

EIGHTH EDITION

VOLUME I



THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY

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The Norton Anthology
of English Literature

EIGHTH EDITION

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The Early Seventeenth Century 1603-1660

- 1603: Death of Elizabeth I; accession of James I, first Stuart king of England
- 1605: The Gunpowder Plot, a failed effort by Catholic extremists to blow up Parliament and the king
- 1607: Establishment of first permanent English colony in the New World at Jamestown, Virginia
- 1625: Death of James I; accession of Charles I
- 1642: Outbreak of civil war; theaters closed
- 1649: Execution of Charles I; beginning of Commonwealth and Protectorate, known inclusively as the Interregnum (1649—60)
- 1660: End of the Protectorate; restoration of Charles II

Queen Elizabeth died on March 24, 1603, after ruling England for more than four decades. The Virgin Queen had not, of course, produced a child to inherit her throne, but her kinsman, the thirty-six-year old James Stuart, James VI of Scotland, succeeded her as James I without the attempted coups that many had feared. Many welcomed the accession of a man in the prime of life, supposing that he would prove more decisive than his notoriously vacillating predecessor. Worries over the succession, which had plagued the reigns of the Tudor monarchs since Henry VIII, could finally subside: James already had several children with his queen, Anne of Denmark. Writers and scholars jubilantly noted that their new ruler had literary inclinations. He was the author of treatises on government and witchcraft, and some youthful efforts at poetry.

Nonetheless, there were grounds for disquiet. James had come to maturity in Scotland, in the seventeenth century a foreign land with a different church, different customs, and different institutions of government. Two of his books, *The True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598) and *Basilikon Doron* (1599), expounded authoritarian theories of kingship: James's views seemed incompatible with the English tradition of "mixed" government, in which power was shared by the monarch, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. As Thomas Howard wrote in 1611, while Elizabeth "did talk of her subjects' love and good affection," James "talketh of his subjects' fear and subjection." James liked to imagine himself as a modern version of the wise, peace-loving Roman Augustus Caesar, who autocratically governed a vast empire. The Romans had deified their emperors, and while the Christian James could not expect the same, he insisted on his closeness to divinity. Kings, he believed, derived their powers from God rather than from the people. As God's specially chosen delegate, surely he deserved his subjects' reverent, unconditional obedience.

Yet unlike the charismatic Elizabeth, James was personally unprepossessing. One contemporary, Anthony Weldon, provides a barbed description: "His tongue too large for his mouth, which ever made him speak full in the mouth, and drink very uncomely as if eating his drink . . . he never washed his hands . . . his walk was ever circular, his fingers ever in that walk fiddling about his codpiece." Unsurprisingly, James did not always inspire in his subjects the deferential awe to which he thought himself entitled.

The relationship between the monarch and his people and the relationship between England and Scotland would be sources of friction throughout James's reign. James had hoped to unify his domains as a single nation, "the empire of Britain." But the two realms' legal and ecclesiastical systems proved difficult to reconcile, and the English Parliament, traditionally a sporadically convened advisory body to the monarch, offered robustly xenophobic opposition. The failure of unification was only one of several clashes with the English Parliament, especially with the House of Commons, which had authority over taxation. After James died in 1625 and his son, Charles I, succeeded him, tensions persisted and intensified. Charles, indeed, attempted to rule without summoning Parliament at all between 1629 and 1638. By 1642 England was up in arms, in a civil war between the king's forces and armies loyal to the House of Commons. The conflict ended with Charles's defeat and beheading in 1649.

Although in the early 1650s the monarchy as an institution seemed as dead as the man who had last worn the crown, an adequate replacement proved difficult to devise. Executive power devolved upon a "Lord Protector," Oliver Cromwell, former general of the parliamentary forces, who wielded power nearly as autocratically as Charles had done. Yet without an institutionally sanctioned method of transferring power upon Cromwell's death in 1658, the attempt to fashion a commonwealth without a hereditary monarch eventually failed. In 1660 Parliament invited the eldest son of the old king home from exile. He succeeded to the throne as King Charles II.

As James's accession marks the beginning of "the early seventeenth century," his grandson's marks the end. Literary periods often fail to correlate neatly with the reigns of monarchs, and the period 1603—60 can seem especially arbitrary. Many of the most important cultural trends in seventeenth-century Europe neither began nor ended in these years but were in the process of unfolding slowly, over several centuries. The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century was still ongoing in the seventeenth, and still producing turmoil. The printing press, invented in the fifteenth century, made books ever more widely available, contributing to an expansion of literacy and to a changed conception of authorship. Although the English economy remained primarily agrarian, its manufacturing and trade sectors were expanding rapidly. England was beginning to establish itself as a colonial power and as a leading maritime nation. From 1550 on, London grew explosively as a center of population, trade, and literary endeavor. All these important developments got under way before James came to the throne, and many of them would continue after the 1714 death of James's great-granddaughter Queen Anne, the last of the Stuarts to reign in England.

From a literary point of view, 1603 can seem a particularly capricious dividing line because at the accession of James I so many writers happened to be in midcareer. The professional lives of William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, John Donne, Francis Bacon, Walter Raleigh, and many less important writers—

Thomas Dekker, George Chapman, Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Heywood, for instance—straddle the reigns of Elizabeth and James. The Restoration of Charles II, with which this section ends, is likewise a more significant political than literary milestone: John Milton completed *Paradise Lost* and wrote two other major poems in the 1660s. Nonetheless, recognizing the years 1603—60 as a period sharpens our awareness of some important political, intellectual, cultural, and stylistic currents that bear directly upon literary production. It helps focus attention too upon the seismic shift in national consciousness that, in 1649, could permit the formal trial, conviction, and execution of an anointed king at the hands of his former subjects.

STATE AND CHURCH, 1603-40

In James's reign, the most pressing difficulties were apparently financial, but money troubles were merely symptoms of deeper quandaries about the proper relationship between the king and the people. Compared to James's native Scotland, England seemed a prosperous nation, but James was less wealthy than he believed. Except in times of war, the Crown was supposed to fund the government not through regular taxation but through its own extensive land revenues and by exchanging Crown prerogatives, such as the collection of taxes on luxury imports, in return for money or services. Yet the Crown's independent income had declined throughout the sixteenth century as inflation eroded the value of land rents. Meanwhile, innovations in military technology and shipbuilding dramatically increased the expense of port security and other defenses, a traditional Crown responsibility. Elizabeth had responded to straitened finances with parsimony, transferring much of the expense of her court, for instance, onto wealthy subjects, whom she visited for extended periods on her annual "progresses." She kept a tight lid on honorific titles too, creating new knights or peers very rarely, even though the years of her reign saw considerable upward social mobility. In consequence, by 1603 there was considerable pent-up pressure both for "honors" and for more tangible rewards for government officials. As soon as James came to power, he was immediately besieged with applicants.

James responded with what seemed to him appropriate royal munificence, knighting and ennobling many of his courtiers and endowing them with opulent gifts. His expenses were unavoidably higher than Elizabeth's, because he had to maintain not only his own household, but also separate establishments for his queen and for the heir apparent, Prince Henry. Yet he quickly became notorious for his financial heedlessness. Compared to Elizabeth's, his court was disorderly and wasteful, marked by hard drinking, gluttonous feasting, and a craze for hunting. "It is not possible for a king of England . . . to be rich or safe, but by frugality," warned James's lord treasurer, Robert Cecil, but James seemed unable to restrain himself. Soon he was deep in debt and unable to convince Parliament to bankroll him by raising taxes.

The king's financial difficulties set his authoritarian assertions about the monarch's supremacy at odds with Parliament's control over taxation. How were his prerogatives as a ruler to coexist with the rights of his subjects? Particularly disturbing to many was James's tendency to bestow high offices upon favorites apparently chosen for good looks rather than for good judgment. James's openly romantic attachment first to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, and then to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, gave rise to widespread

rumors of homosexuality at court. The period had complex attitudes toward same-sex relationships; on the one hand, "sodomy" was a capital crime (though it was very rarely prosecuted); on the other hand, passionately intense male friendship, sometimes suffused with eroticism, constituted an important cultural ideal. In James's case, at least, contemporaries considered his susceptibility to lovely, expensive youths more a political than a moral calamity. For his critics, it crystallized what was wrong with unlimited royal power: the ease with which a king could confuse his own whim with a divine mandate.

Despite James's ungainly demeanor, his frictions with Parliament, and his chronic problems of self-management, he was politically astute. Often, like Elizabeth, he succeeded not through decisiveness but through canny inaction. Cautious by temperament, he characterized himself as a peacemaker and, for many years, successfully kept England out of the religious wars raging on the Continent. His 1604 peace treaty with England's old enemy, Spain, made the Atlantic safe for English ships, a prerequisite for the colonization of the New World and for regular long-distance trading expeditions into the Mediterranean and down the African coast into the Indian Ocean. During James's reign the first permanent English settlements were established in North America, first at Jamestown, then in Bermuda, at Plymouth, and in the Caribbean. In 1611 the East India Company established England's first foothold in India. Even when expeditions ended disastrously, as did Henry Hudson's 1611 attempt to find the Northwest Passage and Walter Raleigh's 1617 expedition to Guiana, they often asserted territorial claims that England would exploit in later decades.

Although the Crown's deliberate attempts to manage the economy were often misguided, its frequent inattention or refusal to interfere had the unintentional effect of stimulating growth. Early seventeenth-century entrepreneurs undertook a wide variety of schemes for industrial or agricultural improvement. Some ventures were almost as loony as Sir Politic Would-be's ridiculous moneymaking notions in Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1606), but others were serious, profitable enterprises. In the south, domestic industries began manufacturing goods like pins and light woollens that had previously been imported. In the north, newly developed coal mines provided fuel for England's growing cities. In the east, landowners drained wetlands, producing more arable land to feed England's rapidly growing population. These endeavors gave rise to a new respect for the practical arts, a faith in technology as a means of improving human life, and a conviction that the future might be better than the past: all important influences upon the scientific theories of Francis Bacon and his seventeenth-century followers. Economic growth in this period owed more to the initiative of individuals and small groups than to government policy, a factor that encouraged a reevaluation of the role of self-interest, the profit motive, and the role of business contracts in the betterment of the community. This reevaluation was a prerequisite for the secular, contractual political theories proposed by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke later in the seventeenth century.

On the vexations faced by the Church of England, James was likewise often most successful when he was least activist. Since religion cemented sociopolitical order, it seemed necessary to English rulers that all of their subjects belong to a single church. Yet how could they do so when the Reformation had discredited many familiar religious practices and had bred disagreement over many theological issues? Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English

people argued over many religious topics. How should public worship be conducted, and what sorts of qualifications should ministers possess? How should Scripture be understood? How should people pray? What did the sacrament of Communion mean? What happened to people's souls after they died? Elizabeth's government had needed to devise a common religious practice when actual consensus was impossible. Sensibly, it sought a middle ground between traditional and reformed views. Everyone was legally required to attend Church of England services, and the form of the services themselves was mandated in the Elizabethan Book of Common Prayer. Yet the Book of Common Prayer deliberately avoided addressing abstruse theological controversies. The language of the English church service was carefully chosen to be open to several interpretations and acceptable to both Protestant- and Catholic-leaning subjects.

The Elizabethan compromise effectively tamed many of the Reformation's divisive energies and proved acceptable to the majority of Elizabeth's subjects. To staunch Catholics on one side and ardent Protestants on the other, however, the Elizabethan church seemed to have sacrificed truth to political expediency. Catholics wanted to return England to the Roman fold; while some of them were loyal subjects of the queen, others advocated invasion by a foreign Catholic power. Meanwhile the Puritans, as they were disparagingly called, pressed for more thoroughgoing reformation in doctrine, ritual, and church government, urging the elimination of "popish" elements from worship services and "idolatrous" religious images from churches. Some, the Presbyterians, wanted to separate lay and clerical power in the national church, so that church leaders would be appointed by other ministers, not by secular authorities. Others, the separatists, advocated abandoning a national church in favor of small congregations of the "elect."

The resistance of religious minorities to Elizabeth's established church opened them to state persecution. In the 1580s and 1590s, Catholic priests and the laypeople who harbored them were executed for treason, and radical Protestants for heresy. Both groups greeted James's accession enthusiastically; his mother had been the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, while his upbringing had been in the strict Reformed tradition of the Scottish Presbyterian Kirk.

James began his reign with a conference at Hampton Court, one of his palaces, at which advocates of a variety of religious views could openly debate them. Yet the Puritans failed to persuade him to make any substantive reforms. Practically speaking, the Puritan belief that congregations should choose their leaders diminished the monarch's power by stripping him of authority over ecclesiastical appointments. More generally, allowing people to choose their leaders in any sphere of life threatened to subvert the entire system of deference and hierarchy upon which the institution of monarchy itself seemed to rest. "No bishop, no king," James famously remarked.

Nor did Catholics fare well in the new reign. Initially inclined to lift Elizabeth's sanctions against them, James hesitated when he realized how entrenched was the opposition to toleration. Then, in 1605, a small group of disaffected Catholics packed a cellar adjacent to the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder, intending to detonate it on the day that the king formally opened Parliament, with Prince Henry, the Houses of Lords and Commons, and the leading justices in attendance. The conspirators were arrested before they could effect their plan. If the "Gunpowder Plot" had succeeded, it would have eliminated much of England's ruling class in a single tremendous explo-

sion, leaving the land vulnerable to invasion by a foreign, Catholic power. Not surprisingly, the Gunpowder Plot dramatically heightened anti-Catholic paranoia in England, and its apparently miraculous revelation was widely seen as a sign of God's care for England's Protestant governors.

