast them either with Swift's writings or Swift's age to show that his eclipse was almost of necessity.

This paper in no manner is an attempt to denigrate the major writers of the Victorian period, regardless of the fact that some of them may be cast in an unfavorable light. We of the twentieth century too often have a tendency to disparage anything "Victorian," but any apparent lack of empathy in this paper is not intentional. If it appears that I have too baldly stated a debatable point, it is my syntax and not my sympathies that one should criticize. When I first started researching this

work, I, too, had a tendency to be anti-Victorian. Now, however, my sympathy lies more and more with this age. Many of the social problems we face in the twentieth century (and have not solved) were first encountered by the Victorians -- and they had no previous body of knowledge to turn to for answers. One thinks immediately of industrialization, universal suffrage, mass education, economic instability, and others too multitudinous to mention. This is a paper of observations, not one of closely reasoned arguments. I hope that it will be read in that manner.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Loyd Douglas for observations that first pointed out the possibilities of research in this area, and to Dr. D. Judson Milburn for suggestions that kept me off too many limbs. Although there are still many branches I shall probably have to vacate, the fault is mine, not my advisers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE TWO AGES	12
Swift and His Age	12
Victorianism: The Background	16
III. OPTIMISM	20
IV. ANXIETY	35
Revolution	35
Industrialization: The Fear of Mechanical Man	41
Religious Anxiety	45
V. INTELLECTUAL ATTITUDES	61
Practicality: A Contrast of the Two Ages	61
Reading Public	65
Selected Authors: Attitudes	70
Critics of the Age	74
VI. CONCLUSION	90
NOTES	94
BIBLIOGRAPHY	103

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is a certain group of people in literature who assume the attitude of purists in their appreciation of literature. They live in an aesthetic world of absolute values. Their argument runs in the main that what is "good" in literature will be good for all time. Perhaps no other figure in English letters refutes this idea as much as does Jonathan Swift, for during the period under study a great majority of the critics gave Swift short shrift in their estimates. In the nineteenth century, with the exception of Thackeray, the critics all paid lip service to Swift, but in all of their criticisms, diaries, journals, letters, etc. they uttered clichés that Swift was good, great, or unexcelled -- then stated nothing more. This is rather unusual. How could a man of such stature in his own age as Swift come from the very heights of literary eminence down to the depths he occupied during the Victorian era?

It is not only the drop from the public eye, for anyone who studies literature realizes that there is usually a drop in popularity of a predecessor; what is also strange is that these critics not only gave him mere lip service but failed to understand him as critics now do.

If one should follow the paths of criticisms of Swift -- from the criticisms of his contemporaries through those of the Victorians -- he would notice the turnings and vagaries of Prince Posterity, whom the author of A Tale of a Tub addressed with such faith.

When one starts to analyze the popularity of a man of the nature of Swift, especially the popularity of Swift in his own time, he runs one risk of lauding him too highly or the other risk of passing off what he wrote as being merely political, religious, or personal writings of a topical nature. One thing is certain: a man with gifts as Swift possessed would not and did not go unnoticed. In all probability he had many more enemies than he had friends; after all, when one is the manager of a political party's propaganda mill, he does not endear himself to many people. And even those whom he does attract are attracted quite often for selfish reasons. Others would be friendly for the obvious reason that to make an enemy of a person in such power would be most unwise. Too, satirists are not the type to inspire especial warmth. Nevertheless, Swift did enjoy the esteem of many men of letters in his own age. Pope, for instance, was a lifelong friend and published some of Swift's writings. Sir William Temple, one of the outstanding men of the age, thought highly of Swift. Among the men of letters of his own time, Swift was on a par in reputation with Dryden -- although mainly in a different

field -- and stood above Gay, Defoe, Addison, and Steele in contemporary thought.

Swift's popularity through his writings was not only esteemed by his fellow literary figures, but in Ireland yet today Swift is considered one of the heroes of the country, for the Dean almost single-handedly stood off the Crown with his Drapier's Letters. And during his years of political power he numbered almost all of the Tory ministry among his acquaintances -- one is rather fearful of saying friends, for his job with the various politicians precluded warmth from those with whom he worked. One has more the feeling that there was a wary tolerance on their parts for one who, for all they knew, was just as capable of writing for one ministry as another.

In the later years of Swift's life, especially after he had departed from London, he did lose his political power to a certain degree, but he managed to maintain the esteem of most of the many friends he had made in literary circles, and his popularity among the people of Ireland was almost to the point of idolization. With his death in 1745, he still stood large among the literary figures of the age.

Thirty-five years later, the dominant figure of the literary world was Dr. Johnson, and in his Lives of the English Poets (1779-82) he, too, felt that Swift was one of the outstanding figures of the immediately preceding

years. Johnson called Dryden, Pope, Swift, and Addison the most important authors of the Restoration and Queen Anne periods. Johnson apparently understood Swift quite well, for he felt that Swift, among others, "gave scope to his moralistic approach to literature, and their works were based on the principles of 'general nature' that he valued."¹ This "moralistic approach" is something to keep in mind when one studies the Victorian age, for this was to a degree one of the reasons that put Swift into such an eclipse. The Victorians did not feel that Swift's morals, as exhibited in his writings were of high quality. All in all, Johnson's estimate of Swift was most laudatory and quite perceptive. In his Lives of the Poets Johnson does not dwell at all on Swift's use of coarse language; he apparently understands its usage -- although he does not condone it. Johnson stated that Swift's wit was perhaps as told by Dr. Delany, who knew Swift better and who felt that Swift's writing was

...delightful in many instances, and salutary even where it is most offensive; when you consider his strict truth, his fortitude in resisting oppression and arbitrary power; his fidelity in friendship, his sincere love and zeal for religion, his uprightness in making right resolutions, and his steadiness in adhering to them....²

Although Johnson himself did not wholeheartedly agree with this estimate, he was honest enough to include it in his own evaluation of Swift. And although he felt that Swift was a great writer, he did foreshadow the revulsion felt by the Victorians.

The greatest difficulty that occurs in analyzing his character is to discover by what depravity of intellect he took delight in revolting ideas from which almost every other mind shrinks with disgust.³

When this is read out of context, it appears that Johnson, too, is disgusted with Swift, but it does not sound that way at all when one finds that which follows. Johnson states that Swift was a most original writer, had good diction, easiness and gaiety, exact rhymes, no hard-laboured expression, no redundancies, and so forth. All in all, one sees that Swift was a writer whom Johnson admired, but one finds also the seeds of future condemnation.

Johnson's lengthy appraisal of Swift in Lives of the Poets was the last major analysis of him for seventy years. Swift was mentioned in the century ahead, to be sure; but he was mentioned only as if it were expected that he be mentioned. Of those who commented, some liked him, some did not, and some did not care.

For instance, in 1819 Shelley writes in "A Philosophical View of Reform"⁴ that Swift was a good author. The allusion to Swift was merely made in passing; the subject was not Swift per se. Nowhere else does Shelley mention Swift. In 1823 Carlyle writes in a letter to John A. Carlyle, recommending what to read for enjoyment and for knowledge:

Swift is also a first rate fellow: his Gulliver, and Tale of a Tub, and many of his smaller pieces are inimitable in their way. Have you read all of Shakespeare? Have you read Fielding's novels?

They are genuine things; though if you were not a decent fellow, I should pause before recommending them, their morality is so loose.⁵

Earlier, in March of 1821, he had written to John Carlyle telling him what to read: "Dean Swift is a merry grinning dog. Did you ever see his 'Tale of a Tub'?" Other than this, Carlyle mentions nothing of Swift. One must remember that these lines were written before Carlyle became one of the really major critics of his time. One wonders why he did not comment more on Swift later on. That he should recommend Swift without reservations but tell John that he recommends Fielding with his "loose morals" only because John is such a "decent" fellow strikes one as a bit unusual.

Coleridge, too, has withheld any real comment, although G. A. Aitken in the Athenaeum criticizes Coleridge's earlier estimate of Johnathan Swift. From the Aitken article it appears that Coleridge has written something concerning Swift. According to Aitken, Coleridge rather left-handedly apologizes for Swift's method of presentation of material. Aitken quotes Coleridge as stating that he dislikes the Houyhnhnms because they did not show perfection as Swift apparently meant them to do. He further quotes Coleridge as stating that he admired Swift, but "Laputa I would expunge altogether. It is a wretched abortion, the product of spleen and ignorance and self conceit."⁶

Wordsworth's comments are also rather bland. To one "Miss Fenwick" he mentioned Fielding's works, Don Quixote,

Gil Blas, Gulliver's Travels, and "A Tale of a Tub" as boy-hood favourites."⁷

Although it was not written by him, Byron was quoted by Trelawney in 1822 while they were discussing rhymes, saying that "if you are curious about these matters, look in Swift. I will send you a volume; he beats us all hollow, his rhymes are wonderful."⁸

Neither DeQuincey nor Ruskin has anything to say about Swift.

George Eliot in a letter to Charles Lee Lewes in 1863 says that

I am glad you enjoyed "Esmond." It is a fine book. Since you have been interested in the historical suggestions, I recommend you to read Thackeray's "Lectures on the English Humorists," which are all about men of the same period. There is a more exaggerated estimate of Swift and Addison than is implied in "Esmond;" and the excessive laudation of men who are considerably below the tip top of human nature both in their lives and genius, rather vitiates the Lectures, which are otherwise admirable and are delightful reading.⁹

It sounds almost as if Eliot has been reading some other article than Thackeray's. Thackeray does admit that Swift has some good points, but for the most part, the "excessive laudation" Eliot mentions cannot be found in the English Humorists.

W. S. Landor in 1858 in a letter to a Mr. Forster states that Swift's "Tale of a Tub" is "the work I have red [sic] oftener than any other prose work of our language....What a writer!"¹⁰ Nowhere else does Landor have anything to say

about Swift. If this is adulation, one would expect Landor to have commented more extensively elsewhere.

Robert Lewis Stevenson, apparently caring nothing for what posterity would say about his omission, said nothing.

As one looks back over these comments, he notices a strange parallelism between what these people have said and what Dr. Johnson had said several decades before. They like Swift, as did Johnson; they admire his rhymes, as did Johnson; they are rather uncertain about his word choice, as was Johnson. Perhaps the very magisterial quality of Johnson's Lives of the Poets would be enough to frighten off any nay-sayer. There is no doubt that Dr. Johnson did command a vast amount of literary influence and he, like any outstanding literary figure, was not above ponderous, ex cathedra pronouncements.

Is it not rather strange that a man of the importance of Jonathan Swift, the man who is now included among the greatest of literary figures of all of history -- the greatest in satire -- could be so shunted aside? For seventy-one years -- from the time of Lives of the Poets until English Humorists of the 18th Century (1851) -- no major attention was devoted to Swift. And then in 1851 when Thackeray published his English Humorists, Swift was finally exhumed. These lectures, as Dodds states, "on Swift and Fielding are the most famous of all, and in each case Thackeray helped to set the tone which was to remain fixed in the public

mind and to be the admiration and despair of subsequent judicial critics."¹¹

About Steele, another subject of the lectures, Dodd states that

Thackeray likes Steele's respect for women, and his tenderness towards children, the sweet naturalness of his writing, and his reckless good humor. There is, however, something a little condescending in his praise of Steele. He delights to honor him but finds it necessary to excuse him at length. He gives us too much of the 'poor Dick Steele' business.... Thackeray had no intent to damn by faint praise, nor does he, but he almost damns by forgiveness.¹²

This is not the problem faced in the lecture on Swift.

Swift's writings for the most part are neglected, and all of Swift's shortcomings, real and imagined, are paraded for all to see. One can go through line after line of English Humorists and find Thackeray castigating Swift:

"I think I would rather have had a potato and a friendly word from Goldsmith, than have been beholden to the Dean for a guinea and a dinner."¹³ It is not that Goldsmith was a favorite of Thackeray's, for he later states in a letter to a friend that he intends to show Goldsmith for the poor person that he was. In this lecture on Swift, Thackeray suggests that because Swift held his family devotions with such secrecy that the guests were never aware of them, Swift either did not actually hold them or that he held Catholic services, for he goes on to state that Swift's friendship with Bolingbroke and Pope was of Swift's own

choosing; and they all must have had "conversations... which would not bear to be repeated at other men's boards."¹⁴

In a particularly flamboyant section of his speech he asks rhetorically

Ah, man!...What made you to swear to fatal vows, and bind yourself to a life-long hypocrisy before the Heaven which you adored with such real wonder, humility, and reverence? For Swift's was a reverent, was a pious spirit -- for Swift could love and could pray.¹⁵

Then in the next paragraph Thackeray states, "It is my belief that he suffered frightfully from the consciousness of his own scepticism, and that he had bent his pride so far down as to put his apostasy out to hire."¹⁶ As for Gulliver's Travels, Thackeray considers that a reader must admire the "humour and conduct" (whatever that is), but "as for the moral, I think it horrible, shameful, unmanly, blasphemous."¹⁷ In A Modest Proposal Thackeray says that Swift "enters the nursery with the tread and gaiety of an ogre."¹⁸

Dodds states that for Sterne "only a small part of that looseness will Thackeray attribute to the times, so much freer than those of the Victorian ladies and gentlemen who were listening to the lecture."¹⁹ For Swift, apparently, Thackeray will not allow even that much. Thackeray himself attributes his dislike of Swift to something else. In a letter to James Hannay in 1854 he gives his apparent reasons:

...and as for Swift, you haven't made me alter my opinion. I admire, or rather admit his power as much as you do; but I don't admire that kind of power so much as I did fifteen years ago, or twenty shall we say. Love is a higher intellectual exercise than hatred; and when you get one or two more of those young ones you write so pleasantly about, you'll come over to the side of the kind ways, I think, rather than the cruel ones.²⁰

Thus, there is the problem: is a great work always a great work? Or does each generation determine the greatness of different literary pieces? If a great work of art is always great, there is an anomaly in the Romantic and Victorian rejection of Swift. Because of the revival of interest in Swift during the twentieth century, it is possible that we of this age have many things in common with Swift -- appreciation for ribald satire, aversion to extremes, a goodly amount of cynicism, appreciation of the common, exact word, and so on. If the revival of interest shows a closeness of relationship, then conversely the Victorians apparently felt no such kinship, even if they claimed they did admire and appreciate Swift.

By a study of the backgrounds of the Age of Swift and the background of the nineteenth century, I hope to be able to draw some useful conclusions as to why Swift was not a writer whom the Victorians truly admired or honestly liked.

CHAPTER II

THE TWO AGES

Swift and His Age

From the preceding criticisms, one can see that Swift was not attuned to what the Victorians wanted their writers to say, and yet for his own age he was accepted as a man of his times. If one moves back to the eighteenth century, to the time of Swift, he finds that what Swift had to say was not what the Victorians wanted, needed, or enjoyed. Yet Swift was writing just as much for his age and for his contemporaries as Macaulay, Thackeray, Arnold, Carlyle, and others were writing for theirs.

Swift's age accepted him, with reservations of course: they accepted his style, his philosophy, his intellect. Churchman or not, it was in the seventeenth century tradition, as Anthony Collins pointed out in Discourse concerning Ridicule, that even the most reverend and eminent divines sanctioned and used "Insult, Buffoonery, Banter, Ridicule, Irony, Mockery and bitter Railing."¹ One could imagine that many of these more eminent divines may have let the position and prestige of their offices hold their pens in check at a certain point short of open nastiness;

but this was not the case with Swift. He was a satirist, and he was a satirist in an age that understood his methods of attack. When he had a point to make, he made it -- regardless of his position of clergyman, and the majority of his contemporaries accepted his method of presentation, although once again one must admit, with reservations.