By and large, then, James's ecclesiastical policies continued along the lines laid down by Elizabeth. By appointing bishops of varying doctrinal views, he restrained any single faction from controlling church policy. The most important religious event of James's reign was a newly commissioned translation of the Bible. First published in 1611, it was a typically moderating document. A much more graceful rendering than its predecessor, the Geneva version produced by Puritan expatriates in the 1550s, the King James Bible immediately became the standard English Scripture. Its impressive rhythms and memorable phrasing would influence writers for centuries. On the one hand, the new translation contributed to the Protestant aim of making the Bible widely available to every reader in the vernacular. On the other hand, unlike the Geneva Bible, the King James Version translated controversial and ambiguous passages in ways that bolstered conservative preferences for a ceremonial church and for a hierarchically organized church government.

James's moderation was not universally popular. Some Protestants yearned for a more confrontational policy toward Catholic powers, particularly toward Spain, England's old enemy. In the first decade of James's reign, this party clustered around James's eldest son and heir apparent, Prince Henry, who cultivated a militantly Protestant persona. When Henry died of typhoid fever in 1612, those who favored his policies were forced to seek avenues of power outside the royal court. By the 1620s, the House of Commons was developing a vigorous sense of its own independence, debating policy agendas often quite at odds with the Crown's and openly attempting to use its power to approve taxation as a means of exacting concessions from the king.

James's second son, Prince Charles, came to the throne upon James's death in 1625. Unlike his father, Charles was not a theorist of royal absolutism, but he acted on that principle with an inflexibility that his father had never been able to muster. By 1629 he had dissolved Parliament three times in frustration with its recalcitrance, and he then began more than a decade of "personal rule" without Parliament. Charles was more prudent in some respects than his father had been—he not only restrained the costs of his own court, but paid off his father's staggering debts by the early 1630s. Throughout his reign, he conscientiously applied himself to the business of government. Yet his refusal to involve powerful individuals and factions in the workings of the state inevitably alienated them, even while it cut him off dangerously from important channels of information about the reactions of his people. Money was a constant problem, too. Even a relatively frugal king required some funds for ambitious government initiatives; but without parliamentary approval, any taxes Charles imposed were widely perceived as illegal. As a result, even wise policies, such as Charles's effort to build up the English navy, spawned misgivings among many of his subjects.

Religious conflicts intensified. Charles's queen, the French princess Henrietta Maria, supported an entourage of Roman Catholic priests, protected English Catholics, and encouraged several noblewomen in her court to convert to the Catholic faith. While Charles remained a staunch member of the Church of England, he loved visual splendor and majestic ceremony in all aspects of life, spiritual and otherwise—proclivities that led his Puritan sub-

jects to suspect him of popish sympathies. Charles's profound attachment to his wife, so different from James's neglect of Anne, only deepened their qualms. Like many fellow Puritans, Lucy Hutchinson blamed the entire debacle of Charles's reign on his wife's influence.

Charles's appointment of William Laud as archbishop of Canterbury, the ecclesiastical head of the English Church, further alienated Puritans. Laud subscribed to a theology that most Puritans rejected. As followers of the sixteenth-century reformer John Calvin, Puritans held that salvation depended upon faith in Christ, not "works." Works were meaningless because the deeds of sinful human beings could not be sanctified in the absence of faith; moreover, the Fall had so thoroughly corrupted human beings that they could not muster this faith without the help of God's grace. God chose (or refused) to extend grace to particular individuals on grounds that human beings were incapable of comprehending, and his decision had been made from eternity, before the individuals concerned were even born. In other words, Puritans believed, God predestined people to be saved or damned, and Christ's redemptive sacrifice was designed only for the saved group, the "elect." Laud, by contrast, advocated the Arminian doctrine that through Christ, God made redemption freely available to all human beings. Individuals could choose whether or not to respond to God's grace, and they could work actively toward their salvation by acts of charity, ritual devotion, and generosity to the church.

Although Laud's theology appears more generously inclusive than the Calvinist alternative, his ecclesiastical policies were uncompromising. Stripping many Puritan ministers of their posts, Laud aligned the doctrine and ceremonies of the English church with Roman Catholicism, which like Arminianism held works in high regard. In an ambitious project of church renovation, Laud installed religious paintings and images in churches; he thought they promoted reverence in worshippers, but the Puritans believed they encouraged idolatry. He rebuilt and resituated altars, making them more ornate and prominent: another change that dismayed Puritans, since it implied that the Eucharist rather than the sermon was the central element of a worship service. In the 1630s thousands of Puritans departed for the New England colonies, but many more remained at home, deeply discontented.

As the 1630s drew to a close, Archbishop Laud and Charles attempted to impose a version of the English liturgy and episcopal organization upon Presbyterian Scotland. Unlike his father, Charles had little acquaintance with his northern realm, and he drastically underestimated the difficulties involved. The Scots objected both on nationalist and on religious grounds, and they were not shy about expressing their objections: the bishop of Brechin, obliged to conduct divine service in the prescribed English style, mounted the pulpit armed with two pistols against his unruly congregation, while his wife, stationed on the floor below, backed him up with a blunderbuss. In the conflict that followed, the Bishops' Wars of 1639 and 1640, Charles's forces met with abject defeat. Exacerbating the situation, Laud was simultaneously insisting upon greater conformity within the English church. Riots in the London streets and the Scots' occupation of several northern English cities forced Charles to call the so-called Long Parliament, which would soon be managing a revolution.

LITERATURE AND CULTURE, 1603-40

Old Ideas and Next

In the first part of the seventeenth century, exciting new scientific theories were in the air, but the older ways of thinking about the nature of things had not yet been superseded. Writers such as John Donne, Robert Burton, and Ben Jonson often invoked an inherited body of concepts even though they were aware that those concepts were being questioned or displaced. The Ptolemaic universe, with its fixed earth and circling sun, moon, planets, and stars, was a rich source of poetic imagery. So were the four elements—fire, earth, water, and air—that together were thought to comprise all matter, and the four bodily humors—choler, blood, phlegm, and black bile—which were supposed to determine a person's temperament and to cause physical and mental disease when out of balance. Late Elizabethans and Jacobeans (so called from *Jacobus*, Latin for James) considered themselves especially prone to melancholy, an ailment of scholars and thinkers stemming from an excess of black bile. Shakespeare's Hamlet is melancholic, as is Bosola in John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* and Milton's title figure in "Il Penseroso" ("the serious-minded one"). In his panoramic *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Burton argued that melancholy was universal.

Key concepts of the inherited system of knowledge were analogy and order. Donne was especially fond of drawing parallels between the macrocosm, or "big world," and the microcosm, or "little world," of the individual human being. Also widespread were versions of the "chain of being" that linked and ordered various kinds of beings in hierarchies. The order of nature, for instance, put God above angels, angels above human beings, human beings above animals, animals above plants, plants above rocks. The social order installed the king over his nobles, nobles over the gentry, gentry over yeomen, yeomen over common laborers. The order of the family set husband above wife, parents above children, master and mistress above servants, the elderly above the young. Each level had its peculiar function, and each was connected to those above and beneath in a tight network of obligation and dependency. Items that occupied similar positions in different hierarchies were related by analogy: thus a monarch was like God, and he was also like a father, the head of the family, or like a lion, most majestic of beasts, or like the sun, the most excellent of heavenly bodies. A medieval or Renaissance poet who calls a king a sun or a lion, then, imagines himself not to be forging a metaphor in his own creative imagination, but to be describing something like an obvious fact of nature. Many Jacobean tragedies, Shakespeare's *King Lear* perhaps most comprehensively, depict the catastrophes that ensue when these hierarchies rupture, and both the social order and the natural order disintegrate.

Yet this conceptual system was itself beginning to crumble. Francis Bacon advocated rooting out of the mind all the intellectual predilections that had made the old ideas so attractive: love of ingenious correlations, reverence for tradition, and a priori assumptions about what was possible in nature. Instead, he argued, groups of collaborators ought to design controlled experiments to find the truths of nature by empirical means. Even as Bacon was promoting his views in *The Advancement of Learning*, *Novum Organum*, and *The New Atlantis*, actual experiments and discoveries were calling the old verities into question. From the far-flung territories England was beginning to colonize or to trade with, collectors brought animal, plant, and ethnological novelties,

many of which were hard to subsume under old categories of understanding. William Harvey's discovery that blood circulated in the body shook received views on the function of blood, casting doubt on the theory of the humors. Galileo's telescope provided evidence confirming Copernican astronomical theory, which dislodged the earth from its stable central position in the cosmos and, in defiance of all ordinary observation, set it whirling around the sun. Galileo found evidence as well of change in the heavens, which were supposed to be perfect and incorruptible above the level of the moon. Donne, like other writers of his age, responded with a mixture of excitement and anxiety to such novel ideas as these:

And new philosophy calls all in doubt:
The element of fire is quite put out;
The sun is lost, and the earth, and no man's wit
Can well direct him where to look for it.

Several decades later, however, Milton embraced the new science, proudly recalling a visit during his European tour to "the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought." In *Paradise Lost*, he would make complex poetic use of the astronomical controversy, considering how, and how far, humans should pursue scientific knowledge.

Patrons, Printers, and Acting Companies

The social institutions, customs, and practices that had supported and regulated writers in Tudor times changed only gradually before 1640. As it had under Elizabeth, the church promoted writing of several kinds: devotional treatises; guides to meditation; controversial tracts; "cases of conscience," which work out difficult moral issues in complex situations; and especially sermons. Since everyone was required to attend church, everyone heard sermons at least once and often twice on Sunday, as well as on religious or national holidays. The essence of a sermon, Protestants agreed, was the careful exposition of Scripture, and its purpose was to instruct and to move. Yet styles varied; while some preachers, like Donne, strove to enthrall their congregations with all the resources of artful rhetoric, others, especially many Puritans, sought an undecorated style that would display God's word in its own splendor. Printing made it easy to circulate many copies of sermons, blurring the line between oral delivery and written text and enhancing the role of printers and booksellers in disseminating God's word.

Many writers of the period depended in one way or another upon literary patronage. A Jacobean or Caroline aristocrat, like his medieval forebears, was expected to reward dependents in return for services and homage. Indeed, his status was gauged partly on the size of his entourage (that is one reason why in *King Lear* the hero experiences his daughters' attempts to dismiss his retainers as so intensely humiliating). In the early seventeenth century, although commercial relationships were rapidly replacing feudal ones, patronage pervaded all walks of life: governing relationships between landlords and tenants, masters and servants, kings and courtiers. Writers were assimilated into this system partly because their works reflected well on the patron, and partly because their all-around intelligence made them useful members of a great man's household. Important patrons of the time included the royal family—especially Queen Anne, who sponsored the court masques, and Prince

Henry—the members of the intermarried Sidney/Herbert family, and the Countess of Bedford, Queen Anne's confidante.

Because the patronage relationship often took the form of an exchange of favors rather than a simple financial transaction, its terms were very variable and are difficult to recover with any precision at this historical remove. A poet might dedicate a poem or a work to a patron in the expectation of a simple cash payment. But a patron might provide a wide range of other benefits: a place to live; employment as a secretary, tutor, or household servant; or gifts of clothing (textiles were valuable commodities). Donne, for instance, received inexpensive lodging from the Drury family, for whom he wrote the *Anniversaries*; a suit of clerical attire from Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford, when he took orders in the Church of England; and advancement in the church from King James. Ben Jonson lived for several years at the country estates of Lord Aubigny and of Robert Sidney, in whose honor he wrote "To Penshurst"; he received a regular salary from the king in return for writing court masques; and he served as chaperone to Sir Walter Raleigh's son on a Continental tour. Aemilia Lanyer apparently resided for some time in the household of Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland. Andrew Marvell lived for two years with Thomas Fairfax, tutored his daughter and wrote "Upon Appleton House" for him. All these quite different relationships and forms of remuneration fall under the rubric of patronage.

The patronage system required the poets involved to hone their skills at eulogizing their patrons' generosity and moral excellence. Jonson's epigrams and many of Lanyer's dedicatory poems evoke communities of virtuous poets and patrons joined by bonds of mutual respect and affection. Like the line between sycophantic flattery and truthful depiction, the line between patronage and friendship could be a thin one. Literary manuscripts circulated among circles of acquaintances and supporters, many of whom were, at least occasionally, writers as well as readers. Jonson esteemed Mary Wroth both as a fellow poet and as a member of the Sidney family to whom he owed so much. Donne became part of a coterie around Queen Anne's closest confidante, Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford, who was also an important patron for Ben Jonson, Michael Drayton, and Samuel Daniel. The countess evidently wrote poems herself, although only one attributed to her has apparently survived.

Presenting a poem to a patron, or circulating it among the group of literary people who surrounded the patron, did not require printing it. In early-seventeenth-century England, the reading public for sophisticated literary works was tiny and concentrated in a few social settings: the royal court, the universities, and the Inns of Court, or law schools. In these circumstances, manuscript circulation could be an effective way of reaching one's audience. So a great deal of writing remained in manuscript in early-seventeenth-century England. The collected works of many important writers of the period—most notably John Donne, George Herbert, William Shakespeare, and Andrew Marvell—appeared in print only posthumously, in editions produced by friends or admirers. Other writers, like Robert Herrick, collected and printed their own works long after they were written and (probably) circulated in manuscript. In consequence, it is often difficult to date accurately the composition of a seventeenth-century poem. In addition, when authors do not participate in the printing of their own works, editorial problems multiply—when, for instance, the printed version of a poem is inconsistent with a surviving manuscript copy.

Nonetheless, the printing of all kinds of literary works was becoming more common. Writers such as Francis Bacon or Robert Rurton, who hoped to reach large numbers of readers with whom they were not acquainted, usually arranged for the printing of their texts soon after they were composed. The sense that the printing of lyric poetry, in particular, was a bit vulgar began to fade when the famous Ben Jonson collected his own works in a grand folio edition.

Until 1640 the Stuart kings kept in place the strict controls over print publication originally instituted by Henry VIII, in response to the ideological threat posed by the Reformation. King Henry had given the members of London's Stationer's Company a monopoly on all printing; in return for their privilege, they were supposed to submit texts to prepublication censorship. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, presses associated with the universities at Oxford and Cambridge would begin operation as well, but they were largely concerned with scholarly and theological books. As a result, with a very few exceptions (such as George Herbert's *The Temple*, published by Cambridge University Press), almost all printed literary texts were produced in London. Most of them were sold there as well, in the booksellers' stalls set up outside St. Paul's Cathedral.

The licensing system located not only primary responsibility for a printed work, but its ownership, with the printer rather than with the author. Printers typically paid writers a onetime fee for the use of their work, but the payment was scanty, and the authors of popular texts realized no royalties from the many copies sold. As a result, no one could make a living as a writer in the early seventeenth century by producing best sellers. The first writer formally to arrange for royalties was apparently John Milton, who received five pounds up front for *Paradise Lost*, and another five pounds and two hundred copies at the end of each of the first three impressions. Still, legal ownership of and control over a printed work remained with the printer: authorial copyright would not become a reality until the early eighteenth century.

In monetary terms, a more promising outlet for writers was the commercial theater, which provided the first literary market in English history. Profitable and popular acting companies, established successfully in London in Elizabeth's time, continued to play a very important cultural role under James and Charles. Because the acting companies staged a large number of different plays and paid for them at a predictable, if not generous, rate, they enabled a few hardworking writers to support themselves as full-time professionals. One of them, Thomas Dekker, commented bemusedly on the novelty of being paid for the mere products of one's imagination: "the theater," he wrote, "is your poet's Royal Exchange upon which their muses—that are now turned to merchants—meeting, barter away that light commodity of words." In James's reign, Shakespeare was at the height of his powers: *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and other important plays were first staged during these years. So were Jonson's major comedies: *Volpone*, *Epicene*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair*. The most important new playwright was John Webster, whose dark tragedies *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* combined gothic horror with stunningly beautiful poetry.

Just as printers were legally the owners of the texts they printed, so theater companies, not playwrights, were the owners of the texts they performed. Typically, companies guarded their scripts closely, permitting them to be printed

only in times of financial distress or when they were so old that printing them seemed unlikely to reduce the paying audience. As a result, many Jacobean and Caroline plays are lost to us or available only in corrupt or posthumous versions. For contemporaries, though, a play was "published" not by being printed but by being performed. Aware of the dangerous potential of plays in arousing the sentiments of large crowds of onlookers, the Stuarts, like the Tudors before them, instituted tight controls over dramatic performances. Acting companies, like printers, were obliged to submit works to the censor before public presentation.

Authors, printers, and acting companies who flouted the censorship laws were subject to imprisonment, fines, or even bodily mutilation. Queen Elizabeth cut off the hand of a man who disagreed in print with her marriage plans, King Charles the ears of a man who inveighed against court masques. Jonson and his collaborators found themselves in prison for ridiculing King James's broad Scots accent in one of their comedies. The effects of censorship on writers' output were therefore far reaching across literary genres. Since overt criticism or satire of the great was so dangerous, political writing was apt to be oblique and allegorical. Writers often employed animal fables, tales of distant lands, or long-past historical events to comment upon contemporary issues.

While the commercial theaters were profitable businesses that made most of their money from paying audiences, several factors combined to bring writing for the theater closer to the Stuart court than it had been in Elizabeth's time. The Elizabethan theater companies had been officially associated with noblemen who guaranteed their legitimacy (in contrast to unsponsored traveling players, who were subject to punishment as vagrants). Early in his reign, James brought the major theater companies under royal auspices. Shakespeare's company, the most successful of the day, became the King's Men: it performed not only all of Shakespeare's plays but also *Volpone* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. Queen Anne, Prince Henry, Prince Charles, and Princess Elizabeth sponsored other companies of actors. Royal patronage, which brought with it tangible rewards and regular court performances, naturally encouraged the theater companies to pay more attention to courtly taste. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* put onstage Scots history and witches, two of James's own interests; in *King Lear*, the hero's disastrous division of his kingdom may reflect controversies over the proposed union of Scotland and England. In the first four decades of the seventeenth century, court-affiliated theater companies such as the King's Men increasingly cultivated audiences markedly more affluent than the audiences they had sought in the 1580s and 1590s, performing in intimate, expensive indoor theaters instead of, or as well as, in the cheap popular amphitheatres. *The Duchess of Malfi*, for instance, was probably written with the King's Men's indoor theater at Blackfriars in mind, because several scenes depend for their effect upon a control over lighting that is impossible outdoors. Partly because the commercial theaters seemed increasingly to cater to the affluent and courtly elements of society, they attracted the ire of the king's opponents when civil war broke out in the 1640s.

Jacobean Writers and Genres

The era saw important changes in poetic fashion. Some major Elizabethan genres fell out of favor—long allegorical or mythological narratives, sonnet sequences, and pastoral poems. The norm was coming to be short, concentrated, often witty poems. Poets and prose writers alike often preferred the

jagged rhythms of colloquial speech to the elaborate ornamentation and near-musical orchestration of sound that many Elizabethans had sought. The major poets of these years, Jonson, Donne, and Herbert, led this shift and also promoted a variety of "new" genres: love elegy and satire after the classical models of Ovid and Horace, epigram, verse epistle, meditative religious lyric, and country-house poem. Although these poets differed enormously from one another, all three exercised an important influence on the poets of the next generation.

A native Londoner, Jonson first distinguished himself as an acute observer of urban manners in a series of early, controversial satiric plays. Although he wrote two of his most moving poems to his dead children, Jonson focused rather rarely on the dynamics of the family relationships that so profoundly concerned his contemporary Shakespeare. When generational and dynastic matters do figure in his poetry, as they do at the end of "To Penshurst," they seem part of the agrarian, feudal order that Jonson may have romanticized but that he suspected was rapidly disappearing. By and large, Jonson interested himself in relationships that seemed to be negotiated by the participants, often in a bustling urban or courtly world in which blood kinship no longer decisively determined one's social place. Jonson's poems of praise celebrate and exemplify classical and humanist ideals of friendship: like-minded men and women elect to join in a community that fosters wisdom, generosity, civic responsibility, and mutual respect. In the plays and satiric poems, Jonson stages the violation of those values with such riotous comprehensiveness that the very survival of such ideals seem endangered: the plays swarm with voracious swindlers and their eager victims, social climbers both adroit and inept, and a dizzying assortment of morons and misfits. In many of Jonson's plays, rogues or wits collude to victimize others; their stormy, self-interested alliances, apparently so different from the virtuous friendships of the poems of praise, in fact resemble them in one respect: they are connections entered into by choice, not by law, inheritance, or custom.

Throughout his life, Jonson earned his living entirely from his writing, composing plays for the public theater while also attracting patronage as a poet and a writer of court masques. His acute awareness of his audience was partly, then, a sheerly practical matter. Yet Jonson's yearning for recognition ran far beyond any desire for material reward. A gifted poet, Jonson argued, was a society's proper judge and teacher, and he could only be effective if his audience understood and respected the poet's exalted role. Jonson set out unabashedly to create that audience and to monumentalize himself as a great English author. In 1616 he took the unusual step, for his time, of collecting his poems, plays, and masques in an elegant folio volume.

Jonson's influence upon the next generation of writers, and through them into the Restoration and the eighteenth century, was an effect both of his poetic mastery of his chosen modes and of his powerful personal example. Jonson mentored a group of younger poets, known as the Tribe, or Sons, of Ben, meeting regularly with some of them in the Apollo Room of the Devil Tavern in London. Many of the royalist, or Cavalier, poets—Robert Herrick, Thomas Carew, Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, Edmund Waller, Henry Vaughan in his secular verse—proudly acknowledged their relationship to Jonson or gave some evidence of it in their verse. Most of them absorbed too Jonson's attitude toward print and in later decades supervised the publication of their own poems.

Donne, like Jonson, spent most of his life in or near London, often in the

company of other writers and intellectuals—indeed, in the company of many of the same writers and intellectuals, since the two men were friends and shared some of the same patrons. Yet, unlike Jonson's, most of Donne's poetry concerns itself not with a crowded social panorama, but with a dyad—with the relationship between the speaker and one single other being, a woman or God—that in its intensity blots out the claims of lesser relationships. Love for Donne encompasses an astonishing range of emotional experiences, from the lusty impatience of "To His Mistress Going to Bed" to the cheerful promiscuity of "The Indifferent" to the mysterious platonic telepathy of "Air and Angels," from the vengeful wit of "The Apparition" to the postcoital tranquility of "The Good Morrow." While for Jonson the shared meal among friends often becomes an emblem of communion, for Donne sexual consummation has something of the same highly charged symbolic character, a moment in which the isolated individual can, however temporarily, escape the boundaries of selfhood in union with another:

The phoenix riddle hath more with
By us: we two being one, are it.
So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.

In the religious poems, where Donne both yearns for a physical relationship with God and knows it is impossible, he does not abandon his characteristic bodily metaphors. The doctrine of the Incarnation—God's taking material form in the person of Jesus Christ—and the doctrine of the bodily resurrection of the dead at the Last Day are Christian teachings that fascinate Donne, to which he returns again and again in his poems, sermons, and devotional writings. While sexual and religious love had long shared a common vocabulary, Donne delights in making that overlap seem new and shocking. He likens conjoined lovers to saints; demands to be raped by God; speculates, after his wife's death, that God killed her because He was jealous of Donne's divided loyalty; imagines Christ encouraging his Bride, the church, to "open" herself to as many men as possible.

Throughout Donne's life, his faith, like his intellect, was anything but quiet. Born into a family of devout Roman Catholics just as the persecution of Catholics was intensifying in Elizabethan England, Donne eventually became a member of the Church of England. If "Satire 3" is any indication, the conversion was attended by profound doubts and existential crisis. Donne's restless mind can lead him in surprising and sometimes unorthodox directions, to a qualified defense of suicide, for instance, in *Biathanatos*. At the same time, overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness, he courts God's punishment, demanding to be spat upon, flogged, burnt, broken down, in the expectation that suffering at God's hand will restore him to grace and favor.

In both style and content, Donne's poems were addressed to a select few rather than to the public at large. His style is demanding, characterized by learned terms, audaciously far-fetched analogies, and an intellectually sophisticated play of ironies. Even Donne's sermons, attended by large crowds, share the knotty difficulty of the poems, and something too of their quality of intimate address. Donne circulated his poems in manuscript and largely avoided print publication (most of his poems were printed after his death in 1631). By some critics Donne has been regarded as the founder of a Metaphysical school of poetry. We find echoes of Donne's style in many later poets: in Thomas Carew, who praised Donne as a "monarch of wit," George Herbert, Richard

Crashaw, John Cleveland, Sir John Suckling, Abraham Cowley, and Andrew Marvell.

Herbert, the younger son of a wealthy, cultivated, and well-connected family, seemed destined in early adulthood for a brilliant career as a diplomat or government servant. Yet he turned his back on worldly greatness to be ordained a priest in the Church of England. Moreover, eschewing a highly visible career as an urban preacher, he spent the remaining years of his short life ministering to the tiny rural parish of Bemerton. Herbert's poetry is shot through with the difficulty and joy of this renunciation, with all it entailed for him. Literary ambition—pride in one's independent creativity—appears to Herbert a temptation that must be resisted, whether it takes the form of Jonson's openly competitive aspiration for literary preeminence or Donne's brilliantly ironic self-displaying performances. Instead, Herbert seeks other models for poetic agency: the secretary taking dictation from a master, the musician playing in harmonious consort with others, the member of a church congregation who speaks with and for a community.

Herbert destroyed his secular verse in English and he turned his volume of religious verse over to a friend only on his deathbed, desiring him to print it if he thought it would be useful to "some dejected poor soul," but otherwise to burn it. The 177 lyrics contained in that volume, *The Temple*, display a complex religious sensibility and great artistic subtlety in an amazing variety of stanza forms. Herbert was the major influence on the next generation of religious lyric poets and was explicitly recognized as such by Henry Vaughan and Richard Crashaw.

The Jacobean period also saw the emergence of what would become a major prose genre, the familiar essay. The works of the French inventor of the form, Michel de Montaigne, appeared in English translation in 1603, influencing Shakespeare as well as such later writers as Sir Thomas Browne. Yet the first essays in English, the work of Francis Bacon, attorney general under Elizabeth and eventually lord chancellor under James, bear little resemblance to Montaigne's intimate, tentative, conversational pieces. Bacon's essays present pithy, sententious, sometimes provocative claims in a tone of cool objectivity, tempering moral counsel with an awareness of the importance of prudence and expediency in practical affairs. In *Novum Organum* Bacon adapts his deliberately discontinuous mode of exposition to outline a new scientific method, holding out the tantalizing prospect of eventual mastery over the natural world and boldly articulating the ways in which science might improve the human condition. In his fictional Utopia, described in *The New Atlantis*, Bacon imagines a society that realizes his dream of carefully orchestrated collaborative research, so different from the erratic, uncoordinated efforts of alchemists and amateurs in his own day. Bacon's philosophically revolutionary approach to the natural world profoundly impacted scientifically minded people over the next several generations. His writings influenced the materialist philosophy of his erstwhile secretary, Thomas Hobbes, encouraged Oliver Cromwell to attempt a large-scale overhaul of the university curriculum during the 1650s, and inspired the formation of the Royal Society, an organization of experimental scientists, after the Restoration.