Although Swift was a high churchman, this was of no special consequence to him nor to his contemporaries who read or utilized his writings. Although he was "often an embarrassment both to the Church and to the Tories," as one of his contemporaries said, he was still "one of the greatest Droles that ever appear'd upon the Stage of the World."² For his age, Swift was just as widely read as was Dickens of the next century. Although Dickens may have had his tens of thousands of readers, Swift had his thousands -- and his thousands were those in power. As a matter of fact, when many of his books were first published in Dublin, they were quickly pirated by the London publishers and reprinted; and this pirating included many that were spuriously attributed to him.³

When Swift attacked the Moderns in The Battle of the Books, he had the support of the majority of the learned men of his day, even though some of them may have held reservations concerning the crudity of some of his attacks. When in A Tale of a Tub he attacked those who

would pick the church and state apart, he had the support of those in power in both church and state. In The Battle of the Books, in addition to satirizing the "hack" moderns of his day, he wished "to expose the numerous corruptions in religion and learning which might furnish matter for a satire that would be useful and diverting."⁴

Later, in the last years of Queen Anne's reign, Swift was at the very height of his political powers when he was what might be called the publicity manager of the Tory party. Perhaps he was not universally loved -- as one critic says, you cannot love an oak tree -- but he was respected; and even more important, he was listened to by an attentive audience. Whether he was hated by the opposition or openly courted by his own party, he was a man of tremendous influence. As mentioned before, he was a churchman, and being a churchman he had certain ecclesiastical duties to perform. This did not affect his writing when his political or basic moral philosophies were involved. Although Archbishop King may have reminded him to write on subjects "suitable to his calling,"⁵ Swift would still use crudity to get his points across to those whom he needed to impress. It was not a matter of writing something aesthetically beautiful; it was a matter of expediency. One can equate almost any propaganda with this line of thinking: it is

not a question of trying to show people the magnanimity of one's mind, one's toleration of the opposite side of a question, or one's true sympathies on an issue; it is a matter of focusing attention on a certain viewpoint.

In the "Preface" to A Tale of a Tub when Swift speaks of a "large Pederastick School," the scatological aspect was of no importance. What Swift meant to do was to cut, and to cut deeply, what he felt to be corruption in education. When in "Section IV" Swift crudely attacks the Catholic church by satirizing their sending of papal bulls to offending kings, he does so because he believes that Catholics are a danger to the Church of England. When Swift speaks of the "Modern Wits" as having a "highly celebrated talent" of "deducting Similitudes, Allusions, and Applications, very Surprising, Agreeable, and Apposite, from the Pudenda of either Sex, together with their proper uses," he was not using obscenity for its pleasurable usage. It is more a use of "nastiness" in the hope that the slime would attach itself to his objects of satire. Incidentally, many Augustans utilized this as a standard method of attacking not only Catholics, but any object of their dislike.

From the preceding material, one can see that Swift in his age was not untypical; but when one starts to read that which was published in the Victorian age as compared with that which Swift wrote, he gains the defin-

ite impression that there was very little in Swift that would appeal to the Victorians.

Victorianism: The Background

It should be clear to any man who does much reading in the two radically different ages -- the early decades of the eighteenth century and the middle decades of the nineteenth -- that England had changed. Any knowledgeable reader recalls that the political and industrial revolutions began in the latter part of the eighteenth century. It was not, however, until the fruits of the far-reaching legislation of 1828-35 began to be tasted that the middle class came definitely into its own. England in the time of Swift was rather rational, highly aristocratic, and to a degree static; England in the middle of the nineteenth century had become more emotional, more middle class, and, to a greater degree, progressive. This new middle class of the nineteenth century wanted new power, or, as Houghton states the case, "wealth and outraged pride" demanded equal social and political power.⁶

And not only did the new middle class want equal power, but they wanted their writers to reflect the new age and the new beliefs that their ascendancy had brought to the scene. Again and again in reading comments by and concerning the Victorians there are those omnipresent words, written over and over: earnestness, duty, optimism,

anxiety, perfectibility, dogmatism, and morals. One should not make the mistake of thinking that these apparently conflicting terms are found only in Victorian times -- that would be an error. The same emotions and beliefs can be found in any age if one looks only half carefully. However, in the Victorian age one has the feeling that these terms become of paramount importance, for they give strong indications of the Victorian frame of mind.

After one does reading in this era only a little beyond the surface, he realizes that these terms stand out, for this was an age of transition far greater than any other age in history has ever undergone. The Victorians of 1830 were men who were born into one age with one set of seemingly permanent values; and they grew up in a rapidly changing one. These were men who were born into an age when a man of birth was considered far above any man of wealth, no matter what the poverty or immorality of the former or the wealth and uprightness of the latter. These were men who were born in an age in which the real wealth of any man was land; and who grew up in an age where a wealthy, middle-class individual was able to buy and sell hundreds of the "landed gentry." These were men who were born into an England in which the Anglican Church spoke for the country, and yet a majority of the populace was of non-Anglican background.

It was, indeed a time when old beliefs were dying and new ones were yet to be formed. Although Englishmen had

always felt the equal to any man, the Reform Bill of 1832 had stated that there were obviously class differences. Now, however, the middle class also had the franchise. The aristocrats who for so long had managed to hold the middle class out of power were not to be trusted. After all, it was only through the very real danger of rebellion that the aristocrats had given up such a degree of their power. Therefore, the new age could not turn to them for enlightenment. The Established Church was not the answer, for it was still controlled by the aristocrats, and besides it was not the church of belief of many men. One could not turn back to the Greeks and Romans for advice (although some tried), for it was obvious that trains and steamships and mills were not compatible with those two cultures. It was an age dominated by science, new knowledge, new criticisms.

Somewhere along the line of intellectual thought Swift had lost communication with the Victorians. One could, in all probability, trace the paths of intellectual, political, economical, social, and education history -- to mention just a few -- and find the slow changes of beliefs from one age to another. That would be manifestly impossible in a paper of this nature. Among the Victorians, however, there are three rather broad categories of belief that apparently hold a few of the keys as to why Swift was not understood, not liked by the Victorians.

Among these are optimism, anxiety, and intellectual characteristics. These qualities in the age as contrasted

with such qualities in the age of Swift and with that which Swift wrote should give one a better understanding for the eclipse of Swift.

CHAPTER III

OPTIMISM

Perhaps optimism in the Victorian age had its beginnings in the Renaissance, that is in the Baconian idea that each age builds on the body of truth found in the last. To this idea the utilitarian philosophers of the early Victorian age felt that the effect of external circumstances might well be able to shape for the good all of man's environment.

And this belief in the effect of external circumstances led to optimism in all things. There was the belief in perfectibility, an assurance that progress would take place, the feeling that science could be the answer to all of man's problems, a belief that England was rapidly rising to the heights that all civilizations aspired toward. Again, if these external circumstances might well be able to shape for the good all of man's environment, then man should utilize anything at hand in order to better his conditions -- wise laws, democratic government, and universal education until the millennium. This was the Utilitarian creed of Mill and Jeremy Bentham and Malthus and Hartley, and it meant

In politics, an almost unbounded confidence in the efficacy of two things: representative government, and complete freedom of discussion
....In psychology, his fundamental doctrine

was the formation of all human character by circumstances, through the universal Principle of Association, and the consequent unlimited possibility of improving the moral and intellectual condition of mankind by education.¹

This belief in progress was shared by others, almost all of the others of this time, as a matter of fact. Carlyle states

Find Mankind where though wilt, thou findest it in living movement, in progress faster or slower: the Phoenix soars aloft, hovers with outstretched wings, filling Earth with her music; or, as now, she sinks, and with spherical swan-song immolates herself in flame, that she may soar the higher and sing the clearer.²

And one can go on and on with various other writers of the time who, too, felt that this was an age of progress, an age of optimism, an age of perfectibility:

Because evil and wrong-doing and darkness are acknowledged to be effects of causes, sums of conditions, terms in a series, they are to be brought to their end, or weakened and narrowed, by right action and endeavour.³

And W. K. Clifford states that "Those who can read the signs of the times read in them that the kingdom of Man is at Hand."⁴ And it was felt that only a matter of time was needed to cure all diseases, stamp out all immorality and evil; man would become perfect. Darwin himself stated that evolution "worked solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection" to a utopia.⁵ One can see this underlying belief of perfectibility! One hundred years later would make no difference. They felt it would

come. And this is one time that we can agree with Thackeray that Swift would indeed come in "with the tread and gaiety of an ogre" on prophecies such as these, for perfectibility was not one of the shrines where Swift worshipped. In A Tale of a Tub Swift squashes the idea of perfectibility with his

For Health is but one Thing, and has always been the same, whereas Diseases are by the thousands, besides new and daily Additions; So, all the Virtues that have been ever in Mankind, are to be counted upon a few Fingers, but his Follies and Vices are innumerable, and Time adds hourly to the Heap.

It is easy to understand that Swift is not a believer in progress. T. B. Macaulay, one of the most popular writers of the age, felt that the English are

the greatest and most highly civilized people that ever the world saw, have spread their dominion over every quarter of the globe...have created a maritime power which would annihilate in a quarter of an hour the navies of Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Venice, and Genoa together, have carried the science of healing, the means of locomotion and correspondence, every mechanical art, every manufacture, every thing that promotes the convenience of life to a perfection which our ancestors would have thought magical.⁶

In short, he felt that "the history of England is emphatically the history of progress."⁷ This very "Establishment of New Empires" so lauded by Macaulay was prophesied also by Swift in "A Digression on Madness."

The very same Principle that influences a Bully to break the Windows of a Whore, who has jilted him, naturally stirs up a Great Prince to Raise mighty Armies, and dream of nothing but Sieges, Battles and Victories.

One can see the very antithesis of Swift in almost each part of Macaulay's series, especially when one recalls Gulliver's "Voyage to Brobdingnag." Gulliver has just finished telling the king of the Brobdingnagians of all of the greatnesses of England; the king has a hearty laugh, strokes Gulliver gently, as if amazed that man could be so material, and observed

...how contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as I: "and yet," said he, "I dare engage, these creatures have their titles and distinctions of honour; they contrive little nests and burrows, that they call houses and cities; they make a figure in dress and equipage; they love, they fight, they dispute, they cheat, they betray.

Later when Gulliver has yet another audience with the king, he is asked for more details of his country and replies much as the king suspects he would. Then the peroration of the Brobdingnagian king brands Swift as anti-perfectible for all time:

But by what I have gathered from your own relation, and the answers I have with much pains wringed and extorted from you, I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth.

Also, the recently cited passage by Macaulay is reminiscent of the "Voyage to Lilliput" wherein Gulliver is asked to do the very things that Macaulay threatens England is capable of doing. Gulliver is asked to "annihilate...the navies of Tyre" but in this instance, it is Blefuscu, the enemy of

Lilliput. Gulliver-Swift finds a pretence for not doing so, and as a result is sentenced to be blinded.

Too, the "science of healing" was foreshadowed by Swift with the comment from Chapter VI of "A Voyage to Brobdingnag."

But besides real diseases we are subject to many that are only imaginary, for which the physicians have invented imaginary cures; these have their several names, and so have the drugs that are proper for them.

Admittedly, the Victorians were possessed by the feeling of optimistic nationalism which wealth and power can give to any nation; as a matter of fact, one is very strongly reminded of America of the 1960's when he reads that there was "a vulgar enthusiasm for sheer size and quantity -- bigger populations, longer lines of railroads, more tons of coal -- which Arnold ridiculed in Culture and Anarchy."⁸ The belief in the twin gods of business and science coupled for bigger and better things, leading toward optimism and perfectibility of man, was again told by Macaulay and believed by the majority of the Victorians when he stated that "every improvement of the means of locomotion benefits mankind morally and intellectually as well as materially," because it "not only facilitates the interchange of the various productions of nature and art, but tends to remove national and provincial antipathies, and to bind together all the branches of the great human family."⁹ One could imagine what Swift would have had to

say about the above quotation, especially how "locomotion" improves the "intellect." But it was not only Macaulay who felt this way. The same feelings were given by other major figures of the age, including Coleridge, Arnold, and Carlyle -- although they were more discriminating, more rebellious against the obvious materialism of Macaulay, more perceptive as to where this course may be leading mankind.¹⁰

Progress and science, however, were equated in the Victorian mind to a great degree. And it is in this very area, i.e., science, that Swift's ideas were quite incompatible with many Victorian feelings. Swift's apparent anti-science is evidenced most strongly in "A Voyage to Laputa" wherein he appears to attack all science and any form of "speculation." This segment of Gulliver's Travels is often criticized as being the weakest part of the book. It appears, though, that one should not interpret this section too quickly. Agreement with Swift is possible if the reader thinks of Swift as satirizing the perversion of science, not science per se. The food-from-feces, ice-to-gunpowder, roof-to-foundation, paint-mixing-by-the-blind experiments that Gulliver encountered in his third voyage are familiar to all. It must be remembered that the 1726 scientific methods were a far cry from those of the mid-eighteen hundreds.

One can very easily rationalize Swift's apparent anti-science when he understands some of the rather misleading

experiments that were carried on under the auspices of the members of the Dublin Philosophical Society. As Ehrenpreis states, Swift "need not have learned of" some of the rather speculative experiments from this society "but that they were available to him many years before he embarked upon his great literary enterprises is certain."¹¹ Some of the rather strange undertakings of members of this society were as follows: Allen Mullen, M. D. of Trinity, was quite fond of experimenting on dogs. He once "pumped eighteen ounces of water into the thorax of one, and found that it grew short-winded."¹² Into another he "injected an infusion of opium mixed with brandy and water; the dog died."¹³ For some rather strange reason Mullen also "fed a die to a dog: 'he kept it in his body twenty-four hours, when it came out it had lost half its weight, but retain'd its cubical figure most accurately, and every point on each side.'"¹⁴ One would have to admit that Swift was anti-intellectual concerning such scientific experiments, but as Ehrenpreis says, "to a nature as order-loving as Swift's, the miscellaneous enthusiasms of half-baked experimenters would by contrast seem a jungle."¹⁵ Seen in this light, Swift's apparent hostility to science is, to say the least, understandable.

What the perceptive reader of "A Voyage to Laputa" should perceive is that Swift's attack here is double-edged: not only does he inveigh against those perversions of man as a rational animal, but just as strongly does he say to the

reader, "Do not be too credulous!" The overly credulous man is not a thinking man. He is a man who cannot distinguish between that which is merely ingenious and that which is of lasting greatness, i.e., the difference between perhaps the discovery of a principle and the application of it versus the many gadgets that come thereof. Perhaps to be honest with Swift one should say that he was being anti-intellectual, but with reason. If we recall, in "The Digression Concerning Madness" Swift satirizes the shallow thinkers, the credulous persons, by stating that "Credulity is a more peaceful Possession of the Mind than Curiosity, so far more preferable is that Wisdom, which converses about the Surface, to that pretended Philosophy which enters into the Depth of Things ...". He goes on to say in his most celebrated passage that the really wise man skims all knowledge from the surface and achieves true "Felicity, called, the Possession of being-well-deceived; The Serene Peaceful State of being a Fool among Knaves."