The reigns of the first two Stuart kings mark the entry of Englishwomen, in some numbers, into authorship and publication. Most female writers of the period were from the nobility or gentry; all were much better educated than most women of the period, many of whom remained illiterate. In 1611 Aemilia

Lanyer was the first Englishwoman to publish a substantial volume of original poems. It contained poetic dedications, a long poem on Christ's passion, and a country-house poem, all defending women's interests and importance. In 1613 Elizabeth Cary, Lady Falkland, was the first Englishwoman to publish a tragedy, *Mariam*, a closet drama that probes the situation of a queen subjected to her husband's domestic and political tyranny. In 1617 Rachel Speght, the first female polemicist who can be securely identified, published a defense of her sex in response to a notorious attack upon "Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women"; she was also the author of a long dream-vision poem. Lady Mary Wroth, niece of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke, wrote a long prose romance, *Urania* (1612), which presents a range of women's experiences as lovers, rulers, counselors, scholars, storytellers, poets, and seers. Her Petrarchan sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, published with *Urania*, gives poetic voice to the female in love.

THE CAROLINE ERA, 1625-40

When King Charles came to the throne in 1625, "the fools and bawds, mimics and catamites of the former court grew out of fashion," as the Puritan Lucy Hutchinson recalled. The changed style of the court directly affected the arts and literature of the Caroline period (so called after *Carolus*, Latin for Charles). Charles and his queen, Henrietta Maria, were art collectors on a large scale and patrons of such painters as Peter Paul Rubens and Sir Anthony Van Dyke; the latter portrayed Charles as a heroic figure of knightly romance, mounted on a splendid stallion. The conjunction of chivalric virtue and divine beauty or love, symbolized in the union of the royal couple, was the dominant theme of Caroline court masques, which were even more extravagantly hyperbolic than their Jacobean predecessors. Even as Henrietta Maria encouraged an artistic and literary cult of platonic love, several courtier-poets, such as Carew and Suckling, wrote playful, sophisticated love lyrics that both alluded to this fashion and sometimes urged a more licentiously physical alternative.

The religious tensions between the Caroline court's Laudian church and the Puritan opposition produced something of a culture war. In 1633 Charles reissued the *Book of Sports*, originally published by his father in 1618, prescribing traditional holiday festivities and Sunday sports in every parish. Like his father, he saw these recreations as the rural, downscale equivalent of the court masque: harmless, healthy diversions for people who otherwise spent most of their waking hours hard at work. Puritans regarded masques and rustic dances alike as occasions for sin, the Maypole as a vestige of pagan phallus worship, and Sunday sports as a profanation of the Sabbath. In 1632 William Prynne staked out the most extreme Puritan position, publishing a tirade of over one thousand pages against stage plays, court masques, Maypoles, Laudian church rituals, stained-glass windows, mixed dancing, and other outrages, all of which he associated with licentiousness, effeminacy, and the seduction of popish idolatry. For this cultural critique, Prynne was stripped of his academic degrees, ejected from the legal profession, set in the pillory, sentenced to life imprisonment, and had his books burned and his ears cut off. The severity of the punishments indicates the perceived danger of the book and the inextricability of literary and cultural affairs from politics.

Milton's astonishingly virtuosic early poems also respond to the tensions of the 1630s. Milton repudiated both courtly aesthetics and also Prynne's whole-

sale prohibitions, developing reformed versions of pastoral, masque, and hymn. In "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," the birth of Christ coincides with a casting out of idols and a flight of false gods, stanzas that suggest contemporary Puritan resistance to Archbishop Laud's policies. Milton's magnificent funeral elegy "Lycidas" firmly rejects the poetic career of the Cavalier poet, who disregards high artistic ambition to "sport with Amaryllis in the shade / Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair." The poem also vehemently denounces the establishment clergy, ignorant and greedy "blind mouths" who rob their flocks of spiritual nourishment.

THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA, 1640-60

Early in the morning on January 30, 1649, Charles Stuart, the dethroned king Charles I, set off across St. James Park for his execution, surrounded by a heavy guard. He wore two shirts because the weather was frigid, and he did not want to look as if he were shivering with fear to the thousands who had gathered to watch him be beheaded. The black-draped scaffold had been erected just outside James I's elegant Banqueting House, inside of which so many court masques, in earlier decades, had celebrated the might of the Stuart monarchs and assured them of their people's love and gratitude. To those who could not attend, newsbooks provided eyewitness accounts of the dramatic events of the execution, as they had of Charles's trial the week before. Andrew Marvell also memorably describes the execution scene in "An Horatian Ode."

The execution of Charles I was understood at the time, and is still seen by many historians today, as a watershed event in English history. How did it come to pass? Historians do not agree over what caused "the English revolution," or, as it is alternatively called, the English civil war. One group argues that long-term changes in English society and the English economy led to rising social tensions and eventually to violent conflict. New capitalist modes of production in agriculture, industry, and trade were often incompatible with older feudal norms. The gentry, an affluent, highly educated class below the nobility but above the artisans, mechanics, and yeomen, played an increasingly important part in national affairs, as did the rich merchants in London; but the traditional social hierarchies failed to grant them the economic, political, and religious freedoms they believed they deserved. Another group of historians, the "revisionists," emphasize instead short-term and avoidable causes of the war—unlucky chances, personal idiosyncrasies, and poor decisions made by a small group of individuals.

Whatever caused the outbreak of hostilities, there is no doubt that the twenty-year period between 1640 and 1660 saw the emergence of concepts central to bourgeois liberal thought for centuries to come: religious toleration, separation of church and state, freedom from press censorship, and popular sovereignty. These concepts developed out of bitter disputes centering on three fundamental questions: What is the ultimate source of political power? What kind of church government is laid down in Scripture, and therefore ought to be settled in England? What should be the relation between the church and the state? The theories that evolved in response to these questions contained the seeds of much that is familiar in modern thought, mixed with much that is forbiddingly alien. It is vital to recognize that the participants in the disputes were not haphazardly attempting to predict the shape of modern liberalism, but were responding powerfully to the most important problems of

their day. The need to find right answers seemed particularly urgent for the Millenarians among them, who, interpreting the upheavals of the time through the lens of the apocalyptic Book of Revelation, believed that their day was very near to being the last day of all.

When the so-called Long Parliament convened in 1640, it did not plan to execute a monarch or even to start a war. It did, however, want to secure its rights in the face of King Charles's perceived absolutist tendencies. Refusing merely to approve taxes and go home, as Charles would have wished, Parliament insisted that it could remain in session until its members agreed to disband. Then it set about abolishing extralegal taxes and courts, reining in the bishops' powers, and arresting (and eventually trying and executing) the king's ministers, the Earl of Strafford and Archbishop Laud. The collapse of effective royal government meant that the machinery of press censorship, which had been a Crown responsibility, no longer restrained the printing of explicit commentary on contemporary affairs of state. As Parliament debated, therefore, presses poured forth a flood of treatises arguing vociferously on all sides of the questions about church and state, creating a lively public forum for political discussion where none had existed before. The suspension of censorship permitted the development of weekly newsbooks that reported, and editorialized on, current domestic events from varying political and religious perspectives.

As the rift widened between Parliament and the king in 1641, Charles sought to arrest five members of Parliament for treason, and Londoners rose in arms against him. The king fled to York, while the queen escaped to the Continent. Negotiations for compromise broke down over the issues that would derail them at every future stage: control of the army and the church. On July 12, 1642, Parliament voted to raise an army, and on August 22 the king stood before a force of two thousand horse and foot at Nottingham, unfurled his royal standard, and summoned his liege men to his aid. Civil war had begun. Regions of the country, cities, towns, social classes, and even families found themselves painfully divided. The king set up court and an alternative parliament in Oxford, to which many in the House of Lords and some in the House of Commons transferred their allegiance.

In the First Civil War (1642—46), Parliament and the Presbyterian clergy that supported it had limited aims. They hoped to secure the rights of the House of Commons, to limit the king's power over the army and the church—but not to depose him—and to settle Presbyterianism as the national established church. As Puritan armies moved through the country, fighting at Edgehill, Marston Moor, Naseby, and elsewhere, they also undertook a crusade to stamp out idolatry in English churches, smashing religious images and stained-glass windows and lopping off the heads of statues as an earlier generation had done at the time of the English Reformation. Their ravages are still visible in English churches and cathedrals.

The Puritans were not, however, a homogeneous group, as the 1643 Toleration Controversy revealed. The Presbyterians wanted a national Presbyterian church, with dissenters punished and silenced as before. But Congregationalists, Independents, Baptists, and other separatists opposed a national church and pressed for some measure of toleration, for themselves at least. The religious radical Roger Williams, just returned from New England, argued that Christ mandated the complete separation of church and state and the civic toleration of all religions, even Roman Catholics, Jews, and

Muslims. Yet to most people, the civil war itself seemed to confirm that people of different faiths could not coexist peacefully. Thus even as sects continued to proliferate—Seekers, Finders, Antinomians, Fifth Monarchists, Quakers, Muggletonians, Ranters—even the most broad-minded of the age often attempted to draw a line between what was acceptable and what was not. Predictably, their lines failed to coincide. In *Areopagitica* (1644), John Milton argues vigorously against press censorship and for toleration of most Protestants—but for him, Catholics are beyond the pale. Robert Herrick and Sir Thomas Rowne regarded Catholic rites, and even some pagan ones, indulgently but could not stomach Puritan zeal.

In 1648, after a period of negotiation and a brief Second Civil War, the king's army was definitively defeated. His supporters were captured or fled into exile, losing position and property. Yet Charles, imprisoned on the Isle of Wight, remained a threat. He was a natural rallying point for those disillusioned by parliamentary rule—many people disliked Parliament's legal but heavy taxes even more than they had the king's illegal but lighter ones. Charles repeatedly attempted to escape and was accused of trying to open the realm to a foreign invasion. Some powerful leaders of the victorious New Model Army took drastic action. They expelled royalists and Presbyterians, who still wanted to come to an accommodation with the king, from the House of Commons and abolished the House of Lords. With consensus assured by the purgation of dissenting viewpoints, the army brought the king to trial for high treason in the Great Hall of Westminster.

After the king's execution, the Rump Parliament, the part of the House of Commons that had survived the purge, immediately established a new government "in the way of a republic, without king or House of Lords." The new state was extremely fragile. Royalists and Presbyterians fiercely resented their exclusion from power and pronounced the execution of the king a sacrilege. The Rump Parliament and the army were at odds, with the army rank and file arguing that voting rights ought not be restricted to men of property. The Levelers, led by John Lilburne, called for suffrage for all adult males. An associated but more radical group, called the Diggers or True Levelers, pushed for economic reforms to match the political ones. Their spokesman, Gerrard Winstanley, wrote eloquent manifestos developing a Christian communist program. Meanwhile, Millenarians and Fifth Monarchists wanted political power vested in the regenerate "saints" in preparation for the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth foretold in the biblical Book of Revelation. Quakers defied both state and church authority by refusing to take oaths and by preaching incendiary sermons in open marketplaces. Most alarming of all, out of proportion to their scant numbers, were the Ranters, who believed that because God dwelt in them none of their acts could be sinful. Notorious for sexual license and for public nudity, they got their name from their deliberate blaspheming and their penchant for rambling prophecy. In addition to internal disarray, the new state faced serious external threats. After Charles I's execution, the Scots and the Irish—who had not been consulted about the trial—immediately proclaimed his eldest son, Prince Charles, the new king. The prince, exiled on the Continent, was attempting to enlist the support of a major European power for an invasion.

The formidable Oliver Cromwell, now undisputed leader of the army, crushed external threats, suppressing rebellions in Ireland and Scotland. The Irish war was especially bloody, as Cromwell's army massacred the Catholic

natives in a frenzy of religious hatred. When trade rivalries erupted with the Dutch over control of shipping lanes in the North Sea and the English Channel, the new republic was again victorious. Yet the domestic situation remained unstable. Given popular disaffection and the unresolved disputes between Parliament and the army, the republic's leaders dared not call new elections. In 1653 power effectively devolved upon Cromwell, who was sworn in as Lord Protector for life under England's first written constitution. Many property owners considered Cromwell the only hope for stability, while others, including Milton, saw him as a champion of religious liberty. Although persecution of Quakers and Ranters continued, Cromwell sometimes intervened to mitigate the lot of the Quakers. He also began a program to readmit Jews to England, partly in the interests of trade but also to open the way for their conversion, supposedly a precursor of the Last Day as prophesied in the Book of Revelation.

The problem of succession remained unresolved, however. When Oliver Cromwell died in 1658, his son, Richard, was appointed in his place, but he had inherited none of his father's leadership qualities. In 1660 General George Monck succeeded in calling elections for a new "full and free" parliament, open to supporters of the monarchy as well as of the republic. The new Parliament immediately recalled the exiled prince, officially proclaiming him King Charles II on May 8, 1660. The period that followed, therefore, is called the Restoration: it saw the restoration of the monarchy and with it the royal court, the established Church of England, and the professional theater.

Over the next few years, the new regime executed some of the regicides that had participated in Charles I's trial and execution and harshly repressed radical Protestants (the Baptist John Bunyan wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* in prison). Yet Charles II, who came to the throne at Parliament's invitation, could not lay claim to absolute power as his father had done. After his accession, Parliament retained its legislative supremacy and complete power over taxation, and exercised some control over the king's choice of counselors. It assembled by its own authority, not by the king's mandate. During the Restoration years, the journalistic commentary and political debates that had first flourished in the 1640s remained forceful and open, and the first modern political parties developed out of what had been the royalist and republican factions in the civil war. In London and in other cities, the merchant classes, filled with dissenters, retained their powerful economic leverage. Although the English revolution was apparently dismantled in 1660, its long-term effects profoundly changed English institutions and English society.

LITERATURE AND CULTURE, 1640-60

The English civil war was disastrous for the English theater. One of Parliament's first acts after hostilities began in 1642 was to abolish public plays and sports, as "too commonly expressing lascivious mirth and levity." Some drama continued to be written and published, but performances were rare and would-be theatrical entrepreneurs had to exploit loopholes in the prohibitions by describing their works as "operas" or presenting their productions in semiprivate circumstances.

As the king's government collapsed, the patronage relationships centered upon the court likewise disintegrated. Many leading poets were staunch royalists, or Cavaliers, who suffered considerably in the war years. Robert Herrick

lost his position; Richard Lovelace was imprisoned; Margaret Cavendish went into exile. With their usual networks of manuscript circulation disrupted, many royalist writers printed their verse. Volumes of poetry by Thomas Carew, John Denham, John Suckling, James Shirley, Richard Lovelace, and Robert Herrick appeared in the 1640s. Their poems, some dating from the 1620s or 1630s, celebrate the courtly ideal of the good life: good food, plenty of wine, good verse, hospitality, and high-spirited loyalty, especially to the king. One characteristic genre is the elegant love lyric, often with a *carpe diem* theme. In Herrick's case especially, apparent ease and frivolity masks a frankly political subtext. The Puritans excoriated May Day celebrations, harvest-home festivities, and other time-honored holidays and "sports" as unscriptural, idolatrous, or frankly pagan. For Herrick, they sustained a community that strove neither for ascetic perfection nor for equality among social classes, but that knew the value of pleasure in cementing social harmony and that incorporated everyone—rich and poor, unlettered and learned—as the established church had traditionally tried to do.

During the 1640s and 1650s, as they faced defeat, the Cavaliers wrote movingly of the relationship between love and honor, of fidelity under duress, of like-minded friends sustaining one another in a hostile environment. They presented themselves as amateurs, writing verse in the midst of a life devoted to more important matters: war, love, the king's service, the endurance of loss. Rejecting the radical Protestant emphasis on the "inner light," which they considered merely a pretext for presumptuousness and violence, the Cavalier poets often cultivated a deliberately unidiosyncratic, even self-deprecating poetic persona. Thus the poems of Richard Lovelace memorably express sentiments that he represents not as the unique insights of an isolated genius, but as principles easily grasped by all honorable men. When in "The Vine" Herrick relates a wet dream, he not only laughs at himself but at those who mistake their own fantasies for divine inspiration.

During the 1650s, royalists wrote lyric poems in places far removed from the hostile centers of parliamentary power. In Wales, Henry Vaughan wrote religious verse expressing his intense longing for past eras of innocence and for the perfection of heaven or the millennium. Also in Wales, Katherine Philips wrote and circulated in manuscript poems that celebrate female friends in terms normally reserved for male friendships. The publication of her poems after the Restoration brought Philips some celebrity as "the Matchless Orinda." Richard Crashaw, an exile in Paris and Rome and a convert to Roman Catholicism, wrote lush religious poetry that attempted to reveal the spiritual by stimulating the senses. Margaret Cavendish, also in exile, with the queen in Paris, published two collections of lyrics when she returned to England in 1653; after the Restoration she published several dramas and a remarkable Utopian romance, *The Blazing World*.

Several prose works by royalist sympathizers have become classics in their respective genres. Thomas Hobbes, the most important English philosopher of the period, another exile in Paris, developed his materialist philosophy and psychology there and, in *Leviathan* (1651), his unflinching defense of absolute sovereignty based on a theory of social contract. Some royalist writing seems to have little to do with the contemporary scene, but in fact carries a political charge. In *Religio Medici* (1642–43), Sir Thomas Browne presents himself as a genial, speculative doctor who loves ritual and ceremony not for complicated theological reasons, but because they move him emotionally. While he can

sympathize with all Christians, even Roman Catholics, and while he recognizes in himself many idiosyncratic views, he willingly submits his judgment to the Church of England, in sharp contrast to Puritans bent on ridding the church of its errors. Izaak Walton's treatise on fishing, *The Complete Angler* (1653), presents a dialogue between Walton's persona, Piscator the angler, and Venator the hunter. Piscator, speaking like many Cavalier poets for the values of warmheartedness, charity, and inclusiveness, converts the busy, war-like Venator, a figure for the Puritan, to the tranquil and contemplative pursuit of fishing.

The revolutionary era gave new impetus to women's writing. The circumstances of war placed women in novel, occasionally dangerous situations, giving them unusual events to describe and prompting self-discovery. The autobiographies of royalists Lady Anne Halkett and Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, published after the Restoration, report their experiences and their sometimes daring activities during those trying days. Lucy Hutchinson's memoir of her husband, Colonel John Hutchinson, first published in 1806, narrates much of the history of the times from a republican point of view. Leveler women offered petitions and manifestos in support of their cause and of their imprisoned husbands. The widespread belief that the Holy Spirit was moving in unexpected ways encouraged a number of female prophets: Anna Trapnel, Mary Cary, and Lady Eleanor Davies. Their published prophecies often carried a strong political critique of Charles or of Cromwell. Quaker women came into their own as preachers and sometimes as writers of tracts, authorized by the Quaker belief in the spiritual equality of women and men, and by the conviction that all persons should testify to whatever the inner light communicates to them. Many of their memoirs, such as Dorothy Waugh's "Relation," were originally published both to call attention to their sufferings and to inspire other Quakers to similar feats of moral fortitude.

While most writers during this period were royalists, two of the best, Andrew Marvell and John Milton, sided with the republic. Marvell wrote most of the poems for which he is still remembered while at Nunappleton in the early 1650s, tutoring the daughter of the retired parliamentary general Thomas Fairfax; in 1657 he joined his friend Milton in the office of Cromwell's Latin Secretariat. In Marvell's love poems and pastorals, older convictions about ordered harmony give way to wittily unresolved or unresolvable oppositions, some playful, some painful. Marvell's conflictual worldview seems unmistakably the product of the unsettled civil war decades. In his country-house poem "Upon Appleton House," even agricultural practices associated with regular changes of the season, like the flooding of fallow fields, become emblems of unpredictability, reversal, and category confusion. In other poems Marvell eschews an authoritative poetic persona in favor of speakers that seem limited or even a bit unbalanced: a mower who argues for the values of pastoral with disconcerting belligerence, a nymph who seems to exemplify virginal innocence but also immature self-absorption and possibly unconscious sexual perversity. Marvell's finest political poem, "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland," celebrates Cromwell's providential victories even while inviting sympathy for the executed king and warning about the potential dangers of Cromwell's meteoric rise to power.

A promising, prolific young poet in the 1630s, Milton committed himself to the English republic as soon as the conflict between the king and Parliament began to take shape. His loyalty to the revolution remained unwavering despite

his disillusion when it failed to realize his ideals: religious toleration for all Protestants and the free circulation of ideas without prior censorship. First as a self-appointed adviser to the state, then as its official defender, he addressed the great issues at stake in the 1640s and the 1650s. In a series of treatises he argued for church disestablishment and for the removal of bishops, for a republican government based on natural law and popular sovereignty, for the right of the people to dismiss from office and even execute their rulers, and, most controversial even to his usual allies, in favor of divorce on the grounds of incompatibility. Milton was a Puritan, but both his theological heterodoxies and his poetic vision mark him as a distinctly unusual one.

During his years as a political polemicist, Milton also wrote several sonnets, revising that small, love-centered genre to accommodate large private and public topics: a Catholic massacre of proto-Protestants in the foothills of Italy, the agonizing questions posed by his blindness, various threats to intellectual and religious liberty. In 1645 he published his collected English and Latin poems as a counterstatement to the royalist volumes of the 1640s. Yet his most ambitious poetry remained to be written. Milton probably wrote some part of *Paradise Lost* in the late 1650s and completed it after the Restoration, encompassing in it all he had thought, read, and experienced of tyranny, political controversy, evil, deception, love, and the need for companionship. This cosmic blank-verse epic assimilates and critiques the epic tradition and Milton's entire intellectual and literary heritage, classical and Christian. Yet it centers not on martial heroes but on a domestic couple who must discover how to live a good life day by day, in Eden and later in the fallen world, amid intense emotional pressures and the seductions of evil.

Seventeenth-century poetry, prose, and drama retains its hold on readers because so much of it is so very good, fusing intellectual power, emotional passion, and extraordinary linguistic artfulness. Poetry in this period ranges over an astonishing variety of topics and modes: highly erotic celebrations of sexual desire, passionate declarations of faith and doubt, lavishly embroidered paeans to friends and benefactors, tough-minded assessments of social and political institutions. English dramatists were at the height of their powers, situating characters of unprecedented complexity in plays sometimes remorselessly satiric, sometimes achingly moving. In these years English prose becomes a highly flexible instrument, suited to informal essays, scientific treatises, religious meditation, political polemic, biography and autobiography, and journalistic reportage. Literary forms evolve for the exquisitely modulated representation of the self: dramatic monologues, memoirs, spiritual autobiographies, sermons in which the preacher takes himself for an example. Finally, we have in Milton an epic poet who assumed the role of inspired prophet, envisioning a world created by God but shaped by human choice and imagination.

Additional information about the Early Seventeenth Century, including primary texts and images, is available at Norton Literature Online (www.norton.com/literature). Online topics are

- Gender, Family, Household
- *Paradise Lost* in Context
- Civil Wars of Ideas
- Emigrants and Settlers

THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

TEXTS	CONTEXTS
1603 James I, <i>Basilizon Doron</i> reissued	1603 Death of Elizabeth I; accession of James I. Plague
1604 William Shakespeare, <i>Othello</i>	
1605 Shakespeare, <i>King Lear</i> . Ben Jonson, <i>The Masque of Blackness</i> . Francis Bacon, <i>The Advancement of Learning</i>	1605 Gunpowder Plot, failed effort by Roman Catholic extremists to blow up Parliament
1606 Jonson, <i>Volpone</i> . Shakespeare, <i>Macbeth</i>	
	1607 Founding of Jamestown colony in Virginia
1609 Shakespeare, <i>Sonnets</i>	1609 Galileo begins observing the heavens with a telescope
1611 "King James" Bible (Authorized Version). Shakespeare, <i>The Tempest</i> . John Donne, <i>The First Anniversary</i> ¹ . Aemilia Lanyer, <i>Salve Dens Rex Judaeorum</i>	
1612 Donne, <i>The Second Anniversary</i> ¹	1612 Death of Prince Henry
1613 Elizabeth Cary, <i>The Tragedy of Mariam</i>	
1614 John Webster, <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	
1616 Jonson, <i>Works</i> . James I, <i>Works</i>	1616 Death of Shakespeare
	1618 Beginning of the Thirty Years War
	1619 First African slaves in North America exchanged by Dutch frigate for food and supplies at Jamestown
1620 Bacon, <i>Novum Organum</i>	1620 Pilgrims land at Plymouth
1621 Mary Wroth, <i>The Countess of Montgomery's Urania</i> and <i>Pamphilia to Amphilanthus</i> . Robert Burton, <i>The Anatomy of Melancholy</i>	1621 Donne appointed dean of St. Paul's Cathedral
1623 Shakespeare, First Folio	
1625 Bacon, <i>Essays</i>	1625 Death of James I; accession of Charles I; Charles I marries Henrietta Maria
	1629 Charles I dissolves Parliament
1633 Donne, <i>Poems</i> . George Herbert, <i>The Temple</i>	1633 Galileo forced by the Inquisition to recant the Copernican theory
1637 John Milton, "Lycidas"	
1640 Thomas Carew, <i>Poems</i>	1640 Long Parliament called (1640-53). Archbishop Laud impeached
1642 Thomas Browne, <i>Religio Medici</i> . Milton, <i>The Reason of Church Government</i>	1642 First Civil War begins (1642-46). Parliament closes the theaters
1643 Milton, <i>The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce</i>	1643 Accession of Louis XIV of France

TEXTS	CONTEXTS
1644 Milton, <i>Arcopagitica</i>	
1645 Milton, <i>Poems</i> . Edmund Waller, <i>Poems</i>	1645 Archbishop Laud executed. Royalists defeated at Naseby
1648. Robert Herrick, <i>Hesperides</i> and <i>Noble Numbers</i>	1648 Second Civil War. "Pride's Purge" of Parliament
1649 Milton, <i>The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates</i> and <i>Eikonoklastes</i>	1649 Trial and execution of Charles I. Republic declared. Milton becomes Latin Secretary (1649-59)
1650 Henry Vaughan, <i>Silex Scintillans</i> (Part II, 1655)	
1651 Thomas Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> . Andrew Marvell, "Upon Appleton House" (unpublished)	
	1652 Anglo-Dutch War (1652-54)
	1653 Cromwell made Lord Protector
	1658 Death of Cromwell; his son Richard made Protector
1660 Milton, <i>Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth</i>	1660 Restoration of Charles II to throne. Royal Society founded
	1662 Charles II marries Catherine of Braganza
1666 Margaret Cavendish, <i>The Blazing World</i>	1665 The Great Plague
1667 Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> (in ten books). Katherine Philips, <i>Collected Poems</i> . John Dryden, <i>Annus Mirabilis</i>	1666 The Great Fire
1671 Milton, <i>Paradise Regained</i> and <i>Samson Agonistes</i>	
1674 Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> (in twelve books)	1674 Death of Milton
1681 Marvell, <i>Poems</i> , published posthumously	

The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century 1660-1785

- 1660: Charles II restored to the English throne
- 1688—89: The Glorious Revolution: deposition of James II and accession of William of Orange
- 1700: Death of John Dryden
- 1707: Act of Union unites Scotland and England, creating the nation of "Great Britain"
- 1714: Rule by House of Hanover begins with accession of George I
- 1744[^]-5: Deaths of Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift
- 1784: Death of Samuel Johnson

The Restoration and the eighteenth century brought vast changes to the island of Great Britain, which became a single nation after 1707, when the Act of Union joined Scotland to England and Wales. After the prolonged civil and religious strife of the seventeenth century, Britain attained political stability and unprecedented commercial vigor. The countryside kept its seemingly timeless agricultural rhythms, even as the nation's great families consolidated their control over the land and those who worked it. Change came most dramatically to cities, which absorbed much of a national population that nearly doubled in the period, to ten million. Britons came together in civil society—the public but nongovernmental institutions and practices that became newly powerful in the period. The theaters (reopened at the Restoration), coffeehouses, concert halls, pleasure gardens, lending libraries, picture exhibitions, and shopping districts gave life in London and elsewhere a feeling of bustle and friction. Reflecting and stimulating this activity, an expanding assortment of printed works vied to interest literate women and men, whose numbers grew to include most of the middle classes and many among the poor. Civil society also linked people to an increasingly global economy, as they shopped for diverse goods from around the world. The rich and even the moderately well off could profit or go broke from investments in joint-stock companies, which controlled much of Britain's international trade, including its lucrative traffic in slaves. At home, new systems of canals and turnpikes stimulated domestic trade, industry, and travel, bringing distant parts of the country closer together. The cohesion of the nation also depended on ideas of social order—some old and clear, many subtle and new. An ethos of politeness came to prevail, a standard of social behavior to which more and more could aspire yet that served to distinguish the privileged sharply from the rude and vulgar. This and other ideas, of order and hierarchy, of liberty and rights, of sentiment

and sympathy, helped determine the ways in which an expanding diversity of people could seek to participate in Britain's thriving cultural life.