Swift possibly would have been correct in his estimate of "progress through science" idolized by the typical Victorian, for one of the most significant aspects of this optimism through belief in science is that the

Industrial Revolution owed very little to scientific theory. The great inventors -- Watt, Stephenson, Arkwright, Hargreaves -- had had little mathematics and less science. Their inventions were almost entirely empirical; and the 'science' often praised by the

practical men is simply the art of mechanical contrivance available to anyone with an ingenious head.¹⁶

For instance, Stephenson, who, when asked how he managed to invent all of his machines, stated that by imagining all of the various parts in their various positions and by "dint of trying, he hit upon the practical combination."¹⁷ "Practical combination" becomes a key in this phrase, for it reflects the utilitarian philosophy of the Victorians, and the practicality of their philosophy; and such experimenting to find the correct combinations is the object of some of the most amusing of Swift's satire.

In *A Voyage to Laputa*, one finds exactly this kind of speculative learning being attacked. At the Academy of Lagado one entire side of the academy had been set aside "to the advancers of speculative learning." Among some of the more classical experiments was the "Stephenson" of Lagado, who was by "dint of trying" to hit upon the practical combination of words, phrases, and clauses "to piece together...out of those rich materials to give the world a complete body of all arts and sciences." Gulliver gives his "humblest acknowledgement to this illustrious person for his great communicativeness" and promises to give the professor full credit for the invention upon ever reaching England.

Now, at the risk of over-simplification, or by a leap from one mountain peak to the next, try to imagine the

Victorian optimistic belief in perfectibility, progress, and science all wrapped together in a single mind and then bring in Darwin's so-called "discovery" of natural evolution. If one did believe in an age of change, of progress, then the compatibility of Darwin's belief was an orderly adjunct to other beliefs which were not too critically analyzed. If man had come from an amoeba, to fish, to mammal, to monkey, to man -- then, if this were true, the end need not be man as he was known at that time. Could it not be just as effectively argued, or if not argued, believed, that it was but a short distance to complete perfection?

Without going into religious beliefs of the time, let us assume that we as Victorians do believe in progress and in science; it is almost a corollary that we are in a mechanistic universe, one in which human progress takes place regardless of what we as individuals do. To put it another way, if we are to progress technically, we do not need to apply the principles of human progress: they are ordained by outside forces, and we move toward perfection in a biologically mechanical manner with no volition on our part. As Spencer argued, men would more and more resemble a social animal than a predatory one and "Progress, therefore is not an accident, but a necessity....As surely as there is... any meaning in such terms as habit, custom, practice" so surely must "evil and immorality disappear; so surely must man become perfect."¹⁸

It is in such passages as these that a writer from a distance runs the most dangerous risk of research: he runs the risk of criticizing out of context or the doubly dangerous risk of taking to task a philosopher who stands in considerable esteem for all of history; however, without attempting to criticize what Spencer wrote, let one take the average reader of the time and assume that that person has not read Spencer, but only felt, even if only vaguely felt, that man is capable of perfection. Just call it the spirit of the age, or the character of the people! This is the man who would care nothing for Swift. It is such a man as this -- the one who takes these grand concepts of evolution and social Darwinism and tries to telescope them into his own little epoch of history that Swift would have denounced. If he be not the "Serene, Peaceful...Fool among Knaves," he is at least the optimistic fool for being so overly credulous, for being such a top-skimmer. For, as we see, Swift was not optimistic. He was not optimistic about politics. He had served and he knew his fellow men too well. In Chapter VI of "A Voyage to Laputa" he states that

Every senator in the great council of a nation, after he had delivered his opinion, and argued in the defense of it, should be obliged to give his vote directly contrary; because if that were done, the result would infallibly terminate in the good of the public.

And this should be done because

The bulk of the people consisted wholly of discoverers, witnesses, informers, accusers, prosecutors, evidences, swearers; together with

their several subservient and subaltern instruments; all under the colours and conduct of ministers of state and their deputies.

✓ Nor was he optimistic about religion, for "we are taught by the tritest Maxim...that Religion being the best of Things, its Corruptions are likely to be the worst." He had the fear that the enthusiasm and zeal of the Dissenters were an absolute corruption of the Anglican philosophy of God. He was not optimistic about wisdom with age, for he had the Struldbrugs to achieve great age but with it senility, greed, filthiness and "The least miserable among them appear to be those who turn to dotage, and entirely lose their memories." He was not optimistic about brotherhood, for he had the Yahoos bickering, cheating, and fighting -- unable to set up more than a most rudimentary form of civilization. He was not optimistic about lawyers, doctors, sailors, ministers, scientists, ladies-in-waiting, nor almost any other person or occupation. ✓ It was not that man was not capable of reason -- he was; it was that man absolutely refused to be rational. Man inevitably let his fancy "run away with his Reason, which I have observed from long Experience, to be a very light Rider, and easily shook off."

Even immortality was a transient thing as far as Swift was concerned, and as much as he himself wished to write the history of Queen Anne's reign in order to be remembered, he felt that time would treat all men in a rather cavalier manner, just as Posterity makes short shrift of the surface

writers of his age, so perhaps will everything man does be remembered only fleetingly.

The Originals were posted fresh upon all Gates and Corners of Streets; but returning in a very few Hours to take a Review, they were all torn down, and fresh ones in their Places.

He had no great love of life, no feeling that man would ever, perhaps could ever become better. In the letter to Sympson appended to Gulliver's Travels one finds that the culmination of anti-optimism, anti-perfectibility, anti-progress is hammered home by Swift. He gives no false hopes to his readers, no up-lifting of the spirit, no reason to think that tomorrow will ever be the least bit better than today or yesterday. Man is full of brutality, degradation, and meanness. One wonders with what frame of mind Swift finished his most ambitious undertaking.

I do in the next place complain of my own great want of judgment, in being prevailed upon by the entreaties and false reasonings of you and some others, very much against my own opinion, to suffer my Travels to be published. Pray bring to your Mind how often I desired you to consider, when you insisted on the Motive of publick Good; that the Yahoos were a species of animal utterly incapable of Amendment by Precepts or Examples: And so it hath proved; for instead of seeing a full Stop put to all Abuses and Corruptions, at least in this little Island, as I had reason to expect: Behold, after above six Months Warning, I cannot learn that my Book hath produced one single effect according to my Intentions:...And, it must be owned, that seven Months were a sufficient Time to correct every Vice and Folly to which Yahoos are subject; if their Natures had been capable of the least Disposition to Virtue or Wisdom.

One can conclude the optimistic viewpoint of the Victorians with the full belief that it would be most unusual for the masses, especially the new middle class which was rapidly coming to the fore, to find any kinship with either Jonathan Swift or his time. Swift was no optimist, not a progressive, not a man after the Victorian frame of mind.

Instead, and here may be a key to the lack of kinship, Swift did not believe in progress at all, at least not in progress in the same way that the Victorians did. Swift, one feels, is more like his patron, Sir William Temple, who believed in "cyclic change but not in progress."¹⁹ Swift's mind was turned to the earlier part of history, to the ancients.

The industrial and scientific revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries tended to change man's ways of thinking. No longer need man to think that he was born, lived, and died. There was a feeling that science had changed all of that. Man had great things ahead of him and he who did not think so was obviously, to many Victorians, out of the main stream of thought. Swift's attitudes on optimism are there for all to read, and his attitudes are basically negative, at least to Victorian interpretation. (He had no place in this new age so dominated by a belief in the ultimate greatness of man.)

And yet this very belief by the Victorians that essentially things were optimistic, that all was well, ran cross

current to another stream of thought. This was the underlying anxiety of the age. Ironically, the optimistic belief in progress and perfectibility through science was the basis for this apparently dissimilar characteristic of the age.

CHAPTER IV

ANXIETY

Although anxiety is not considered a characteristic as important as are some other aspects of Victorian society, it does play a main and a most illuminating part in the understanding of the age and its relationship to the one preceding it. Anxiety, however, is one of those rather intangible qualities that weave their way through the structure of society, touching all from commoner to aristocrat; yet we find few except the most famous who have bothered to say exactly why they felt as they did.

The reasons for the anxiety of the Victorians were almost the very same ones that caused their optimism; there was the feeling of progress, but those who doubted tended to call it revolution; there was optimism and a belief in perfectibility through science, but there was the fear that man was becoming only a cog in a mechanistic world. And the combination of progress and science raised grave doubts when they tried to rationalize the two with the Bible.

Revolution

First, there was the fear of revolution. Both Burke's Thoughts on the French Revolution and Paine's Rights of Man

exerted a profound influence on the educated classes during the last part of the eighteenth century.¹ Burke with his one-sided conservatism and Paine with his democracy each presented the rights of man as he saw fit. And the "Conservatism of that day made no claim to be allied to Democracy." It stood for "the balance of the constitution between King, Lords, and Commons." On the other hand, Paine claimed "that all power was derived from the people, and that the government by a properly representative chamber should be at once established."² As one critic said, speaking complimentarily of democracy in that age was almost the same as speaking well of communism in the twentieth century. In early 1793 when England went to war with the Jacobin Republic, the average man on the street thought of Republicans in the vein of Paine as being "people in red caps of liberty intent on beheading the good old King and setting up a ragged republic of sans-culottes."³ Of course, after the Reform Bill of 1832, the liberals were no longer so radical, but still the aristocracy felt unsure of the lower classes, and because the bill now enfranchised the middle classes, they too were now interested in the status quo. They did not want a democracy such as the United States had. They were quite satisfied with limited male suffrage. Even Macaulay regarded universal suffrage with "dread and aversion" because it was "incompatible with property, and...consequently incompatible with

civilization." In his speech "The People's Charter" (1842) Macaulay said that the first thing that a democracy (and by this he meant universal manhood suffrage) would do if it came to power "will be to plunder every man in the kingdom who has a good coat on his back and a good roof over his head."⁴

The Reform Bill of 1832 was passed, but it of course did not give the vote to the working classes. In 1837, a commercial depression threw many out of work and the Chartists (so-called because of a document called the People's Charter) demanded six popular legislative changes: "annual parliaments, universal manhood suffrage, equal electoral districts, and other reforms equally extravagant at the time."⁵ Macaulay once again predicted that some day in the twentieth century the U.S.A., a democratic country, would go under a military dictator or go to communism. "And to make these possibilities the more disturbing, the Victorians were quite sure that democracy was inevitable, sooner or later."⁶ What was most disturbing was that there was the real fear that this would be accomplished by revolution. It would be brought about by such radical journalists as Cobbett, Cobb, and Carlile.

How would Swift have fared during this time of social upheaval? Not too well, one would have to admit. Swift, like Macaulay, was not a believer in democracy, but he was a believer in certain forms of revolution, especially a

revolution against those guilty of tyranny, and it was only through his personal power and friendships that he was not in trouble almost all of his life. In a "Letter To The Whole People of Ireland" of the Drapier's Letters, Swift openly advocates revolution, but he does it in a most clever manner. As he so carefully states, some people say that "we are grown ripe for Rebellion" but it is not true; we would never be called rebels "for not suffering our selves to be robbed of all that we have, by one obscure ironmonger." All of the time that Swift is fomenting a sense of being wronged in the Irish people -- that is, fomenting revolution -- he is just as loud in his 'yeas' when it comes to talk about loyalty to England. Swift says that he is no rebel, but that people of Ireland absolutely will not take the Wood's coinage; but rebel -- never!

Could Swift have gotten away with this in 1837? In all probability, he could have, but he would have been just as harshly damned as were Cobbett, Cobb, Carlile, and other radical writers during the age of reform.

And this fear of revolution was reflected in the Victorian literature: in Disraeli's Sybil, which has the Chartist background of 1837-44, there is the "Two Nations" feeling:

"Yes," resumed the younger stranger after a moment's interval. "Two nations; between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts and feelings...." "You speak of --" said Egremont, hesitatingly. "THE RICH AND THE POOR."⁷

There was no love between those in power and those with no power. In Kingsley's Alton Locke there was the feeling that

The young men of the labouring classes were 'the cads,' 'the snobs,' 'the blackguards;' looked on with a dislike, contempt, and fear, which they were not backward to return... The old feudal ties between class and class, employer and employed, had been severed. Large masses of working people had gathered in the manufacturing districts in savage independence. The agricultural labourers had been debased by the abuses of the Old Poor-law... Then arose Luddite mobs, meal mobs, farm riots, riots everywhere; Captain Swing and his rick-burners, Peterloo 'massacres,' Bristol conflagrations, and all the ugly sights and rumours which made young lads, thirty or forty years ago, believe (and not so wrongly) that 'the masses' were their natural enemies, and that they might have to fight, any year, or any day, for the safety of their property and the honour of their sisters.⁸

Here without going into all of the details of the above was the fear behind the Reform Bill of 1832. Trevelyan says that the last revolution was that of 1688, but incipient riots on a near national scale, and open riots on district scale were commonplace; and the fear of revolution was in the hearts of all of the middle class and the aristocracy. Instead of Paine with his revolutionary ideas or Cobbett with his, let one put Swift with his Drapier's Letters into the same era. In all probability he would have been hated for as much of a rabble rouser as the before- and above-mentioned agitators, a very apostate to his class, another of those fellows who quite obviously was stirring up trouble and who should be dealt with summarily. It was

not so much that Swift would have especially liked the masses; his opinions of them were quite low. But he seemed to have an almost congenital weakness when he noticed a usurpation of power. It would matter not whether the person attacked were his patron, Lord Temple, or the Irish of his country. He seemed to enter a fight just to see if he could come off winner against a Lord Wharton, a Lord Carteret, or an entire ministry.

At Norwich in early 1841 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts held a meeting, and the Chartists tried to take over the meeting, a common Chartist tactic. There were cries of "We want more bread and less Bibles, more pigs and less parsons!" The Times reporter states that one Mr. Crofts stated that "You complain of the rich, but you could not live without them." (Cries of "Oh, yes, we could; give us the land and we will try.") Another Chartist cried about the difference between the slaves in the West Indies and the English workingman. "I am a slave to the classes above me...I work hard, and cannot get food for myself and children...I am whipped in the belly, while the black slave was only beaten on his fat back."⁹ The Times liked to point out "dreary, unfeeling aspects of the new poor law of 1834 -- that 292 ounces of food were allotted weekly to a convicted felon in the penitentiary and 145 ounces to an able-bodied man in a union workhouse."¹⁰ One is strongly reminded of A Modest Proposal wherein Swift

states that "...this Food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for Landlords; who, as they have already devoured most of the Parents, seem to have the best Title to the Children."

It was generally a time of trouble, and the feeling of revolution was always in the air. In November of 1839 a mob was subdued only after being fired on by soliders; in 1841 there were more mass meetings from people wanting relief from the ups and downs of the business cycles, drunkenness was much on the increase. Throughout the decades of 1830-1850 one can find one dreary instance after another of people meeting to solve their problems but have the meetings turning to mob rule. All of these things were most unsettling to the Victorians.

When one is worried about revolution in his back yard, he feels no compelling necessity to add any more radical nay-sayers to the list.