RELIGION AND POLITICS

The Restoration of 1660—the return of Charles Stuart and, with him, the monarchy to England—brought hope to a divided nation, exhausted by years of civil war and political turmoil. Almost all of Charles's subjects welcomed him home. After the abdication of Richard Cromwell in 1659 the country had seemed at the brink of chaos, and Britons were eager to believe that their king would bring order and law and a spirit of mildness back into the national life. But no political settlement could be stable until the religious issues had been resolved. The restoration of the monarchy meant that the established church would also be restored, and though Charles was willing to pardon or ignore many former enemies (such as Milton), the bishops and Anglican clergy were less tolerant of dissent. When Parliament reimposed the Book of Common Prayer in 1662 and then in 1664 barred Nonconformists from religious meetings outside the established church, thousands of clergymen resigned their livings, and the jails were filled with preachers like John Bunyan who refused to be silenced. In 1673 the Test Act required all holders of civil and military offices to take the sacrament in an Anglican church and to deny belief in transubstantiation. Thus Protestant Dissenters and Roman Catholics were largely excluded from public life; for instance, Alexander Pope, a Catholic, could not attend a university, own land, or vote. The scorn of Anglicans for Nonconformist zeal or "enthusiasm" (a belief in private revelation) bursts out in Samuel Butler's popular *Hudibras* (1663), a caricature of Presbyterians and Independents. And English Catholics were widely regarded as potential traitors and (wrongly) thought to have set the Great Fire that destroyed much of London in 1666.

Yet the triumph of the established church did not resolve the constitutional issues that had divided Charles I and Parliament. Charles II had promised to govern through Parliament but slyly tried to consolidate royal power. Steering away from crises, he hid his Catholic sympathies and avoided a test of strength with Parliament—except on one occasion. In 1678 the report of the Popish Plot, in which Catholics would rise and murder their Protestant foes, terrified London; and though the charge turned out to be a fraud, the House of Commons exploited the fear by trying to force Charles to exclude his Catholic brother, James, duke of York, from succession to the throne. The turmoil of this period is captured brilliantly by Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophiel* (1681). Finally, Charles defeated the Exclusion Bill by dissolving Parliament. But the crisis resulted in a basic division of the country between two new political parties: the Tories, who supported the king, and the Whigs, the king's opponents.

Neither party could live with James II. After he came to the throne in 1685, he claimed the right to make his own laws, suspended the Test Act, and began to fill the army and government with fellow Catholics. The birth of James's son in 1688 brought matters to a head, confronting the nation with the prospect of a Catholic dynasty. Secret negotiations paved the way for the Dutchman William of Orange, a champion of Protestantism and the husband of James's Protestant daughter Mary. William landed with a small army in southwestern England and marched toward London. As he advanced the king's allies

melted away, and James fled to a permanent exile in France. But the house of Stuart would be heard from again. For more than half a century some loyal Jacobites (from the Latin *Jacobus*, "James"), especially in Scotland, supported James, his son ("the Old Pretender"), and his grandson ("the Young Pretender" or "Bonnie Prince Charlie") as the legitimate rulers of Britain. Moreover, a good many writers, from Aphra Behn and Dryden (and arguably Pope and Johnson) to Robert Burns, privately sympathized with Jacobitism. But after the failure of one last rising in 1745, the cause would dwindle gradually into a wistful sentiment. In retrospect, the coming of William and Mary in 1688—the Glorious, or Bloodless, Revolution—came to be seen as the beginning of a stabilized, unified Great Britain.

A lasting settlement followed. In 1689 a Bill of Rights revoked James's actions; it limited the powers of the Crown, reaffirmed the supremacy of Parliament, and guaranteed some individual rights. The same year the Toleration Act relaxed the strain of religious conflict by granting a limited freedom of worship to Dissenters (although not to Catholics or Jews) so long as they swore allegiance to the Crown. This proved to be a workable compromise; and with the passage of the Act of Settlement in 1701, putting Sophia, electress of Hanover, and her descendants in line for the throne (as the granddaughter of James I, she was the closest Protestant relative of Princess Anne, James II's younger daughter, whose sole surviving child died in that year), the difficult problems that had so long divided England seemed resolved. The principles established in 1689 endured unaltered in essentials until the Reform Bill of 1832.

During Anne's reign (1702–14), new political tensions embittered the nation. In the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–13), England and its allies defeated France and Spain; as these commercial rivals were weakened and war profits flowed in, the Whig lords and London merchants supporting the war grew rich. The spoils included new colonies and the *asiento*, a contract to supply slaves to the Spanish Empire. The hero of the war, Captain-General John Churchill, duke of Marlborough, won the famous victory of Blenheim; was showered with honors and wealth; and, with his duchess, dominated the queen until 1710. But the Whigs and Marlborough pushed their luck too hard. When the Whigs tried to reward the Dissenters for their loyalty by removing the Test, Anne fought back to defend the established church. She dismissed her Whig ministers and the Marlboroughs and called in Robert Harley and the brilliant young Henry St. John to form a Tory ministry. These ministers employed prominent writers like Defoe and Swift and commissioned Matthew Prior to negotiate the Peace of Utrecht (1713). But to Swift's despair—he later burlesqued events at court in *Gulliver's Travels*—a bitter rivalry broke out between Harley (now earl of Oxford) and St. John (now Viscount Bolingbroke). Though Bolingbroke succeeded in ousting Oxford, the death of Anne in 1714 reversed his fortunes. The Whigs returned to power, and George I (Sophia's son) became the first Hanoverian king (he would reign until 1727). Harley was imprisoned in the Tower of London until 1717; and Bolingbroke, charged with being a Jacobite traitor, fled to France. Government was now securely in the hands of the Whigs.

The political principles of the Whig and Tory Parties, which bring so much fire to eighteenth-century public debate, evolved to address changing circumstances through the period. Now we tend to think of Tories as conservative and Whigs as liberal. (Members of today's Conservative Party in the United

Kingdom are sometimes called Tories.) During the Exclusion Crisis of the 1680s the Whigs asserted the liberties of the English subject against the royal prerogatives of Charles II, whom Tories such as Dryden supported. After both parties survived the 1688 Glorious Revolution, the Tories guarded the pre-eminence of the established church (sometimes styling themselves the Church Party), while Whigs tended to support toleration of Dissenters. Economically, too, Tories defined themselves as traditionalists, affirming landownership as the proper basis of wealth, power, and privilege (though most thought trade honorable), whereas the Whigs came to be seen as supporting a new "moneyed interest" (as Swift called it): managers of the Bank of England (founded 1694), contrivers of the system of public credit, and investors in the stock market. But conservatism and liberalism did not exist as coherent ideologies in the period, and the vicissitudes of party dispute offer many surprises. When Bolingbroke returned to England in 1724 after being pardoned, he led a Tory opposition that decried the "ministerial tyranny" of the Whig government. This opposition patriotically hailed liberty in a manner recalling the Whig rhetoric of earlier decades, appealed to both landed gentry and urban merchants, and arguably anticipated the antigovernment radicalism of the end of the eighteenth century. Conversely, the Whigs sought to secure a centralized fiscal and military state machine and a web of financial interdependence controlled by the wealthiest aristocrats.

The great architect of this Whig policy was Robert Walpole, who came to power as a result of the "South Sea bubble" (1720), a stock market crash. His ability to restore confidence and keep the country running smoothly, as well as to juggle money, would mark his long ascendancy. Coming to be known as Britain's first "prime" minister, he consolidated his power during the reign of George II (1727—60). More involved in British affairs than his essentially German father, George II came to appreciate the efficient administration of the patronage system under Walpole, who installed dependents in government offices and controlled the House of Commons by financially rewarding its members. Many great writers found these methods offensive and embraced Bolingbroke's new Tory rhetoric extolling the Englishman's fierce independence from the corrupting power of centralized government and concentrations of wealth. Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728) and Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1743) draw parallels between great criminals and great politicians, and Pope's *Dunciad* uses Walpole as an emblem of the venal commercialization of the whole social fabric. This distaste, however, did not prevent Pope himself from marketing his poems as cleverly as he wrote them.

Walpole fell in 1742 because he was unwilling to go to war against the French and Spanish, a war he thought would cost too much but that many perceived would enhance Britain's wealth still further. The next major English statesman, William Pitt the Elder, appealed to a spirit of national patriotism and called for the expansion of British power and commerce overseas. The defeat of the French in the Seven Years' War (1756—63), especially in North America, was largely his doing. The long reign of George III (1760—1820) was dominated by two great concerns: the emergence of Britain as a colonial power and the cry for a new social order based on liberty and radical reform. In 1763 the Peace of Paris consolidated British rule over Canada and India, and not even the later loss of the American colonies could stem the rise of the empire. Great Britain was no longer an isolated island but a nation with interests and responsibilities around the world.

At home, however, there was discontent. The wealth brought to England by industrialism and foreign trade had not spread to the great mass of the poor. For much of the century, few had questioned the idea that those at the top of the social hierarchy rightfully held power. Rich families' alliances and rivalries, national and local, dominated politics; while male property owners could vote in Parliamentary elections, they and others of the middle classes and the poor had mostly followed the powerful people who could best help them thrive or at least survive. But toward the end of the century it seemed to many that the bonds of custom that once held people together had finally broken, and now money alone was respected. Protestants turned against Catholics; in 1780 the Gordon Riots put London temporarily under mob rule. The king was popular with his subjects and tried to take government into his own hands, rising above partisanship, but his efforts often backfired—as when the American colonists took him for a tyrant. From 1788 to the end of his life, moreover, an inherited disease (porphyria) periodically unhinged his mind, as in a memorable scene described by Frances Rurney. Meanwhile, reformers such as John Wilkes and Richard Price called for a new political democracy. Fear of their radicalism would contribute to the British reaction against the French Revolution. In the last decades of the century British authors would be torn between two opposing attitudes: loyalty to the old traditions of subordination, mutual obligations, and local self-sufficiency, and yearning for a new dispensation founded on principles of liberty, the rule of reason, and human rights.

THE CONTEXT OF IDEAS

Much of the most powerful writing after 1660 exposed divisions in the nation's thinking that derived from the tumult of earlier decades. As the possibility of a Christian Commonwealth receded, the great republican John Milton published *Paradise Lost* (final version, 1674), and John Bunyan's immensely popular masterwork *Pilgrim's Progress* (1679) expressed the conscience of a Nonconformist. Conversely, an aristocratic culture, led by Charles II himself, aggressively celebrated pleasure and the right of the elite to behave extravagantly: members of the court scandalized respectable London citizens and considered their wives and daughters fair game. The court's hero, the earl of Rochester, became a celebrity for enacting the creed of a libertine and rake. The delights of the court also took more refined forms. French and Italian musicians, as well as painters from the Low Countries, migrated to England; and playhouses—closed by the Puritans since 1642—sprang back to life. In 1660 Charles authorized two new companies of actors, the King's Players and the Duke's; their repertory included witty, bawdy comedies written and acted by women as well as men. But as stark as the contrasts were during the Restoration between libertine and religious intellectuals, royalists and republicans, High Churchmen and Nonconformists, the court and the rest of the country, a spirit of compromise was brewing.

Perhaps the most widely shared intellectual impulse of the age was a distrust of dogmatism. Nearly everybody blamed it for the civil strife through which the nation had recently passed. Opinions varied widely about which dogmatism was most dangerous—Puritan enthusiasm, papal infallibility, the divine right of kings, medieval scholastic or modern Cartesian philosophy—but these were denounced in remarkably similar terms. As far apart intellectually and temperamentally as Rochester and Milton were, both portray overconfidence

in human reasoning as the supreme disaster. It is the theme of Butler's *Hudibras* and much of the work of Dryden. Many philosophers, scientists, and divines began to embrace a mitigated skepticism, which argued that human beings could readily achieve a sufficient degree of necessary knowledge (sometimes called "moral certainty") but also contended that the pursuit of absolute certainty was vain, mad, and socially calamitous. If, as the commentator Martin Clifford put it in *A Treatise of Humane Reason* (1675), "in this vast latitude of probabilities," a person thinks "there is none can lead one to salvation, but the path wherein he treads himself, we may see the evident and necessary consequence of eternal troubles and confusions." Such writers insist that a distrust of human capacities is fully compatible with religious faith: for them the inability of reason and sensory evidence to settle important questions reveals our need to accept Christian mysteries as our intellectual foundation. Dryden's poem *Religio Laid* (1682) explains: "So pale grows reason in religion's sight; / So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light."