Industrialization: The Fear of Mechanical Man

Too, there was the anxiety caused by the growth of the industrial society in which the Victorians found themselves. Gone were the idyllic days of life and leisure where each man had his niche in life -- the aristocrats with their land, the shopkeepers with their small businesses, and the laborers on their farms. Each man had a sense of identity in the England of the early and middle eighteenth century,

but by mid-nineteenth century the revolution had moved entire populations from their static country lives to the dynamic life of the mill towns. As Houghton states, "Most of the men were artisans and laborers. Their grueling toil, often for wages barely sufficient to keep alive, their constant fear of unemployment, the slums in which they existed, form a record of suffering unparalleled in the history of the working class."¹¹ By the end of the century there had been some alleviation made due to the rise of trade unions, but the spirit of laissez-faire was too strongly felt at mid-century to do the average man any good.

Any legislative remedy was precluded by the triumphant laissez-faire doctrines of the political economists, those partial students of Adam Smith. Only increased prosperity...could ...mitigate the general misery...and this could best be obtained by granting to everyone engaged in economic activity, to buyer and seller, employer and employee, absolute freedom to pursue his individual interests.¹²

When Lord Ashley was trying to get the Ten Hours Bill passed through parliament, there was outrage on the part of some of the opposition. Lord Egerton had the "fear that the peculiar bend of the back, and other physical peculiarities requisite to the employment, cannot be obtained if children are initiated [into the collieries] at a later age than twelve."¹³ There was the fear that dropping the hours of labor to only ten a day would cause a flight of capital abroad and ruin the British manufacturer. Too, some of the

good samaritans wanted to know how a family could live if the children and women could not work. Ashley was accused of taking bread out of their mouths. Ashley was the man who caused such testimony as "We began at five o'clock on Monday morning and went on to Tuesday night at nine" from a seventeen-year-old who had gone to work in the woolen mills when he was nine; or the testimony of a man who saw children as young as seven go to work at dawn and come home at ten and eleven after seventeen or seventeen and one-half hours of labor; or the testimony of fathers who ruptured themselves lifting coal onto the backs of their children. Ashley was one of the more enlightened men of his day. Could one imagine A Modest Proposal of 1842 instead of 1729? And what would have been the reaction? Ashley was a member of the house of lords. Aristocrat though he was, he was damned by industrialists, bishops, and some of his fellow lords; he did, however, manage to get his bill passed. As some of his testimony was read to parliament, tears came to the eyes of many of the members, and eventually he swayed enough votes. Exhortation is much different than lashing. Pleading is much different than cursing. Child labor and poverty were serious subjects to the Victorians and as they were serious subjects, levity would have been unheard of. Ashley may have been too timely, too upsetting, too meddlesome -- but his presentation was the proper one for the Victorians. A Modest

Proposal for the alleviation of harsh child labor laws would have been a most egregious error to men of this frame of mind. Levity to the Victorians was bad enough, but levity on such subjects would have been considered reprehensible. The Age of Wit was dead.

And it was not just the working man who felt the new strain of making a living, for "throughout the whole community we are called to labour too early and compelled to labour too severely and too long. We live sadly too fast." ¹⁵ But one had to work, for the big worry was "failure." And all who have read Vanity Fair, David Copperfield, The Mill on the Floss, and many, many other novels of the time realize the overlying, brooding atmosphere of the fear of failure, the fear of sinking lower in the social scale. No people like to be reminded of their social climbing, their desire to be somebody. But Swift cared nothing for those who tried to raise themselves by court intrigues. Even though he himself was guilty of this very thing, one has the feeling that in Gulliver's Travels he satirizes himself as much as he does any man. All have read of the dexterity of the ministers and people at court in the "Voyage to Lilliput" wherein certain candidates "cut a caper on the straight rope" in order to rise at court. There is also the satire of the blue, red and green threads and the candidates who "sometimes leap over the stick, sometimes creep under it backwards" in order to gain favor

at court. In this section aimed at all sycophants, there is a decidedly unpractical approach. All men who wish to survive must resort to certain amount of bending of the knee, but no one wishes to be reminded of it. Each man gains his colored thread in the way most compatible to his nature, and the Victorians, although they knew satire, were not comfortable with irony. As far as they were concerned in their anxiety, they realized that their new age had created a new life with problems that were yet to be solved. Irony solved nothing. Swift was perhaps no more unsettling than other critics, but his method of presentation was not compatible to Victorian sensibilities. Living critics have to be met; dead ones, however, can be ignored.

Religious Anxiety

Another cause for anxiety among the Victorians was religious doubts, stemming quite obviously from an attempt to rationalize science and the old beliefs. In his "Characteristics" of 1831 Carlyle states that "our whole relations to the Universe and to our fellow-man have become an Inquiry, a Doubt; nothing will go on of its own accord, and do its function quietly; but all things must be probed into, the whole working of man's world be anatomically studied."¹⁶ He then goes on to worry about wealth to the masses with the corresponding poverty, famine, and unemployment. And in succeeding paragraphs states that the "Spiritual condition of Society" is "no less sick than the

Physical."¹⁷ And that religion has fled to the point that even "the most enthusiastic Evangelicals do not preach a Gospel, but keep describing how it should and might be preached." In short, religion is "more and more mechanical."¹⁸ Carlyle was worried about religion; it was too mechanical.

By 1831 when Carlyle had written his "Characteristics" decrying the mechanical aspect of religion, perhaps emotionalism in religion had run its main course, but during its growth there was enthusiasm to spare. The rise of emotionalism in religion from the time of Swift through the early part of Victorian England was a phenomenon of the age. And with the rise of emotionalism came the rise of other social-religious feelings: duty, earnestness, self-improvement, and self-discipline. The corresponding anxiety that stemmed from the failure of a person to adhere to these beliefs gives one a better insight into the religious character of the age.

John Wesley started his movement from a small society in Oxford which believed in private prayer, visitation of the poor and needy, and a strengthening of religious feeling and piety. From the attacks Swift and others made on it, one can see how the movement was first received, especially by the upper classes. The power of this sect was the profound influence it had in its appeal to the masses, and this, of course, gradually improved the overall

moral tone of the country. This also becomes important as it concerns how people think and feel. The Established Church, by the laws of nature, could not remain the same. For any action, there must be a reaction. The Evangelical Revival took place in the last of the eighteenth century and a feeling of religion swept over the country. Thus, Methodism and the Evangelical Revival it had caused forced

the established church... [to] recover the spiritual character which it lacked earlier in the century. By the closing years of the century, religion held a place in English life which rendered England impervious to the wave of scepticism that swept over so many parts of the continent in that period.¹⁹

The very thing against which Swift felt so strongly had taken place. The Anglican Church -- the High Church of Swift -- had lost its real authority. The Dissenters occupied many positions of power. It is almost as if the "prophecies" of A Tale of a Tub had come true: the very men whom Swift had attacked for their abuses in religion, abuses in education, abuses of reason were now the most populous in England. Those endowed with "Bombastry and Buffoonry" were now to sit in judgment on him who had judged them so harshly.

In order to understand better the moral outlook of these people, one must examine their religion a little more closely. "Their beliefs were at bottom evangelical, but they were not confined to low churchmen. They were shared by high churchmen and by non-conformists, and they

were common also to all classes of society."²⁰ There was a profound belief and an almost universal one of "literal acceptance of the Bible and in a future life of eternal bliss or woe,"²¹ the perfect religion for those of Puritan background and of the working class.

A man's future reward or punishment was determined in part by his faith, but above all it was determined by his conduct. So nearly universal was this point of view that it imposed upon all alike a code of moral conduct which could be broken only at the risk of strong social disapproval. Duty, self-restraint and self-improvement were regarded as outstanding virtues.²²

And not only did the people believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible: they thought religion, lived religion, and bought religious works; but it was the cruelest and most gloomy religion one could imagine -- stern, uncompromising and cheerless here on this earth in hopes of something better only after death. In addition to believing, they also bought religious matter. In the London Catalogue between 1816 and 1851 of the 45,000 listed books, no less than 10,300 were on divinity.²³ One can quite easily equate self-improvement with the purchase of religious books.

In 1841 the Established Church was the dominant one in power, prestige, and wealth, although in all probability it was only lip service that was paid to it. The Evangelical branch wing of the Established Church probably had many more followers in practice than is shown by the roll

cards. They, much like their Dissenting brothers, held to such doctrines as "salvation by faith in the atonement of Christ and the literal interpretation of the Bible."²⁴ Also like their Non-conformist brothers, "they abhorred the theater, dancing, and card playing, and above all the use of Sunday for anything except strictly religious purposes."²⁵ One can see that self restraint was highly emphasized.

The growth of the Non-conformist sects was another of the phenomena of the age:

In 1800 the Wesleyan Methodist Church had 90,000 members; in 1850, 358,277 in Great Britain alone. In 1812 the Primitive Methodists...had 200 members; in 1850, 104,672. In 1850 one out of every thirty-four people in the nation was a Methodist. In 1851 the number of Methodist meetinghouses in the country was 11,000; Independents (Congregationalists), 4,244; Baptists, 2,789; Primitive Methodists, 2,871; Established Church, 14,077. Dissent then outweighed Conformity."²⁶

And yet to be a Dissenter, as it was in the time of Swift, was considered *déclassé*, even though more and more of the middle class were joining. However, in the mining and manufacturing towns Dissent was the strongest. In many of the pits of the South Staffordshire mines, prayer meetings were held every day -- usually with the express consent of the masters, for if religion "did not teach you the way to improve your condition in this vale of tears, at least it helped you to bear your lot without complaining."²⁷ Duty and earnestness, without being "unmanly" about problems, were high virtues.

With all of this literal interpretation of religion and God came the Oxford dispute of mid-century and "Oxford, the Anglican hierarchy, and all breeds of Evangelicals and Dissenters were soon in full cry."²⁸ In short form, the Oxford dispute arose when John Henry Newman in 1833 published the first of the Tracts for the Times, of which he ultimately wrote twenty-nine. Basically the ideas behind them were to startle the clergy into an awareness of their spiritual responsibilities. They emphasized the dogmatic element in English orthodoxy, the Apostolic Succession, and the dangers of Latitudinarianism. "Tract 90," the most celebrated of the publications, attempted to show that "the Articles of the Church of England were as capable of a Catholic as of an Anglican interpretation."²⁹ Although Newman quite clearly pointed out that he was thinking of the Catholicity of the Primitive Church and not necessarily of the Roman Catholic Church, the storm broke.

Newman joined the Catholic Church in 1845. W. G. Ward, a disciple of Newman's, went also. Pusey and Keble, two other figures in the dispute, stayed with the Anglican Church but were silenced. The importance of the Oxford movement was that it showed that anti-Jacobinism was still strong in England, that the fear of the Catholic Church was as real as ever, and, just as important, "The non-conformists gained from every successful attack upon Anglican privilege."³⁰ The "canters" whom Swift had sat-

irized were more and more becoming the powers of England.

And at the same time that people were being called upon publicly to practice their religion, those people who tried to live a pure life were dismayed with the ideals which they found put to practice. Even George Eliot, a convert to agnosticism, could not forget her Puritan background. F. W. H. Myers tells of her feelings in a walk he once took with her, and

she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet call of men -- the words, God, Immortality, and Duty -- pronounced, with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the first, how unbelievable the second, and yet how peremptory and absolute the third.³¹

At another time she said she could not rid herself of a mind "morbidly desponding, of a consciousness tending more and more to consist in memories of error and imperfection rather than in a strengthening sense of achievement."³²

One sees that the strains of Puritanism die strong, even in agnostics. Or again, we may take Disraeli who "like Carlyle, believed that man was made 'to adore and obey.' Hence the importance of the Church, by which Disraeli means the Church of England -- 'if the Church were to be destroyed, Europe would be divided between the Atheist and the Communist.'" Both Conformists and Non-conformists took their religion seriously.

One could well imagine that those who professed a literal interpretation of the Bible would have fears as

well as anxiety about their future state.

The favorite Evangelical texts tell their own story: 'The Lord our God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.' 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels' 'Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind.'"³⁴

This contrasts rather sharply with the low pitch of the Anglican sermon of the days of Swift. Many biographers tell of their subject's having religious nightmares when such preaching went on. And yet with the very height of religious fervor was the before-mentioned pervading spirit of optimism and belief of perfectibility; the belief that science would cure all of the ailment and ills of the world; the belief that man was an evolutionary creature. How could a God who would burn all sinners in everlasting hell fire be rationalized with evolutionary man as a small part of a mechanistic universe? "It was in truth, the mal du siecle. 'We live in an age of visible transition,' wrote Bulwer Lytton, 'an age of disquietude and doubt...To me such epochs appear...the times of greatest unhappiness.'"³⁵ And, as Lytton said, if they were living in an age of transition, then something new must be taking the place of something old; and the direction toward which the scientific minds forced them to turn evoked an uneasiness hard to

settle. Harkening back to the spirit of utilitarianism, one can recall that man was a product of a mechanistic universe. This the rationalizing men might say would lead only to the Utopia of tomorrow, but "most" Victorians felt the same horrified shock which Charlotte Bronte recorded on her reading of the Atkinson-Martineau Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development:

It is the first exposition of avowed atheism and materialism I have ever read; the first unequivocal declaration of disbelief in the existence of a God or a future life I have ever seen. In judging of such exposition and declaration, one would wish entirely to put aside the sort of instinctive horror they awaken, and to consider them in an impartial spirit and collected mood. This I find it difficult to do...If this be Truth, man or woman who beholds her can but curse the day he or she was born.³⁶

When one looks back to the eighteenth century, he finds that there was not this anxious fear of God or of the fear of man's ultimate end. Both in religion and politics there was the feeling that everything was settled. Everyone had his place in life and his place in an after-life. During the early part of the eighteenth century Locke's ideas on politics dominated the scene, but to a lesser degree so did his religious philosophies. Although they were for the most part rather liberal, Locke's idea on religion and government was that the jurisdiction of government concerns itself "only to civil concernments."³⁷ He further felt that it was not the government's concern to worry about the truth of beliefs, but only for "Safety and security of the

commonwealth and of every particular man's goods and persons." To those who objected that some religious beliefs may be harmful, he felt that "atheists should not be tolerated, nor Roman catholics...though to their purely religious beliefs he would be as tolerant to Roman catholics as to any."³⁸ It is interesting to note that pervasive though Lock's spirit may be concerning religion, in 1753 the Marriage Bill was passed that enacted that no marriage was valid unless solemnized by an Anglican churchman after the banns had been cried for three successive Sundays in the parish church. The exceptions to this were the royal family, Jews, and Quakers, but not Dissenters nor Roman Catholics. And this was passed well after Swift's death and long after he had done any effective publication; obviously, Swift's ideas still had some life long after Swift was no longer a force to be reckoned with in government policy-making.

Too, the proportion of conformists to non-conformists was quite a bit different in early eighteenth century England as compared with the figures for the mid-nineteenth century. In 1676 the proportion of conformists to non-conformists was 22:1 and for conformists to papists the ratio was 178:1.³⁹ Although there were no accurate figures for the last part of the seventeenth century, Clark states in The Later Stuarts that there was no great change. One could easily see that Swift not only would have had a great

majority of the people on his side -- especially the aristocracy, and they were all that counted -- who were pro Church of England, but he would also have had the tremendous backing of the Established Church itself.

Although England still had the Established Church in the nineteenth century, during the early eighteenth century the Church meant much more. During Swift's time, clergymen often were given their livings as a matter of political preference. Although many of the clergymen were quite pious, many spent their lives giving a sermon on Sunday and that was about the extent of devotions. Church preferences under Anne were basically Tory in nature and then under George I were Whig. Keeping this in mind, that is, the political nature of the appointments, most scholars realize that clergymen of that age were almost of necessity political in nature -- it was a part of the times.