Far from inhibiting fresh thinking, however, the distrust of old dogmas inspired new theories, projects, and explorations. In *Leviathan* (1651), Thomas Hobbes jettisoned the notion of a divine basis for kingly authority, proposing instead a naturalistic argument for royal absolutism begun from the claim that mere "matter in motion" composes the universe: if not checked by an absolute sovereign, mankind's "perpetual and restless desire of power after power" could lead to civic collapse. Other materialist philosophies derived from ancient Epicurean thought, which was Christianized by the French philosopher Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655). The Epicurean doctrine that the universe consists only of minuscule atoms and void unnerved some thinkers—Swift roundly mocks it in *A Tale of a Tub*—but it also energized efforts to examine the world with deliberate, acute attention. This new scientific impulse advanced Francis Bacon's program of methodical experimentation and inductive reasoning formulated earlier in the century.

Charles II gave official approval to the scientific revolution by chartering the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge in 1662. But observations of nature advanced both formally and informally in an eclectic range of areas: the specialized, professional "scientist" we know today did not yet exist. And new features of the world were disclosed to everyone who had the chance to look. Two wonderful inventions, the microscope and telescope, had begun to reveal that nature is more extravagant—teeming with tiny creatures and boundless galaxies—than anyone had ever imagined. One book that stayed popular for more than a century, Fontenelle's *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds* (1686; translated from French by Behn and later by Burney), suggested that an infinite number of alternate worlds and living creatures might exist, not only in outer space but under our feet, invisibly small. Travels to unfamiliar regions of the globe also enlarged understandings of what nature could do: Behn's classifying and collecting of South American flora and fauna in *Oroonoko* show how the appetite for wondrous facts kept pace with the economic motives of world exploration and colonization. Encounters with hitherto little known societies in the Far East, Africa, and the Americas enlarged Europeans' understanding of human norms as well. In *Gidliiver's Travels*, Swift shows the comical, painful ways in which the discovery of new cultures forces one average Briton to reexamine his own. (See the topics "The Plurality of Worlds" and "Travel, Trade, and the Expansion of Empire" on Norton Literature Online.)

Scientific discovery and exploration also affected religious attitudes. Alongside "natural history" (the collection and description of facts of nature) and "natural philosophy" (the study of the causes of what happens in nature), thinkers of the period placed "natural religion" (the study of nature as a book written by God). Newly discovered natural laws, such as Newton's laws of optics and celestial mechanics, seemed evidence of a universal order in creation, which implied God's hand in the design of the universe, as a watch implies a watchmaker. Expanded knowledge of peoples around the world who had never heard of Christianity led theologians to formulate supposedly universal religious tenets available to all rational beings. Some intellectuals embraced Deism, the doctrine that religion need not depend on mystery or biblical truths and could rely on reason alone, which recognized the goodness and wisdom of natural law and its creator. Natural religion could not, however, discern an active God who punished vice and rewarded virtue in this life; evidently the First Cause had withdrawn from the universe He set in motion. Many orthodox Christians shuddered at the vision of a vast, impersonal machine of nature. Instead they rested their faith on the revelation of Scripture, the scheme of salvation in which Christ died to redeem our sins. Other Christians, such as Pope in *An Essay on Man* and Thomson in *The Seasons*, espoused arguments for natural religion that they felt did not conflict with or diminish orthodox belief.

Some people began to argue that the achievements of modern inquiry had eclipsed those of the ancients (and the fathers of the church), who had not known about the solar system, the New World, microscopic organisms, or the circulation of the blood. The school curriculum began with years of Latin and Greek, inculcating a long-established humanistic tradition that many authors, including Swift and Pope, still cherished. A battle of the books erupted in the late seventeenth century between champions of ancient and of modern learning. Swift crusaded fiercely in this battle: *Gulliver's Travels* denounces the pointlessness and arrogance he saw in experiments of the Royal Society, while "A Modest Proposal" depicts a peculiar new cruelty and indifference to moral purpose made possible by statistics and economics (two fields pioneered by Royal Society member Sir William Petty). But as sharp as such disagreements were, accommodation was also possible. Even as works such as Newton's *Principia* (1687) and *Opticks* (1704) revolutionized previously held views of the world, Newton himself maintained a seemly diffidence, comparing himself to "a boy playing on the sea-shore" "whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." He and other modest modern inquirers such as Locke won the admiration of Pope and many ardent defenders of the past.

The widespread devotion to the direct observation of experience established empiricism as the dominant intellectual attitude of the age, which would become Britain's great legacy to world philosophy. Locke and his heirs George Berkeley and David Hume pursue the experiential approach in widely divergent directions. But even when they reach conclusions shocking to common sense, they tend to reassert the security of our prior knowledge. Berkeley insists we know the world only through our senses and thus cannot prove that any material thing exists, but he uses that argument to demonstrate the necessity of faith, because reality amounts to no more than a perception in the mind of God. Hume's famous argument about causation—that "causes and effects are discoverable, not by reason but by experience"—grounds our sense of the world not on rational reflection but on spontaneous, unreflective beliefs and

feelings. Perhaps Locke best expresses the temper of his times in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690):

If by this inquiry into the nature of the understanding, I can discover the powers thereof; how far they reach; to what things they are in any degree proportionate; and where they fail us, I suppose it maybe of use, to prevail with the busy mind of man to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in a quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our capacities. . . . Our business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct.

Such a position is Swift's, when he inveighs against metaphysics, abstract logical deductions, and theoretical science. It is similar to Pope's warning against human presumption in *An Essay on Man*. It prompts Johnson to talk of "the business of living" and to restrain the flights of unbridled imagination. And it helps account for the Anglican clergy's dislike of emotion and "enthusiasm" in religion and for their emphasis on good works, rather than faith, as the way to salvation. Locke's empiricism pervaded eighteenth-century British thought on politics, education, and morals as well as philosophy; Johnson's great *Dictionary* (1755) uses more than fifteen hundred illustrations from his writings.

Yet perhaps the most momentous new idea at the turn of the eighteenth century was set against Lockean thinking. The groundbreaking intellectual Mary Astell, in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694) and *Some Reflections upon Marriage* (1700, 1706), initiated a powerful strain of modern feminism, arguing for the establishment of women's educational institutions and decrying the tyranny that husbands legally exercised over their wives. She nonetheless mocked the calls for political rights and liberty by Locke and other Whig theorists, rights that pointedly did not extend to women. Instead, she and other early feminists, including Sarah Fyge Egerton and Mary, Lady Chudleigh, embraced the Tory principle of obedience to royal and church authority. Women's advocates had to fight "tyrant Custom" (in Egerton's words), rooted in ancient traditions of domestic power and enshrined in the Bible and mythic human prehistory. This struggle seemed distinct from public political denunciations of the tyranny of some relatively recent Charles or James. Astell feared that the doctrines of male revolutionaries could produce civil chaos and so jeopardize the best that women could hope for in her day: the freedom to become fully educated, practice their religion, and marry (or not) according to their own enlightened judgment.

Other thinkers, male and female, began to advocate improving women's education as part of a wider commitment to enhancing and extending sociability. Richard Steele's periodical *The Tatler* satirized Astell as "Madonella" because she seemed to recommend women to a nun-like, "recluse life." In *The Spectator* (1711—12; 1714), conversely, Steele and Joseph Addison encouraged women to learn to participate in an increasingly sociable, intellectually sophisticated, urbane world, where all sorts of people could mingle, as in the streets and parks of a thriving city like London. Such periodicals sought to teach as large a readership as possible to think and behave politely. On a more aristocratic plane, the *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times* (1711) by the third earl of Shaftesbury similarly asserted the naturally social

meaning of human character and meditated on the affections, the witty intercourse, and the standards of politeness that bind people together. Such ideas led to the popularity around mid-century of a new word, *sentimental*, which locates the bases of social conduct in instinctual feeling rather than divinely sanctioned moral codes. Religion itself, according to Laurence Sterne, might be a "Great Sensorium," a sort of central nervous system that connects the feelings of all living creatures in one great benevolent soul. And people began to feel, exquisite pleasure in the exercise of charity. The cult of sensibility fostered a philanthropy that led to social reforms seldom envisioned in earlier times—to the improvement of jails, the relief of imprisoned debtors, the establishment of foundling hospitals and of homes for penitent prostitutes, and ultimately the abolition of the slave trade. And it also loosed a ready flow of sympathetic responses to the joys and sorrows of fellow human beings.

Another passion that transformed British culture in the period was curiosity: scientific discoveries increasingly found practical applications in industry, the arts, and even entertainment. By the late 1740s, as knowledge of electricity advanced, public experiments offered fashionable British crowds the opportunity to electrocute themselves. Amateurs everywhere amused themselves with air pumps and chemical explosions. Birmingham became famous as a center where science and manufacturing were combining to change the world: in the early 1760s Matthew Boulton (1728-1809) established the most impressive factory of the age just outside town, producing vast quantities of pins, buckles, and buttons; in subsequent decades, his applications and manufacture of the new steam engine invented by Scotsman James Watt (1736—1819) helped build an industry to drive all others. Practical chemistry also led to industrial improvements: domestic porcelain production became established in the 1750s; and from the 1760s Josiah Wedgwood (1730—95) developed glazing, manufacturing, and marketing techniques that enabled British ceramics to compete with China for fashionable taste. (In 1765 he named his creamware "Queen's ware" to remind customers of its place on Queen Charlotte's table.) Wedgwood and others answered an ever-increasing demand in Britain for beautiful objects. Artist William Hogarth satirized this appetite of the upper and middle classes for the accumulation of finery: a chaotic collection of china figurines crowds the mantel in Plate 2 of *Marriage A-la-Mode* (1743—45). Yet the images that made Hogarth famous would soon decorate English ceramic teapots and plates and be turned into porcelain figurines themselves.

New forms of religious devotion sprang up amid Britain's spectacular material success. The evangelical revival known as Methodism began in the 1730s, led by three Oxford graduates: John Wesley (1703—1791), his brother Charles (1707-1788), and George Whitefield (1714-1770). The Methodists took their gospel to the common people, warning that all were sinners and damned, unless they accepted "amazing grace," salvation through faith. Often denied the privilege of preaching in village churches, evangelicals preached to thousands in barns or the open fields. The emotionalism of such revival meetings repelled the somnolent Anglican Church and the upper classes, who feared that the fury and zeal of the Puritan sects were returning. Methodism was sometimes related to madness; convinced that he was damned forever, the poet William Cowper broke down and became a recluse. But the religious awakening persisted and affected many clergymen and laymen within the Establishment, who reanimated the church and promoted unworldliness and

piety. Nor did the insistence of Methodists on faith over works as the way to salvation prevent them or their Anglican allies from fighting for social reforms. The campaign to abolish slavery and the slave trade was driven largely by a passion to save souls.

Sentimentalism, evangelicalism, and the pursuits of wealth and luxury in different ways all placed a new importance on individuals—the gratification of their tastes and ambitions or their yearning for personal encounters with each other or a personal God. Diary keeping, elaborate letter writing, and the novel also testified to the growing importance of the private, individual life. Few histories of kings or nations could rival Richardson's novel *Clarissa* in length, popularity, or documentary detail: it was subtitled "the History of a Young Lady." The older hierarchical system had tended to subordinate individuals to their social rank or station. In the eighteenth century that fixed system began to break down, and people's sense of themselves began to change. By the end of the century many issues of politics and the law revolve around rights, not traditions. The modern individual had been invented; no product of the age is more enduring.

CONDITIONS OF LITERARY PRODUCTION

Publishing boomed as never before in eighteenth-century Britain, as the number of titles appearing annually and the periodicals published in London and the provincial towns dramatically increased. This expansion in part resulted from a loosening of legal restraints on printing. Through much of the previous three centuries, the government had licensed the texts deemed suitable for publication and refused to license those it wanted suppressed (a practice called "prior restraint"). After the Restoration, the new Printing Act (1662) tightened licensing controls, though unlike his Stuart predecessors Charles II now shared this power with Parliament. But in 1695, during the reign of William III, the last in a series of printing acts was not renewed. Debate in Parliament on the matter was more practical than idealistic: it was argued that licensing fettered the printing trades and was ineffective at preventing obnoxious publications anyway, which could be better constrained after publication by enforcing laws against seditious libel, obscenity, and treason. As the two-party system consolidated, both Whigs and Tories seemed to realize that prepublication censorship could bite them when their own side happened to be out of power. Various governments attempted to revive licensing during political crises throughout the eighteenth century, but it was gone for good.