Religion was rather a formal matter to the men of the eighteenth century. Swift and others did not hesitate to take up any challenge that religion should be anything more than was taught by the Anglican Church. Swift, in an age of reason, was only too quick to challenge the deistic assertion that formal religion was unnecessary. To Swift religion was intellectually essential. However, it was not a religion for the masses. It was a religion for the consensus gentium. For in an age governed by common consent, the consensus of educated opinion was respected.

Actions were not governed by moral right or wrong as much as they were governed by whether the actions were decorous or proper. Swift, like many other men of the age, felt that "a good commonsense religion...and no questions asked" was needed.⁴⁰ Enthusiasm in religion was as strongly disliked by Swift as speculation on the why's and wherefore's concerning God.

One can almost feel the radically different theological climates, one assured, the other searching. Both had their writers, but the method of defense and attack on theological matters was quite different. If one will recall almost any theological discussions of the Victorian age, he will agree that, for the most part, the arguments are, in the main, rather lofty. On the other hand, Swift's method of attack was different.

Swift was a wit, a satirist in an age of satire, and "The almost total absence of successful satire in Victorian poetry is less remarkable than the lack of tragedy or of heroes, but it is none the less significant and characterizing."⁴¹ It appears that satire is usually written by someone who has a very firm grip on what he believes to be right and wrong; too, his audience must share these beliefs or else the effect of the attack is lost, and just as important, the audience must have a feeling of kinship in method as much as in content. "It was not only that the Victorians did not write poetic satire, they appear to

have been ideologically opposed to it."⁴² One finds that there was a definite hostility to "derisive mockery, and to wit and ridicule in general. This, of course, is anathema to 'earnestness,'" because wit is a sign of levity, "reprehensible in the face of a social crisis, and outright immoral if it dealt with things evil."⁴³ Obviously, a man who is unsure of himself cares not for ridicule; when one is least assured of himself, he does most often lose his temper, or "When old beliefs are being questioned and no new ones have been established, the modest man doubts and the presumptuous man dogmatizes."⁴⁴ Underlying both of these, of course, is anxiety.

The above statement, however, does need some qualification. One should not make the mistake of thinking that the Victorians were completely without humor or satire. "The Victorians knew satire and liked it; humorous exaggeration they delighted in; tears were a benediction to them. But irony...left them uneasy. Blacks and whites were more comfortable than grays."⁴⁵ They felt that

the 'good' man, whether as person or artist, is one who recognizes the beauty and greatness of human nature and therefore is filled with the 'good' emotions of admiration, love and hope. The 'bad' man or 'bad' artist sees only what is dark and ugly and thus expresses the 'bad' emotions of captious criticism, mockery, or scorn instead of admiration; anger or hatred instead of love; gloomy despondency and pessimism instead of hope.⁴⁶

Herein Swift is the 'bad' man, the writer of 'captious criticism, mockery and scorn." When one turns to

Swift in one of his most famous religious pieces, he finds "An Argument To Prove that the Abolishing of CHRISTIANITY IN ENGLAND, may as Things now stand, be attended with some inconveniences, and perhaps not produce those many good Effects proposed thereby." Here the "gloomy despondency and pessimism" is given full reign by Swift. As Rosenheim states, the basic belief behind "An Argument" is "When a man's Christianity lies only in a name, what better defenses than these can he produce against its destruction."⁴⁷ One can go through piece after piece by Swift and find this very same idea being hurled at the world, sometimes in anger, sometimes in scorn, sometimes with invectives; but the challenge is always there, defying an answer.

In retrospect, one finds it rather ironic, but the very things about which the Victorians were anxious were the very things that bothered Swift. Where Swift attacked those who would tear down the church and state, the Victorians were living examples of men who had lived through this tearing-down. Where Swift satirized progress that didn't know its direction, the Victorians were both at the same time proud of and fearful of that very aspect of their own society. Where Swift excoriated progress, science, and optimism, the Victorians embraced all three; and yet in their embracing, there was the fear that all was not what it should be.

In conclusion, even if it were not for the scatology or the irony, the Victorians would not have enjoyed Swift's

comments on religion, for as Ruskin said, each man dis-trusted his own religion and his neighbor's so much that it was unwise to ask any penetrating or searching questions on religion, for "we shall, in nine cases out of ten, discover him to be only a Christian in his own way, and as far as he thinks proper, and that he doubts of many things which we ourselves do not believe strongly enough to hear doubted without danger."⁴⁸

Swift would have been judged just as any other writer of the times,

since the smallest moral failing no less than the greatest were considered so much evidence of a dangerous state of the soul, the Puritan judgment did not try to weigh them on the basis of any relative seriousness. They were con-demned outright as evil.⁴⁹

As will be found later in Arnold's writings, the Victorians looked at the parts, not the wholes: and Swift's writings out of context are obviously immoral. And out of context, Swift's persona's comments on religion rank as the most intolerant of atheistic pronouncements. In religion Swift was not a man after the Victorian frame of mind -- not in fundamental belief nor in method of presentation.

Thus one has the anxieties of the age: the fear of revolution; the fear of man becoming mechanical in a scientific world; the fear of religious doubts. Perhaps satire is like comedy; i.e., it does not wear too well over the years. It is too topical, too much a part of an age; and when it does wear well, it is too often overly sharp. Its

avowed purpose is negation, not affirmation. When one is in doubt, he wants answers that can give him a touchstone, a place from which he can reconstruct some semblance of sanity in an apparently meaningless world.

If satirists in general -- and Swift in particular -- were not the answer, then who were the men to whom the Victorians turned? The answer to that is found in the writers of their own age to whom the Victorians did turn for succor, for opinions, for enlightenment.

CHAPTER V

INTELLECTUAL ATTITUDES

Practicality: A Contrast of the Two Ages

During the Victorian era there was more rapport between the intellectuals and the business and professional world than perhaps ever before in the history of England, for the traditional authority of the church had broken down, the aristocracy no longer had the power or influence; and yet the business man of the time wanted to be informed, he wanted a touchstone, as any man does who is uncertain of himself in times of turbulence. Because of this uncertainty, the large public who were living in their age of anxiety, doubt, and fear looked to the literary prophets for their guidance and reassurance that all was for the best in this best of all possible worlds. The picture was still very much man in search of himself, still an attempt by the newly arrived and the newly emancipated to find a place for themselves in the overall scheme of things. Nevertheless, they wanted their writers to reflect a "practical" culture, and this many writers did.

Houghton quotes a critic in the Westminster Review of 1835 who quite seriously asked "how the universal pursuit

of literature and poetry, poetry and literature, is to conduce towards cotton spinning."¹ Bentham went so far in his own philosophy of Utilitarianism as to state that art's value is in the amount of pleasure yielded. He felt that the game of push-pin was just as valuable as anything else if it produced as much pleasure. This is highly exaggerated, of course, and Carlyle, Arnold, and other intellectual leaders rebelled against such obvious materialism; but this philosophy, or rather the idea behind it, spilled over throughout much of the social strata to where quite often the average Victorian's test of value was the test of its utility. They were very practical men, and as a result, their minds were concentrated on concrete actions; they had no time to listen to anyone, wrote Mill in 1833, except that

he tells them of something to be done, and not only that, but of something which can be done immediately. What is more, the only reasons they will generally attend to, are those founded on the specific good consequences to be expected from the adoption of the specific proposition.²

Arnold criticized this aspect of his age:

The Englishman has been called a political animal, and he values what is political and practical so much that ideas easily become objects of dislike in his eyes, and thinkers "miscreants," because ideas and thinkers have rashly meddled with politics and practice.³

Macaulay, the "great apostle of the Philistines," felt that the nineteenth century was the age for progress and that nothing but "words, and more words, and nothing but words, had been all of the fruit of all the toil of all

the most renowned sages of sixty generations."⁴

Carlyle, Mill, Macaulay, Thackeray, and hundreds and hundreds of lesser artists not only reflected the spirit of the age, but to a great extent moulded it, and mould it they could, for in an era of turmoil in religion and politics, as Lecky states in Religious Tendencies of the Age, "it is our lay writers who are moulding the characters and forming the opinions of the age."⁵

When one looks back to the age of Swift, he finds that there was practicality but not the same practicality of nature. There is a difference in consensus gentium practicality and material practicality. One might define the writers of the early eighteenth century as having the "elegance, charm, factual negligence and intellectual insight" of those such as Sir William Temple.⁶ One might almost say that the difference between the Victorian writers and the early eighteenth century writers was the difference of being "involved" in their practicality. One has the feeling that most of the Augustans were "elegantly cool," rather "self-indulgent," quite "skeptical" in their approach to writing, as one would expect to find in an age of wit, when quite often essays were the common literary métier. During Swift's time there was a basic distrust in the ability of the "finite reason" to solve "problems of the infinite."⁷ The idea of a gentleman,⁷ and hence a learned man, was a man who was compassionate but one who

was disinterested. As was mentioned before, the consensus gentium prevailed.

Man still, it must be avowed, finds himself described as animal rationale: it is still reason that differentiates him from the brutes. Reason, furthermore, is uniform in all men who are uncorrupted by bad education, false religion, or faulty social institutions: for 'we are all cast in the same mould.' Uniformity encourages individualism in that, being the rational equal of his fellowmen, the individual may trust his own powers -- the light of reason should shine undiffracted within him.

Then if there is doubt, that is, that one's powers of reasoning cannot be trusted (in religion, for instance), then Common Sense is that which one should rely on for his answer. Or, as Sherburn further points out,

Swift, though he praises reason, prefers common sense to intricate reasonings, and like the benevolists really exalts the non-reasoning aspects of the mind over logic. Ingenious and novel imaginings the author of Gulliver, like many others of his day, would be loath to decry; in his suspicion of ingenious and novel reasonings or opinions he is typical of his time.

If one examines the two preceding commentaries from Sherburn he finds the exact description of Swift in the first: the "bad education," "false religion," "faulty social institutions" mentioned are almost a commentary on A Tale of a Tub. It is there that Swift expands a favorite point, that man is animal rationale but too often he acts as if he were animal incapax rationis. It is this same bad education, false religion, faulty social institution that Swift so bitterly attacks and yet attacks as if he were standing off

ten feet, "elegantly cool," while his persona carries the weight of the charge.

In conclusion to the contrast of the two ages, one might make the general statement that the men of both ages were practical, but the men of one were practical in a material, immediate sense; those of the other were practical because of what fellow gentlemen would think of a man who relied on "ingenious and novel reasonings."

Swift, in particular, instead of being emotionally involved, was detached -- as one would expect of a man of wit. Just as the lay writers of the next century were trying to mould a new character of the age, Swift was trying to preserve in his time the old mould; the distinction is the frame of mind and method of presentation.

Reading Public

Just as certain writers reflected the practicality of the age, the reading public reflected this same attitude in their likes and dislikes. As some writers reflected utility, the public bought that which taught. As some reflected doubt, the public bought that which affirmed. As it was an age of anxiety, the public quite often bought that which would allow them to escape.

What did the people of the Victorian age read? For the most part they read serious material -- as was mentioned before, much religious matter; but they read other

works on non-religious subjects also. Macaulay's History in the first two volumes ran through five editions and 18,000 copies within six months of its publication. Compare this with 2,500 copies of Henry Esmond during the same general time. On the whole, five hundred copies was a reasonable sale for a book of reasonable merit, and 2,000 copies was an extraordinary sale of a work by a popular author.¹⁰ Admittedly, these are not anti-intellectual works, but at the other end of the scale were the books read by the masses. To give more of an idea of what they were reading as of October 23, 1841, one can consult the Athenaeum; here, in a list of one hundred seventeen new books listed, thirty-nine were on religious subjects, eleven on poetry, ten on medical subjects, thirteen on travel, and sixteen of them were novels. One can readily see that there was a preponderance of rather weighty matter.

Now, at the other end of the intellectual scale were the streams of bilge of 'edifying' works and 'gothic' novels that quite luckily have been lost to posterity. Some of the titles were Gipsy Bride; or, The Miser's Daughter, The Broken Heart; or, The Village Bridal, The Black Mask; or, The Mysterious Robber, Paul the Poacher, Fatherless Fanny; or The Mysterious Orphan, The Maniac Father; or, The Victim of Seduction.

Who was read by the middle class was good Martin Tupper. A Shakespeare Tupper was not, but he was the poet

of the people, the real poet laureate of middle-class England. Tupper had a witless facility at banal moralizing, but as he was writing for sale, there were apparently no tears on his part. His Proverbial Philosophy sold 500,000 copies in England and 1,000,000 copies in America. He was admired by the Queen and her Consort and even made a Fellow of the Royal Society. One journal of the day, the Spectator, bracketed him with Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning. When one thinks of the original Spectator, he recalls that Addison himself stated in 1711 that the purpose of the paper was "to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality."¹¹ The newly revived Spectator of the Victorian Age apparently had not quite the discriminating audience of the one of a hundred years before. Regardless, Tupper was popular; during the Great Exhibition he wrote the "Exhibition Hymn" that holds such deathless lines as "Hurrah! for honest Industry, Hurrah! for handy Skill."¹² This deathless bit of inanity was actually set to music and printed in twenty-five languages. Apparently it was not only the English middle-class who had arrested mental development.

Tupper did not restrict his imaginative genius to poetry: he was also a great moralizer with such heart-piercing aphorisms as "With his mother's milk the young child drinketh Education. Patience is the first great lesson; he may learn it at the breast." "There is no limit

to enjoyment, though the sources of wealth be boundless."

"For a good book is the best of friends, the same today and forever." "Wisdom is a Fox, who after long hunting, will at last cost you the Pains to dig out." "Wisdom is a Hen, whose Cackling we must value and consider, because it is attended with an Egg." One will immediately notice that the last two maxims given above are from Swift's Tale of a Tub and they fit quite well; the only difference is that Swift was satirizing exactly those people who attempt to gain pithy knowledge by such triteness. One can't help recalling Swift's "On Poetry: A Rhapsody" wherein he satirizes Colly Cibber, the Tupper of the eighteenth century. The importance of Tupper is that his morality was aimed at "home and fireside" and "buttressed and gave a kind of ratification to the pious codes by which middle-class England lived. Its banalities were simple and unostentatious, its soporific qualities eminently respectable."¹³

And let no man think that this pious code was not in effect. When Melville's Mardi was first published, it was praised by the critics, but Sir Walter Farquhar (later Lord Shaftesbury) wrote to Lord Ashley of the Ten Hours Bill fame that Melville's books had a tone which "is reprehensible throughout...they are not works that any mother would like to see in the hands of her daughters, and as such are not suited to lie on the drawing room table."¹⁴

This pious code of the reading public becomes quite important when one turns to Swift's writings. After Thack-

eray (and perhaps even regardless of Thackeray) the Victorians felt that Swift was immoral. This is a two-sided problem. First, perhaps a qualification is necessary: Tupper was a very popular author, but it is not his popularity that needs to be drawn into the discussion. What is more important is that his ideas and method of presentation were to Victorian tastes. He was a moral man in a moral age. This is one aspect of the problem, i.e., the Victorians did not feel that Swift was a moral man or he would not have used such shockingly crude language. The other half of the problem is one of understanding Swift. To the Victorians Swift must have been immoral not only because of his crude language, but also because of some of the things he advocated -- abolishing Christianity, eating children, placing men below animals, disliking marriage, and so forth.

In order to be understood, Swift must be read at length, and this the Victorians quite understandably were loath to do. Swift, in actuality, has a moral feeling that is perhaps reflected more in his private life than in his more famous publications. Sir William Temple, who is quite often considered the figure of graciousness and perfection of the early eighteenth century, was a man who, like Swift and others, was not above using rather coarse language.

Yet while Temple's tolerance for coarse words and coarse images falls well below Swift's, his relish for sexual innuendo appears far stronger...And Temple's letters not uncommonly include risque gallantries of a sort that Swift never permitted himself.¹⁵

This is not an attempt to whitewash Swift. Rather let one be understanding and realize that it was Swift's fate to be chosen to epitomize everything about the age that shocked a later age's sense of propriety. And when one's style of presentation offends, and that is coupled with an inability to understand the true object of attack, the result can be nothing but unpopularity.

In turning to selected authors, one will find that they, too, reflect the tastes of the reading public, some to a greater, some to a lesser degree.

Selected Authors: Attitudes

Noel Annan quotes Leslie Stephen as saying "No doubt, prudery is a bad thing, but it is not so bad as the prurience of Sterne, the laxness of Fielding, the unwholesome atmosphere of Balzac."¹⁶ Sir Leslie Stephen, who wrote the Life of Swift in 1882, is a rather interesting figure. It is a bit difficult to ascertain whether he "liked" Swift. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he didn't "dislike" him. As Annan says, Stephen had pity for those such as Swift. As far as Stephen was concerned, the intellectual had a "duty"¹⁷ to educate his fellow man. Literature, therefore, should be a textbook censored for use in a classroom. Stephen's idea on novels, as was common in Victorian thought, was that novels should "purify and sustain the mind." Much of the eighteenth century in general

and Swift in particular would fall short by this criterion. Like many Victorians, Stephen felt that a man's life should be "manly." Stephen, for instance, did not consider "feminine" as the opposite of masculine. Instead he thought that "morbid" was the true antonym. As a result Pope, Donne, and Swift were morbid, or unmanly.¹⁸ Stephen could understand such an author as Swift, but that did not mean he had to like him.¹⁹

Thackeray, one of the more popular authors of the day, also was a man of the times. In 1860 he became editor of Cornhill Magazine, and his tastes too were those of his age. He once rejected a poem by Mrs. Browning because it contained "an account of unlawful passion felt by a man for a woman." One can understand Thackeray, however, for Tillotson, quoting Henry James, points out that certain things were not allowed in Victorian literature, especially such things as may have to do with sex and love:

Obviously the psychological side of sexual relationships has always been part of the permissible and demanded subject-matter of stories, but at certain times, 'the climate of opinion' has made it risky or impossible for the novelist to explore the carnal side directly. Whenever this proscription was in force, the novelist relied on suggestion to 'give body,' as we might say, to his assurances; and he did not find it difficult to suggest pretty well everything, certainly everything that mattered.²⁰

Melville's Mardi, which was mentioned before, does have some suggestions of illicit love in it, but basically it is an allegorical novel with rather high moral didacticism con-

cerning the vanity of human wishes. But to some of the earnest of the age, apparently his "suggestions" to "give body" were beyond what was considered proper.

In 1866 John Morley, writing in the Saturday Review, criticized Swinburne's Poems and Ballads. He stated, "No language is too strong to condemn the mixed vileness and childishness of depicting the spurious passion of a putrescent imagination, the unnamed lusts of a stated wanton." He goes on to say that Swinburne was "tuning his lyre in a sty," delighting himself "among the nameless, shameless abomination which inspires him with frenzied delight." Swinburne was filling his work "with pieces which many a professional vendor of filthy prints might blush to sell."²¹ One can't help wondering what Morley would have to say concerning Swift's use of pudenda, excreta, and intercourse. Such graffiti would leave Morley rather at a loss for words, as it appears that the ultimates have already been utilized on poor Swinburne.

Though today they appear to be rather strait-laced, one can look to the Brontë sisters' writings and find evidences of creativity that were frowned on by the Victorian reader. The main objection was that there was "passion" in the writing of the Brontë sisters. "This was Jane Eyre's great indelicacy in the eyes of her contemporaries -- that she loved unbidden and dared avow her love."²² And yet Charlotte thought that Anne's Windfell Hall was

"a very improper book for her little sister to have written."²³

One can perhaps permit himself a smile as he reads this, especially if he recalls the ladies of the eighteenth century. The ladies of Swift's age, no less than the men "distrusted sentiment" and "disdained romance." "Romeo was not encouraged either in real life or in fiction."²⁴ If the Brontë sisters shocked Victorian mores, imagine the reaction of a nineteenth-century reader to what was considered normal for the eighteenth-century woman. As Eddy says:

Ladies secured public attention, if at all, by adopting the tone of men in their conversation, their letters, and their more ambitious attempts at literature. Susanna Centlivre and Aphra Behn wrote plays no more delicate than the plays of Congreve, and less sentimental than the plays of Steele. Mary Wortley Montagu successfully, Eliza Haywood and Mary Manley unsuccessfully, competed with the Wits for an audience, and adopted the masculine style: urbane, impersonal, cosmopolitan, and well-informed.²⁵

If, however, there was a sense of puritanism in the Victorian makeup, it was more than compensated for by the copious amounts of tears that a novel could evoke. Dickens, who was by far the most popular of all the Victorian writers,²⁵ wrote for his eminently respectable, middle-class audience.

But once protected by an assurance that no book of a respected author could bring a blush to a young lady's cheek, readers were quite willing to let themselves wallow in a sentimental carousel. Nor was this unbuttoning of the emotions limited to the obscure or the ignorant. Forster, Landor, and Tom Hood all wept over the death of Little Nell in The Old Curiosity Shop. Macready

begged Dickens to save her life... Daniel O'Connell broke into tears, said "He should not have killed her," and threw the book out the window.²⁷

Francis Jeffrey and Carlyle were just as deeply moved.

Dickens at another time wrote to Thackeray. "I cried most bitterly," he wrote "over your affecting picture of that cock-boat manned by babies, and shall never forget it."²⁸

No, it is no wonder that this was not one of the greatest of critical ages. And perhaps it was not that there was an insufficient amount of emotional detachment. They didn't want to be detached. It is not surprising that they lacked the calm impartiality of the ideal critic. They felt that it was the duty of the writer to be an 'interpreter' of life.²⁹

And "interpret" many of the writers did, some in an honest attempt to raise intellectual levels, some as merely charlatans. But most wrote with much more assurance than is considered wise.

Critics of the Age

Of all of the Victorian attitudes, one of the hardest to forgive is that of dogmatism -- not only dogmatism in morals, religion, politics, and love, but also the speaking ex cathedra on matters of literature. And there was much dogmatism by any man of authority during the Victorian era.

The imperious pronouncement of debatable doctrines with little or no argument, the bland statement of possibilities as certainties and

theories as facts, the assertion of opinion in positive and often arrogant tones -- in a word, the voice of the Victorian prophet laying down the law -- this sets our teeth on edge.³⁰

One can see from the previous section what the Victorians read, and one can perhaps partially understand why they read it. But it is difficult for the twentieth century reader to comprehend why such eminent critical authorities could be so dogmatic, at times so narrow in their outlook. But one must here take care, for if he is too misunderstanding, he is in line for the same criticism that is given to the Victorian critics: one must understand that it was the nature of their times to want to feel a certain way. If it is inexplicable how they could be so prudish, it was just as inexplicable to them how those authors of the previous age could be so prurient.

But, as is known, the Victorians believed to a great degree in the infallibility of knowledge. Even if they read Samuel Smiles' popular treatise Self-Help, which minimizes genius or intelligence or talent in favor of hard work and persistence, they still believed in their heroes. Regardless of their immersion in commercial aspirations, they still did think. Regardless of their intellectual difficulties, they still read.

As was stated before, the critics were just as much a part of the age as was any man of the middle class. When one defends Swift from Thackeray by stating that Thackeray

did not understand the age, he must also forgive Thackeray, or if not forgive, at least understand. He was telling the people what they wanted to hear, as well as what he felt was best for them to hear.

Many of the people who had had their faith badly shaken by Darwin, Utilitarianism, and the Oxford Movement turned to Catholicism, but for many of the others this was not the answer, for the Catholic church was still anathema and an object of "fear and distaste." As a result of this doubt in religion, the Victorians turned elsewhere. As a result, many of the Victorians who clung to Protestantism

looked to literature for the authority and to the writer as prophet. Men of letters became in fact, as they often boasted they were in theory, a modern priesthood, supplying the help and guidance, religious and moral, which the old priesthood could no longer provide.³¹

Moreover, such men as Carlyle, Thackeray, Arnold, and Ruskin and others were only too willing to mould the character of the age. When the Victorian critic was asked why something was so, he would be only too quick to say that it was so because he said it was so. When Thomas Arnold was accused of "arrogance of tone" in a pamphlet he had written, he replied that since he had studied the subject since a child, he obviously should know more about it than those who do not study it at all. Ruskin openly stated that it was not arrogant to speak arrogantly about something which he knew better than the other people.³²

In "Sesame: of King's Treasuries" Ruskin, too, shows his authoritarianism with "And therefore, first of all, I tell you, earnestly and authoritatively (I know I am right in this), you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words...."³³ The underlining is Ruskin's. In the same lecture (and one is quite certain that it is a lecture in every sense of the word), he most pontifically states "Now, in order to deal with words rightly, this is the habit you must form."³⁴ Then when he tells people what to read, Ruskin gives his true feelings concerning the average Englishman's mind: he states that when one studies the classics honestly one will "perceive that what you took for your own 'judgment' was mere chance prejudice, and drifted, helpless, entangled weed of castaway thought" and that most men's minds are bogs of thoughtless morass.³⁵ Apparently he was loved for this style, for he lectured to full houses and was often interrupted by applause.

Similarly, Swift would, too, have felt that the average mentality of man at the best was pretty bad. He too felt that "reason is more often the property of the educated few than of the illiterate many."³⁶ Conversely, Swift would have caustically lashed out against any man who sets himself up as an arbitrary dictator as to what a man may think. It was not that Swift believed in "free-thinkers": heaven forbid that each irresponsible Aeolist should make himself heard above the crowd. But instead of lecturing

as to what a man should do, Swift's style was different.

As Eddy points out,

Other writers may plead, cajole, or weep over the wrongs of mankind; they may stop to bind up the wounds of him who fell among thieves. Swift pursues the thieves, wounds their vanity, robs them of their defence, and leaves them by the side of the road less enthusiastic over their profession.

The use of this strategy, no matter how effective it prove against oppression, is not applauded by sentimentalists, who assume that unfortunates prefer kind words and bedside sympathy to the paring of the claws that wound.³⁷

Ruskin's pithy bit of authoritarianism, this exhortation (you must "look at the words") would have delighted Swift. Coldly he states that after all, the True Criticks are "a Race of Men who delighted to nibble at the Superfluities...of Books." Later in the conclusion of the "Digression Concerning Criticks" Swift states that sometime in the future "I hope I have deserved so well of their whole Body, as to meet with generous and tender Usage at their Hands." More futile hopes have never been penned. One cannot expect to flay a man and gain his love.

In Culture and Anarchy Arnold states that of the three things necessary to modern life -- love of industry, love of the things of the mind, the love of beautiful things -- the middle class had no notion of any but the first. And to his contemporaries who felt that each man could believe what he liked or what was true for him, Arnold "kept asking whether it was not important that what people were

free to believe should be worth believing" or whether or not the "anarchy of individualism should not be checked by the authority of Culture, with its inherent power of discovering truth."³⁸ Arnold in his age, like Swift, was trying to mould an opinion. But Arnold stood high as a critic; especially in his later years. As Tillotson points out, "his prestige as a critic was so high that his brilliant epigrams established themselves in the minds of younger critics as dogmas, and in the minds of the incurious mass of readers as assumptions."³⁹ As one goes through the critics of the nineteenth century, the men who wrote and lectured for the masses, he finds that Arnold stands as a not untypical example: often that which he says, can be found in the writings of his fellow critics and lecturers. Often that which he believes, can be found in the writings which were being read and, one can assume, believed by the average Victorian.

The aristocracy of England was politically dead since the Reform Bill of 1832. Tillotson feels that if they still had been in power, Arnold would have cajoled them to aid the working class, but since they were not in power and the laboring classes had not yet begun to rise, Arnold made his criticisms to the middle class, which he felt was the center of English power -- although he, the same as other more discriminating critics, was not especially impressed with the middle class mentality.⁴⁰

When Arnold spoke of literature, he spoke as he did because the middle class were in power; Mill had descried, and Arnold after him, what Weber and Tawney have regularly proved, that the middle-class Briton of the nineteenth century was descended from the Puritan of the seventeenth. But he was still interested in the old questions; in practical morality, in solid demonstrable value, in ways of succeeding, in religious questions when those questions were tied with something -- indeed with 'something or other' -- in the Bible.⁴¹

Arnold's views in criticism are not necessarily confined to those of the century in which he lived, but in his century he did reflect the feeling of his class. In Preface to Poems, 1853, Arnold says the "radical difference between their [Greek] poetical theory and ours consists" in the fact that "they regarded the whole; we regard the parts. With them the action predominated over the expression of it; with us, the expression predominates over the action."⁴² Somervell feels that this looking at the whole, the ideal of serenity, is one of two ideas that runs through all of Arnold's poetry.⁴³ Again in his Essays in Criticism, First Series Arnold states that

The grand power of poetry is in its interpretative power...the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new, and intimate sense of them [mysteries of the universe], and of our relations with them.⁴⁴

Too, just as the majority of writers of the nineteenth century felt, Arnold felt that poetry -- authentic poetry -- was solemn. He admired Spenser or Milton or Dante, but he felt

almost a guiltiness, when his fingers touched the binding of his Chaucer; Chaucer seemed to resist being put on his honour by the priest. And so Arnold had to rule out Chaucer, and with him all poets lacking 'high seriousness' from the greatest; and Moliere, and the poets of the eighteenth century, who were dismissed below stairs to join the prose writers. As far as Arnold was concerned, poets who looked to satire seemed mean and dirty.⁴⁵

It is in these passages that perhaps one of the keys to understanding why Swift was not appreciated can be found. When Arnold speaks of the parts, that is partially what the Victorians found wrong with Swift. His obscenity and profanity were dragged out of context -- out of the eighteenth century and out of what the total effect the work was trying to achieve. It would be interesting to know how many Victorians actually thought that Swift advocated the eating of children or the abolishment of Christianity.

Too, when Arnold speaks of poetry as being "solemn," with "high seriousness," it is no wonder that Swift was not of the elect. In "A Description of the Morning" Swift anticipates the realists of the twentieth century, but fails to satisfy the "grand power" of Arnold.

Now Betty from her Master's Bed had flown,
And softly stole to discompose her own.

This is not solemn. In "A Description of a City Shower" Swift speaks of all of the debris coming from various parts of London:

Sweepings from Butchers, Stalls, Dung, Guts, and Blood,
Drown'd Puppies, stinking Sprats, all drench'd in Mud,
Dead Cats and Turnip-Tops come tumbling down the Flood.

One would have to admit there is a certain lack of "high seriousness" on the part of the poet. At the risk of laboring the obvious, one can go through line after line of Swift's verse and find the good diction, easy gaiety, and exact rhymes so admired by Dr. Johnson, but the solemnity and the sense of our relationship with the mysteries of the universe so essential to Arnold are lacking. In all honesty, perhaps one should dismiss Swift's poetry: much of it is doggerel. However, the presentation in both his verse and prose is essentially the same, i.e., he utilizes irony; regardless the cut of the cloth, Swift does not fulfill the requirements of Arnold criticism.

Just as much as in Arnold, one can find the same ideas put forth by Carlyle, in whose writings between the forty-two years between 1823 and 1865 "no fundamental change of principle" can be found.⁴⁶ Like Arnold, Carlyle felt that a poet who had levity, or rather one who lacked "high seriousness," was to be condemned. One should approach literature with "sympathy" and "reverence." As for satirists, "Voltaire was nearly everything that Carlyle most detested; he had hardly any of the gifts which won his critic's spontaneous admiration. He speaks with truth of Voltaire's 'inborn levity of nature, his entire want of Earnestness.'" Voltaire was "by birth a mocker, and light Pococurante." As far as Carlyle was concerned, "Voltaire's results are mainly negative; and Carlyle loathed mere

negation."⁴⁷ On this question, the Swift advocate must plead nolo contendere, for by definition of satire there is admission that the satirist is "negative," for want of a better word. But that is essentially what he is trying to be: the satirist is never constructive, for he is attempting to be negative toward -- to destroy -- that which he feels to be initially wrong. Swift must fall into the same category as Voltaire, but it appears to be a case of criticizing a satirist because he is not a tragedian.

There is a noticeable lack of disinterested detachment in these criticisms, but as was stated, it was not the function of literary critics to be disinterested. When the Victorians studied the work of the eighteenth century, "they were in two minds about it, hating it one moment because it strangled what was new in their own poetry, and admiring it the next because it was so much a part of them."⁴⁸ The eighteenth century received no credit from Arnold; when in 1879 he listed "our chief poetical names," i.e., of the man in the street, he included Scott, Campbell, and Moore.⁴⁹ In retrospect, Arnold cannot be condemned too heavily for this statement, for "Criticism was the means for advertising the best and for making it prevail." Arnold had no intention of being disinterested, for

his bent towards advocacy was the bent of his whole nature, and even when the advocacy seems to be blowing less like a tradewind, it is not often that we are given disinterested criticism, even disinterested literary criticism.⁵⁰

In "The Literary Influence of Academies" of 1864, Arnold calls the eighteenth century provincial and second rate. He says the best of that time was the 'Attic prose' of Addison. Tillotson states that Arnold felt this way for three reasons, but the prime one was that Arnold accepted the "lazy assumptions of those of his contemporaries who were under no obligation to think."⁵¹ One can see the passing of Victorian prudery and hence an amelioration of Swift's infamy, for in 1881 in "Letters, Speeches and Tracts on Irish Affairs by Edmund Burke" Arnold states "But to lose Swift and Burke out of our mind's circle of acquaintance is a loss indeed..." and he then goes on to equate him with Shakespeare and Milton in an indirect manner.⁵²

Then, still later in 1896 Arnold spoke of Swift as highly as Voltaire and said that the great men of letters are "men like Cicero, Plato, Bacon, Pascal, Swift, Voltaire..." Tillotson once again feels that there is nothing in Arnold's literary criticism that would merit his making such an about face, but that time alone had brought about a change for the better of the popularity of Swift.⁵³

Ruskin, too, carried the banner of Victorianism as high as any. "His theory that great art is always the product of a morally sound society and bad art always the mark of social corruption"⁵⁴ cannot always be validated, but it did not keep him from preaching that very tenet.

One can go on through the writings of Tennyson, of Browning, of Ruskin, and almost any other author of the time and find that there was little or no kinship with the writings of Jonathan Swift. Even in Taine, there is the lip service but lack of love. Taine admires Swift, but calls him in his summation,

a man of the world and a poet, he invented a cruel pleasantry, funeral laughter, a convulsive gaiety of bitter contrasts...he created a personal poetry by painting the crude details of trivial life, by the energy of painful grotesqueness, by the merciless revelation of the filth we conceal.⁵⁵

And then in his summation he states that "...we quit such a spectacle with a sad heart, but full of admiration; and we say the palace is beautiful even when it is on fire."⁵⁶

And so we return to Thackeray, the man who is given the credit for burying Swift from Victorian eyes, but let us recall that Thackeray wrote his "English Humorists" for the men and women of his age. Those parts of Swift he vilified, they, too, were prone to dislike. Those aspects of Swift's they would enjoy, he complimented. For instance, in his lecture on Swift when he spoke of Stella as a paragon, they believed him.

Gentle lady, so lovely, so loving, so unhappy!
you have had countless champions, millions of manly hearts mourning for you. From generation to generation we take up the fond tradition of your beauty; we watch and follow your tragedy your bright morning love and purity, your constancy, your grief, your sweet martyrdom. We know your legend by heart. You are one of the saints of English story.⁵⁷

This is, of course, rather hyperbolic; but once again let one recall that disinterested literary criticism sells few books. One can notice the change of attitude toward Stella in the twentieth century; there is a more clinical detachment. One can still find Thackeray's basic ideas, but the presentation is radically different.

Whether or not Stella died of a broken heart, starved for romantic affection, we do not know; but we must not be too immoderate in our pity. She enjoyed much that women of her time sought eagerly: the friendship of the leading men of letters; a wide acquaintance among the cultured who year after year frequented her parlour; (the gratitude of many unfortunates to whom she was a gracious and open-handed patroness.) If she remained in the shadow of a great man, she was one of many women who chose that part. She was Swift's life-long companion and his closest friend, intensely interested in his career, able to converse with him and to criticize his ideas. He was devoted to her charming person, her uncommon gentility and refinement, her sound opinions and lively conversation, her unfailing generosity and kindness. That a tragedy lurked beneath this restrained interchange of affection all who read between the lines of the story know well; but Stella died without asking for the world's sympathy. In the absence of information and of any invitation to interfere, common courtesy suggests that we leave the secret of their unfulfilled love where Stella kept it, locked in her heart.⁵⁸

To return to Thackeray, however, he was only telling the Victorians what they wanted to hear, for the Victorians did idolize their women, and there was no such a thing as passionate love nor even a reference to it; if there was a passion it was "a passion...tempered by reverence and confined to the home..."⁵⁹ and if it did not confine itself to this, it was lust and therefore taboo. The audience of

"English Humorists" would have heard Stella interpreted in no other way and still have been satisfied.

When in Gulliver's Travels Swift wrote that " the she-Yahoo would admit the male while she was pregnant," or that the female Yahoos would try to entice a male into seduction, or that if a strange female Yahoo entered a group of other females they would "stare and chatter, and grin, and smell her all over; and then turn off with gestures that seemed to express contempt and disdain," how closely would the Victorians embrace a man who would stoop to write such things?

Swift may have been forgiven for some of his errors, but never the sin of not liking women, home, or marriage. To the Victorians the home was a "source of virtue" where none of the commercialisms and critical ideas of the age could penetrate. Ruskin's "Lilies: of Queen's Gardens" gives a rather typical definition of the home and all that went with it: "This is the true nature of home -- it is the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division." In addition, he says that no "inconsistently-minded, unknown, unloved, or hostile society of the outer world is allowed by either husband or wife to cross the threshold."⁶⁰ Ruskin continues, advocating that a woman of the home "must be enduringly, incorruptibly good; instinctively, infallibly wise..., with the passionate gentleness of an infinitely

variable...modesty of service."⁶¹ As far as Ruskin was concerned, women were a thing apart; a woman's education was to be the same as a boy's but hers was to keep her in a "lofty and pure element of thought" and she should not read those books from circulating libraries "wet with the ...spray of the fountain of folly. Or even from the fountain of wit."⁶² This is in decided contrast to the eighteenth century outlook as far as women's education and role in society are concerned.

There could be a very strong relationship between the dislike of Swift and his satire, and between the Victorian idea of love. Considering that women had been so highly idealized and made into a creature to be worshipped, rather than one of the same species; and coupling this with the loss of religious fervor that had gradually taken place toward the middle of the century, it would not be surprising for a man to turn to a human god to worship with full passion in the purest sense. Noel Annan in Stephen says that Stephen adored his Julia Duckworth because in marriage she was "a living image before whom he could pour out the flood of devotion that could find no outlet in religion."⁶³

One cannot very easily imagine Swift's "pouring out the flood of devotion" to anyone -- man or woman -- and it was this apparent lack of the ability to feel tenderness in a fashion suitable to the Victorian taste that further alienated many people of the nineteenth century from

Jonathan Swift. Swift had compassion; but it was a compassion that desired all whom he came into contact with to be perfect. It mattered not that they were female Yahoos or Aeolists, or "ironmongers;" if they did not act as animal rationale they were prostituting their common sense. And the best way to improve such as these was to satirize them. In the age of common sense -- of reason -- this style admirably suited those elegantly cool Augustans; but in the age of emotions, it was not the mocking word that would improve wrong thought -- it was the direct plea to do better. Only appealing to the emotions as the seat of action did they feel that one could improve man's ways. The good Dean with his mockingly corrective irony was not their man.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In summation, one has to find that Swift not only failed to satisfy Victorian sentiments in general, but he was also almost everything in particular that the Victorians disliked: he was anti-perfectibility, anti-science, anti-optimistic; he was full of levity on taboo subjects, and immoral in presentation of accepted subjects. He had no heroes, he hated critics, he flayed the Dissenting sects. He was not only a poor nationalist, but excoriated jingoists long before the term was invented. His exacerbating comments on marriage, women, and the home were judged by an age which held all three as almost sacred.

Born in an age in which land, aristocracy, and agriculture were bases of social acceptability, Swift was fated to be judged in an era in which business, the middle class, and industrialization were the powers -- and the frames of reference of the two societies were radically different. His philosophy was a belief in a government that protected the status quo; the next century was dominated by laissez-faire. He was strongly High Church -- and said so; and the following age was dominated by Dissenters. The Age of

Reason was displaced by the Age of Emotions; the Age of Wit was replaced by the Age of Sentiment.

But if the "Here Are Lions" superscription was placed on the works of Swift by Thackeray in particular and Bowdlers of the Victorian Age in general, it is not to the discredit of Swift, nor perhaps to the discredit of the Victorians. They lived in a special age with its special customs and special mores. If they decided that the bulk of Swift's writings was to be made inaccessible to the public, that Swift himself would be metamorphosed into an author of a child's book (expurgated), or that he would be held up as an example of how immoral such men of the eighteenth century were, it was a part of the character of the Victorian Age. Tillotson says those who did such things did so as if they "were driven...by a biological necessity."² There appears to be no grounds for either extreme criticism or extreme defense for such attitudes, although one might suppose that this greatest of iconoclasts in English literature could have received better understanding, at least from the intellectuals of the age.

Why is it that here in the latter half of the twentieth century there is such a resurgence of Swift criticism? What is it about the Age of Wit that appeals to us so much? Why has the Age of Satire become once again so popular? The answer probably lies with a number of things. Sentiment in literature has run its course; there

is less tendency to "escape" through sentimental reading. Also, the twentieth century now is rather cynical; and because of this cynicism, this age finds in Swift messages that apparently crystallize disenchantment with the way things are. Too, in the twentieth century there is perhaps a tendency to identify more with writers of the eighteenth century for their style; for if their vocabulary is not exactly the same, their construction is very approximate to that which is written today. One can, of course, find a similarity in the noticeable amount of rather scatological literature now being published. Again, there is a lacking of verbosity or hyperbole that appeals to the twentieth century reader.

One could continue the parallels between the two centuries to much greater length, but it would be, for the most part, stating the obvious.

Every man's reputation goes down in a following age, but usually there is only a short lapse until there is a change of fortune, if there is a degree of merit in the person's writing. Swift had the misfortune to be followed by the Age of Romanticism, which rejected the Age of Reason; and then the Romantic Age was followed by the Victorian, an age which rejected almost all elements of Swift (and a good many aspects of Romanticism).

It has taken two hundred years, but Prince Posterity has decided to smile, and the True Criticks are now turn-

ing fawning glances more and more toward Jonathan Swift.

One can almost hear him say:

Now Grub-Street Wits are all employ'd;
With Elegies, the Town is cloy'd.
("On the Death of Dr. Swift")

NOTES

Chapter I

¹George Sherburn, "The Restoration and Eighteenth Century," A Literary History of England, ed. Albert C. Baugh (New York, 1948), p. 996.

²Lives of the English Poets (London, 1961), II, 307.

³Ibid.

⁴Percy B. Shelley, Shelley's Prose, ed. David Lee Clark (Albuquerque, 1954), p. 233.

⁵Early Letters of Thomas Carlyle, ed. Charles Eliot Norton (London, 1885), p. 239.

⁶"Coleridge on 'Gulliver's Travels,'" No. 3590, August 15, 1896, p. 225; the article to which Aitken had reference was Coleridge's Essays and Lectures on Shakespeare and Some Other Old Poets and Dramatists.

⁷Malcom Elwin, The First Romantics (New York, 1948), p. 5; one perhaps cannot rely too heavily on Wordsworth's comment, for Elwin continues the discussion by stating that Wordsworth actually did not care very much about reading anything, and in his later life gave weak eyes as an excuse for not reading more.

⁸His Very Voice and Self: Collected Conversations of Lord Byron, ed. Ernest J. Lovell, Jr. (New York, 1954), p. 268.

⁹George Eliot Letters, ed. Gordon S. Haight (New Haven, 1955), IV, 90-91.

¹⁰R. H. Super, Walter Savage Landor: A Biography (New York, 1954), p. 452.

¹¹John W. Dodds, Thackeray: A Critical Portrait (New York, 1963), p. 184.

¹²Ibid., p. 182.

¹³William Makepeace Thackeray, The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1905), p. 37.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 32

¹⁹Critical Portrait, p. 183

²⁰Gordon M. Ray, Thackeray: The Uses of Adversity (New York, 1955), p. 275.

Chapter II

¹Herbert Davis, The Satire of Jonathan Swift (New York, 1947), pp. 11-12.

²Ibid., p. 2.

³Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁴Ibid., p. 12.

⁵Ibid., p. 7.

⁶Walter E. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind: 1830-1870 (New Haven, 1957), p. 5; I am deeply indebted to Professor Houghton for most of the ideas found in this thesis. Not only are his perceptions excellent, but his references directed me to much more valuable and pertinent information concerning this work.

Chapter III

¹John Stuart Mill, Autobiography (New York, 1909), pp. 71, 72, 73.

²Thomas Carlyle, Sartor Resartus (London, 1893), p. 171.

³John Morley, "Byron" (1870), Critical Miscellanies, 1, 239; quoted in Houghton, p. 35.

⁴"Cosmic Emotion" (1877), Lectures and Essays, 2, 284-5; quoted in Houghton, p. 35.

⁵Charles Darwin, Origin of Species, 6th ed. (London 1925), p. 504.

⁶"Sir James Mackintosh," Miscellaneous Works of Lord Macaulay, ed. Lady Trevelyan (New York, n.d.), II, 286.

⁷Ibid., p. 287.

⁸Houghton, p. 40.

⁹History of England, in Complete Writings, vol. 12, chap. 3, pp. 44-5; quoted in Houghton, p. 41.

¹⁰See Houghton, pp. 33-53 for some of the more unguarded comments made by Carlyle and other intellectual leaders of the age. It does not appear that Houghton is attempting to lessen these men's greatness; he is merely trying to show that at different times almost all of the great men of the age were caught up in the spirit of optimism.

¹¹Irvin Ehrenpreis, Swift: The Man, His Works, and the Age (London, 1962), I, 15-16.

¹²Ibid., p. 83.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 85.

¹⁶Houghton, p. 113.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Herbert Spencer, Social Statics (New York, 1954), p. 65; Spencer's line of reason is a bit difficult to follow, but apparently his argument is that man really has no choice, i.e., there is a "perfect law" to follow. "Obey or suffer" is the maxim. "Progress from deepest ignorance to highest enlightenment is" from the sense of "unconsciousness" (pp. 35-38). To put it another way, he appears to say two things -- both inextricably tied together: one is that man knows certain laws he must follow, so he would be a fool not to follow them; and another, because these laws are perfect laws and man is a rational creature, he will, for the most part, follow them from his "unconsciousness."

¹⁹Sherburn, p. 810.

Chapter IV

¹Geroge Macaulay Trevelyan, History of England (New York, 1952), III, 86.

²Ibid., p. 87.

³Ibid.

⁴"The People's Charter," Speeches of Lord Macaulay, ed. G. M. Young (London, 1935), p. 190; lest this speech misinterpret Macaulay, let it be understood that he did vote for the ballot, but was against universal suffrage. He was very much afraid of loss of property and ultimate nationalization of all private businesses. Looking at his fears from over one hundred years away, one has to admit that they have been, to a degree, realized.

⁵W. E. Lunt, History of England, 3rd ed. (New York; 1945), p. 661.

⁶Houghton, p. 56.

⁷Edward Wagenknecht, Cavalcade of the English Novel (New York, 1950), p. 184.

⁸Charles Kingsley, "1862 Preface," Alton Locke (London, 1923), pp. 2-3.

⁹John W. Dodds, The Age of Paradox (New York, 1952), p. 11.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 12.

¹¹Houghton, p. 60.

¹²Robert A. Rosenbaum, Earnest Victorians (New York, 1961), p. 23.

¹³Ibid., p. 41.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁵W. R. Greg, "England As It Is," Edinburgh Review, 93 (1851), 325.

¹⁶Thomas Carlyle, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays (London, 1886), II, 15.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁸Ibid.

- ¹⁹Lunt, p. 542.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 751.
- ²¹Ibid.
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³Dodds, Paradox, p. 23.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 24.
- ²⁵Ibid.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 26.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 27.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 29.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 33.
- ³⁰E. L. Woodward, The Age of Reform, (Oxford, 1946), p. 503.
- ³¹Wagenknecht, p. 332.
- ³²From a letter to Frederic Harrison, August 15, 1866; in George Eliot's Life, ed. J. W. Cross (New York, 1885), II, 318.
- ³³Wagenknecht, p. 183; as an interesting sidenote, Disraeli apparently managed to reconcile his anxiety about evolution. He originated the famous phrase that if he had to choose between apes and angels, he was "on the side of the angels."
- ³⁴Houghton, p. 62.
- ³⁵England and the English, p. 281; quoted in Houghton, p. 65.
- ³⁶Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, The Life of Charlotte Brontë (London, 1929), p. 385; Charlotte Brontë appeared to be quite aware of the Utilitarians of her age, for in this same letter she comments on how much she enjoyed Ruskin's Stones of Venice and laughs at how the "Utilitarians" would hate Ruskin for his "reverence" of art (p. 386).
- ³⁷Basil Williams, The Whig Supremacy (Oxford, 1962), p. 7.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹G. N. Clark, The Later Stuarts (Oxford, 1947), p. 26.

⁴⁰Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, 3rd ed. (New York, 1902), I, 370.

⁴¹Victorian Poetry and Poetics, ed. Walter E. Houghton and Robert G. Stange (Boston, 1959), p. xxii.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Houghton, p. 300.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 138.

⁴⁵Dodds, Paradox, p. 367.

⁴⁶Houghton, p. 296.

⁴⁷Edward Rosenheim, Jr., ed., "Preface" to Argument for Abolishment of Christianity, Jonathan Swift: Selected Prose and Poetry (New York, 1959), p. 241.

⁴⁸John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice, chap. 2, sec. 103, (London, 1907), p. 41; from this section it appears that Ruskin believes in man's innate goodness even if there were no sectarian tendencies. As he states it, "Everybody likes to do good."

⁴⁹Houghton, p. 173.

Chapter V

¹Houghton, p. 115.

²John Stuart Mill, "Comparison of the Tendencies of French and English Intellectuals," p. 802; quoted in Houghton, p. 112.

³"The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864), Essays in Criticism, First Series (London, 1898), p. 16.

⁴Houghton, p. 123.

⁵p. 316; quoted in Houghton, p. 101.

⁶Sherburn, p. 808.

- ⁷Ibid., p. 824.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 827.
- ⁹Ibid.
- ¹⁰Dodds, Paradox, p. 362; the following data is also from Dodds.
- ¹¹Sherburn, p. 876.
- ¹²Quoted in Dodds, Paradox, p. 372.
- ¹³Dodds, Paradox, p. 373.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 365-66.
- ¹⁵Ehrenpreis, I, 111.
- ¹⁶Noel Gilroy Annan, Leslie Stephen (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), p. 228.
- ¹⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 226.
- ¹⁹To be fair to all concerned, Shelley and Byron also failed to fit the "manly" qualities desired by Stephen.
- ²⁰Geoffrey Tillotson, Criticism in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1951), p. 214.
- ²¹22 (August 4, 1886), 145-47; quoted in Houghton, p. 368.
- ²²Wagenknecht, pp. 316-317.
- ²³Ibid., p. 316.
- ²⁴William Alfred Eddy, ed., "Introduction," Jonathan Swift: Satires and Personal Writings (London, 1949), I, xviii.
- ²⁵Ibid.
- ²⁶From 1846 to 1848 Dombey and Son was selling 30,000 copies per month, while Vanity Fair was selling only 7,000; Dodds, Paradox, p. 366.
- ²⁷Dodds, Paradox, p. 368.
- ²⁸Ibid.

- ²⁹Thomas Marc Parrott and Robert Bernard Martin, A Companion to Victorian Literature (New York, 1955), p. 265.
- ³⁰Houghton, p. 137.
- ³¹Ibid., p. 101.
- ³²Houghton, p. 143.
- ³³Sesame and Lilies (New York, 1876), p. 20.
- ³⁴Ibid., p. 25.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 37.
- ³⁶Eddy, I, xv.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. xxv-xxvi.
- ³⁸Houghton, p. 16.
- ³⁹Tillotson, p. 72.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 47.
- ⁴¹Ibid., p. 49.
- ⁴²Preface to First Edition of Poems (1853), Complete Prose Works, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1960), I, 5.
- ⁴³David Churchill Somervell, English Thought in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1960), p. 155.
- ⁴⁴"Maurice De Guerin," Essays in Criticism, First Series (1865), p. 81.
- ⁴⁵Tillotson, p. 52.
- ⁴⁶Hugh Walker, The Literature of the Victorian Era (Cambridge, Eng., 1931), p. 67.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., p. 56.
- ⁴⁸Tillotson, p. 72.
- ⁴⁹Quoted in Tillotson, p. 63.
- ⁵⁰Tillotson, p. 54.
- ⁵¹Ibid., p. 63.

⁵²Quoted in Tillotson, p. 64.

⁵³Tillotson, p. 53.

⁵⁴Somervell, p. 151.

⁵⁵H. A. Taine, History of English Literature, trans. H. Van Laun (New York, 1908), II, 255.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 256.

⁵⁷p. 40.

⁵⁸Eddy, I, xix.

⁵⁹Houghton, p. 390.

⁶⁰Sesame and Lilies, p. 91.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 92.

⁶²Ibid., p. 99-100.

⁶³p. 390.

Chapter VI

¹Tillotson, p. 3.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aitken, G. A. "Coleridge on 'Gulliver's Travels,'" Athenaeum, No. 3590 (Aug. 15, 1896), 225.
- Annan, Noel Gilroy. Leslie Stephen. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1952.
- Arnold, Matthew. Complete Prose Works. Ed. R. H. Super. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1960.
- _____. "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," Essays in Criticism, First Series. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1898.
- _____. "The Study of Poetry," Essays: English and American. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.
- Boyd, Ernest A. Literary Blasphemies. New York: Harper & Bros., 1927.
- Brown, James. "Swift as Moralist," Philological Quarterly, XXXIII (Oct., 1954), 368-387.
- Burke, Edmund. Reflections on the French Revolution: A Letter to a Noble Lord. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.
- Carlyle, Thomas. Critical and Miscellaneous Essays. 15 vols. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1888.
- _____. Complete Works of Thomas Carlyle. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1901.
- _____. "The English," Past and Present. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918.
- _____. Sartor Resartus. London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1893.
- Clark, G. N. The Later Stuarts: 1660-1714. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947.
- Darwin, Charles. Origin of Species. 6th ed. London: A. L. Burt Co., 1925.

- Davis, Herbert. The Satire of Jonathan Swift. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947.
- Dodds, John W. The Age of Paradox; A Biography of England, 1841-1851. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc., 1952.
- _____. Thackeray: A Critical Portrait. New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1963.
- Dobson, Austin. "Thackeray's 'Esmond,'" De Libris. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1908.
- Early Letters of Thomas Carlyle. Ed. Charles Eliot Norton. 2 vols. London: Macmillan & Co., 1886.
- Eddy, William Alfred. Gulliver's Travels: A Critical Study. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1923.
- Ehrenpreis, Irvin. Swift: The Man, His Works, and the Age. 2 vols. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1962.
- Elwin, Malcom. The First Romantics. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1948.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth Cleghorn. The Life of Charlotte Brontë. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1929.
- George Eliot Letters. Ed. Gordon S. Haight. 4 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955.
- George Eliot's Life. Arr. & ed. J. W. Cross. 3 vols. New York: Harper & Bros., 1885.
- Harth, Phillip. Swift and Anglican Rationalism. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961.
- His Very Voice and Self: Collected Conversations of Lord Byron. Ed. Ernest J. Lovell, Jr. New York: Macmillan Co., 1954.
- Houghton, Walter E. The Victorian Frame of Mind: 1830-1870. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1957.
- Johnson, Maurice. The Sin of Wit: Jonathan Swift as a Poet. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1950.
- Johnson, Samuel. The Critical Opinions of Samuel Johnson. Ed. Joseph Epes Brown. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1926.
- _____. Lives of the English Poets. 2 vols. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1961.

- Kingsley, Charles. Alton Locke: Tailor and Poet. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1923.
- Landa, Louis A. Jonathan Swift: A List of Critical Studies Published from 1895 to 1945. New York: Cosmopolitan Science and Art Service Co., Inc., 1945.
- _____. "Swift, the Mysteries, and Deism," Studies in English. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1944, pp. 239-256.
- Lecky, William Edward Hartpole. Historical and Political Essays. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1908.
- Lunt, W. E. History of England. 3rd ed. New York: Harper & Bros., 1945.
- Macaulay, Thomas Babington. Critical and Historical Essays. London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1907.
- _____. Speeches by Lord Macaulay. Ed. G. M. Young. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1935.
- Mill, John Stuart. Autobiography. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.
- Miscellaneous Works of Lord Macaulay. Ed. Lady Trevelyan. 5 vols. New York: Harper & Bros., n.d.
- Murry, John Middleton. Jonathan Swift: A Critical Biography. London: Jonathan Cape, 1954.
- Nussbaum, Frederick L. The Triumph of Science and Reason. New York: Harper and Bros., 1953.
- Parrott, Thomas Marc and Robert Bernard Martin. A Companion to Victorian Literature. New York: Scribner, 1955.
- Poetry and Criticism of Matthew Arnold. Ed. A. Dwight Culler. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.
- Quiller-Couch, A. T. The Roll Call of Honor. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, n.d.
- Quintana, Ricardo. Swift, An Introduction. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1955.
- Ray, Gordon N. Thackeray: The Uses of Adversity. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1955.
- Rosenbaum, Robert A. Earnest Victorians. New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1961.

- Rosenheim, Edward, ed. Johnathan Swift: Selected Prose and Poetry. New York: Rinehart & Co., 1959.
- Ruskin, John. Sesame and Lilies. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1876.
- _____. The Stones of Venice. London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1907.
- _____. The Works of John Ruskin. Ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn. London: G. Allen, 1903-12.
- Scott, Walter. Familiar Letters of Sir Walter Scott. 2 vols. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1894.
- Shelley, Percy B. "A Philosophical View of Reform," Shelley's Prose. Ed. David Lee Clark. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1954.
- Sherburn, George. "The Restoration and Eighteenth Century," A Literary History of England. Ed. Albert C. Baugh. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948.
- Smith, Adam. An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.
- Somervell, David Churchill. English Thought in the Nineteenth Century. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1960.
- Spencer, Herbert. Social Statics. New York: Robert Schalkenback Foundation, 1954.
- Stephen, Sir Leslie. English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century. New York: Putnam, 1907.
- _____. The English Utilitarians. New York: P. Smith, 1950.
- _____. History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century. 2 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1902.
- Super, R. H. Walter Savage Landor: A Biography. New York: New York Univ. Press, 1954.
- Swift, Jonathan. Gulliver's Travels, The Tale of a Tub, Battle of the Books, etc. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1942.
- _____. Satires and Personal Writings. Ed. William Alfred Eddy. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949.

- Taine, H. A. History of English Literature. Trans. H. Van Laun. 2 vols. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1908.
- Thackeray, William Makepeace. The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century. 2nd ed. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1905.
- Tillotson, Geoffrey. Criticism and the Nineteenth Century. London: Athlone Press, 1951.
- Trevelyan, George Macaulay. History of England. 3 vols. New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1952.
- Victorian Poetry and Poetics. Ed. Walter E. Houghton and Robert G. Stange. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1959.
- Wagenknecht, Edward. Cavalcade of the English Novel: From Elizabeth to George VI. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1950.
- Walker, Hugh. The Literature of the Victorian Era. Cambridge, Eng.: Univ. Press, 1931.
- Willey, Basil. The Eighteenth Century Background. London: Chatto & Windus, 1940.
- _____. More Nineteenth Century Studies. London: Chatto & Windus, 1956.
- Williams, Basil. The Whig Supremacy: 1714-1760. 2nd ed., rev. C. H. Stuart. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.
- Woodward, E. L. The Age of Reform: 1815-1870. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946.

VITA

James Neal Elliott

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: CRITICAL ESTIMATES OF JONATHAN SWIFT DURING THE
VICTORIAN ERA

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Hominy, Oklahoma,
September 18, 1933, the son of James Samuel and
Thelma Lenore Elliott.

Education: Attended grade school in various schools
throughout Texas and Oklahoma; graduated from
high school in Hominy, Oklahoma, in 1951.
Received the Bachelor of Arts degree from
Central State College, Edmond, Oklahoma, in
1959, with a major in English; completed
requirements for the Master of Arts degree in
English at Oklahoma State University in July,
1966.

Professional Experience: Served as graduate assist-
ant in the Oklahoma State University English
Department from 1959 to 1961; served as instruc-
tor of English at the Oklahoma State University
Contract to Ethiopia in Jimma from 1961 to 1965;
served as temporary instructor of English in the
English Department at Oklahoma State University
during 1965-66.