This did not end the legal liabilities, and the prosecutions, of authors. Daniel Defoe, for instance, was convicted of seditious libel and faced the pillory and jail for his satirical pamphlet "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters" (1702), which imitated High-Church zeal so extravagantly that it provoked both the Tories and the Dissenters he had set about to defend. And licensing of the stage returned: irritated especially by Henry Fielding's anti-government play *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*, Robert Walpole pushed the Stage Licensing Act through Parliament in 1737, which authorized the Lord Chamberlain to license all plays and reduced the number of London theaters to two (Drury Lane and Covent Garden), closing Fielding's New Theatre in the Haymarket and driving him to a new career as a novelist. But despite such constraints, Hume could begin his essay "Of the Liberty of the Press" (1741) by citing "the extreme liberty we enjoy in this country of communicating whatever

we please to the public" as an internationally recognized commonplace. This freedom allowed eighteenth-century Britain to build an exemplary version of what historians have called "the public sphere": a cultural arena, free of direct government control, consisting of not just published comment on matters of national interest but also the public venues—coffeehouses, clubs, taverns—where readers circulated, discussed, and conceived responses to it. The first regular daily London newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, appeared in 1702; in 1731, the first magazine, the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The latter was followed both by imitations and by successful literary journals like the *Monthly Review* (1749) and the *Critical Review* (1756). Each audience attracted some periodical tailored to it, as with the *Female Tatler* (1709) and Eliza Haywood's *Female Spectator* (1744–46).

After 1695, the legal status of printed matter became ambiguous, and in 1710 Parliament enacted the Statute of Anne—"An Act for the Encouragement of Learning by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies"—the first copyright law in British history not tied to government approval of works' contents. Typically, these copyrights were held by booksellers, who operated much as publishers do today (in the eighteenth century, *publisher* referred to one who distributed books). A bookseller paid an author for a work's copyright and, after registering the work with the Stationers' Company for a fee, had exclusive right for fourteen years to publish it; if alive when this term expired, he owned it another fourteen years. Payments to authors for copyright varied. Pope got £15 for the 1714 version of *The Rape of the Lock*, while Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* earned him £100. The Statute of Anne spurred the book trade by enhancing booksellers' control over works and hence their chance to profit by them. But the government soon introduced a new constraint. In 1712, the first Stamp Act put a tax on all newspapers, advertisements, paper, and pamphlets (effectively any work under a hundred pages or so): all printed matter had to carry the stamp indicating the taxes had been paid. Happily for Anne and her ministry, the act both raised government revenue and drove a number of the more irresponsible, ephemeral newspapers out of business, though the *Spectator* simply doubled its price and thrived. Stamp Acts were in effect throughout the century, and duties tended to increase when the government needed to raise money and rein in the press, as during the Seven Years' War in 1757.

But such constraints were not heavy enough to hold back the publishing market, which began to sustain the first true professional class of authors in British literary history. The lower echelon of the profession was called "Grub Street," which was, as Johnson's *Dictionary* explains, "originally the name of a street in Moorfields in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems." The market increasingly motivated the literary elite too, and Johnson himself came to remark that "no man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money." As a young writer, he sold articles to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and many other men and women struggled to survive doing piecework for periodicals. The enhanced opportunity to sell their works on the open market meant that fewer authors needed to look to aristocratic patrons for support. But a new practice, publication by subscription, blended elements of patronage and literary capitalism and created the century's most spectacular authorial fortunes. Wealthy readers could subscribe to a work in progress, usually by agreeing to pay the author half in advance and half upon receipt of the book. Subscribers were rewarded with an edition

more sumptuous than the common run and the appearance of their names in a list in the book's front pages. Major works by famous authors, such as Dryden's translation of Virgil (1697) and the 1718 edition of Prior's poems, generated the most subscription sales; the grandest success was Pope's translation of Homer's *Iliad* (1715—20), which gained him about £5000; his *Odyssey* (1725—26) raised nearly that much. But smaller projects deemed to need special encouragement also sold by subscription, including nearly all books of poetry by women, such as Mary Leapor's poems (1751).

Not all entered the literary market with equal advantages; and social class played a role, though hardly a simple one, in preparing authors for success. The better educated were better placed to be taken seriously: many eminent male writers, including Dryden, Locke, Addison, Swift, Hume, Johnson, Burke—the list could go on and on—had at least some university education, either at Oxford or Cambridge or at Scottish or Irish universities, where attendance by members of the laboring classes was virtually nil. Also, universities were officially closed to non-Anglicans. Some important writers attended the Dissenting academies that sprang up to fulfill Nonconformists' educational aspirations: Defoe went to an excellent one at Newington Green. A few celebrated authors such as Rochester and Henry Fielding had aristocratic backgrounds, but many came from the "middle class," though those in this category show how heterogeneous it was. Pope, a Catholic, obtained his education privately, and his father was a linen wholesaler, but he eventually became intimate with earls and viscounts, whereas Richardson, who had a family background in trade and (as he said) "only common school-learning," was a successful printer before he became a novelist. Roth were middle class in a sense and made their own fortunes in eighteenth-century print culture, yet they inhabited vastly different social worlds.

Despite the general exclusion of the poor from education and other means of social advancement, some self-educated writers of the laboring classes fought their way into print. A few became celebrities, aided by the increasing popularity of the idea, famously expressed by Gray in his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," that there must be unknown geniuses among the poor. Stephen Duck, an agricultural worker from Wiltshire, published his popular *Poems on Several Subjects* in 1730, which included "The Thresher's Labor" (he became known as the Thresher Poet). Queen Caroline herself retained him to be keeper of her library in Richmond. Several authors of the "common sort" followed in Duck's wake, including Mary Collier, whose poem "The Woman's Labor: An Epistle to Mr. Duck" (1739) defended country women against charges of idleness. Apart from such visible successes, eighteenth-century print culture afforded work for many from lower socioeconomic levels, if not as authors, then as hawkers of newspapers on city streets and singers of political ballads (who were often illiterate and female), bookbinders, paper-makers, and printing-press workers. The vigor of the literary market demanded the labor of all classes.

As all women were barred from universities and faced innumerable other disadvantages and varieties of repression, the story of virtually every woman author in the period is one of self-education, courage, and extraordinary initiative. Yet women did publish widely for the first time in the period, and the examples that can be assembled are as diverse as they are impressive. During the Restoration and early eighteenth century, a few aristocratic women poets were hailed as marvelous exceptions and given fanciful names: the poems of Katherine Philips (1631—1664), "the matchless Orinda," were published post-

humously in 1667; and others, including Anne Finch, Anne Killigrew, and later, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, printed poems or circulated them in manuscript among fashionable circles. A more broadly public sort of female authorship was more ambivalently received. Though Aphra Behn built a successful career in the theater and in print, her sexually frank works were sometimes denounced as unbecoming a woman. Many women writers of popular literature after her in the early eighteenth century assumed "scandalous" public roles. Delarivier Manley published transparent fictionalizations of the doings of the Whig nobility, including *The New Atalantis* (1709), while Eliza Haywood produced stories about seduction and sex (though her late works, including *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, 1751, courted a rising taste for morality). Male defenders of high culture found it easy to denounce these women and their works as affronts simultaneously to sexual decency and good literary taste: Pope's *Dunciad* (1728) awards Haywood as the prize in a pissing contest between scurrilous male booksellers.

Many women writers after mid-century were determined to be more moral than their predecessors. Around 1750, intellectual women established clubs of their own under the leadership of Elizabeth Vesey and Elizabeth Montagu, cousin to Lady Mary. Proclaiming a high religious and intellectual standard, these women came to be called "bluestockings" (after the inelegant worsted hose of an early member). Eminent men joined the bluestockings for literary conversation, including Samuel Johnson, Samuel Richardson, Horace Walpole (novelist, celebrated letter writer, and son of the prime minister), and David Garrick, preeminent actor of his day. The literary accomplishments of bluestockings ranged widely: in 1758 Elizabeth Carter published her translation of the Greek philosopher Epictetus, while Hannah More won fame as a poet, abolitionist, and educational theorist. Some of the most considerable literary achievements of women after mid-century came in the novel, a form increasingly directed at women readers, often exploring the moral difficulties of young women approaching marriage. The satirical novel *The Female Quixote* (1752) by Charlotte Lennox describes one such heroine deluded by the extravagant romances she reads, while Frances Rurney's *Evelina* (1778) unfolds the sexual and other dangers besetting its naive but good-hearted heroine.

Readers' abilities and inclinations to consume literature helped determine the volume and variety of published works. While historians disagree about how exactly the literacy rate changed in Britain through the early modern period, there is widespread consensus that by 1800 between 60 and 70 percent of adult men could read, in contrast to 25 percent in 1600. Since historians use the ability to sign one's name as an indicator of literacy, the evidence is even sketchier for women, who were less often parties to legal contracts: perhaps a third of women could read by the mid-eighteenth century. Reading was commoner among the relatively well off than among the very poor, and among the latter, more prevalent in urban centers than the countryside. Most decisively, cultural commentators throughout the century portrayed literacy as a good in itself: everyone in a Protestant country such as Britain, most thought, would benefit from direct access to the Bible and devotional works, and increasingly employers found literacy among servants and other laborers useful, especially those working in cities. Moral commentators did their best to steer inexperienced readers away from the frivolous and idle realm of popular imaginative literature, though literacy could not but give its new possessors freedom to explore their own tastes and inclinations.

Cost placed another limit on readership: few of the laboring classes would have disposable income to buy a cheap edition of Milton (around two shillings at mid-century) or even a copy of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (six pence), let alone the spare time or sense of entitlement to peruse such things. Nonetheless, reading material was widely shared (Addison optimistically calculated "twenty readers to every paper" of the *Spectator*), and occasionally servants were given access to the libraries of their employers or the rich family of the neighborhood. In the 1740s, circulating libraries began to emerge in cities and towns throughout Britain. Though the yearly fee they usually charged put them beyond the reach of the poor, these libraries gave the middle classes access to a wider array of books than they could afford to assemble on their own. Records of such libraries indicate that travels, histories, letters, and novels were most popular, though patrons borrowed many specialized, technical works as well. One fascinating index of change in the character of the reading public was the very look of words on the page. In the past, printers had rather capriciously capitalized many nouns—words as common as *Wood* or *Happiness*—and frequently italicized various words for emphasis. But around the middle of the eighteenth century, new conventions arose: initial capitals were reserved for proper names, and the use of italics was reduced. Such changes indicate that the reading public was becoming sophisticated enough not to require such overt pointing to the meanings of what they read. The modern, eighteenth-century reader had come to expect that all English writing, no matter how old or new, on any topic, in any genre, would be printed in the same consistent, uncluttered style. No innovation of the eighteenth-century culture of reading more immediately demonstrates its linkage to our own.

LITERARY PRINCIPLES

The literature appearing between 1660 and 1785 divides conveniently into three lesser periods of about forty years each. The first, extending to the death of Dryden in 1700, is characterized by an effort to bring a new refinement to English literature according to sound critical principles of what is fitting and right; the second, ending with the deaths of Pope in 1744 and Swift in 1745, extends that effort to a wider circle of readers, with special satirical attention to what is unfitting and wrong; the third, concluding with the death of Johnson in 1784 and the publication of Cowper's *The Task* in 1785, confronts the old principles with revolutionary ideas that would come to the fore in the Romantic movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

A sudden change of taste seemed to occur around 1660. The change had been long prepared, however, by a trend in European culture, especially in seventeenth-century France: the desire for an elegant simplicity. Reacting against the difficulty and occasional extravagance of late Renaissance literature, writers and critics called for a new restraint, clarity, regularity, and good sense. Donne's "metaphysics" and Milton's bold storming of heaven, for instance, seemed overdone to some Restoration readers. Hence Dryden and Andrew Marvell both were tempted to revise *Paradise Lost*, smoothing away its sublime but arduous idiosyncrasies. As daring and imaginative as Dryden's verse is, he tempers even its highly dramatic moments with an ease and sense of control definitive of the taste of his times.

This movement produced in France an impressive body of classical literature that distinguished the age of Louis XIV. In England it produced a literature often termed "Augustan," after the writers who flourished during the

reign of Augustus Caesar, the first Roman emperor. Rome's Augustan Age reestablished stability after the civil war that followed the assassination of Julius Caesar. Its chief poets, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, addressed their polished works to a sophisticated aristocracy among whom they looked for patrons. Dryden's generation took advantage of the analogy between post—civil war England and Augustan Rome. Later generations would be suspicious of that analogy; after 1700 most writers stressed that Augustus had been a tyrant who thought himself greater than the law. But in 1660 there was hope that Charles would be a better Augustus, bringing England the civilized virtues of an Augustan age without its vices.

Charles and his followers brought back from exile an admiration of French literature as well as French fashions, and the theoretical "correctness" of such writers as Pierre Corneille, Rene Rapin, and Nicolas Roileau came into vogue. England also had a native tradition of classicism, derived from Ben Jonson and his followers, whose couplets embodied a refinement Dryden eagerly inherited and helped codify. The effort to formulate rules of good writing appealed to many critics of the age. Even Shakespeare had sometimes been careless; and although writers could not expect to surpass his genius, they might hope to avoid his faults. But "neoclassical" English literature aimed to be not only classical but *new*. Rochester and Dryden drew on literary traditions of variety, humor, and freewheeling fancy represented by Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson, and Milton to infuse fresh life into Greek or Latin or French classical models.

Above all, the new simplicity of style aimed to give pleasure to readers—to express passions that everyone could recognize in language that everyone could understand. According to Dryden, Donne's amorous verse misguidedly "perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy, when he should engage their hearts, and entertain them with the softnesses of love." Dryden's poems would not make that mistake; like subsequent English critics, he values poetry according to its power to move an audience. Thus Timotheus, in Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," is not only a musician but an archetypal poet who can make Alexander tearful or loving or angry at will. Readers, in turn, were supposed to cooperate with authors through the exercise of their own imaginations, creating pictures in the mind. When Timotheus describes vengeful ghosts holding torches, Alexander hallucinates in response and seizes a torch "with zeal to destroy." Much eighteenth-century poetry demands to be visualized. A phrase from Horace's *Art of Poetry*, *ut pictura poesis* (as in painting, so in poetry), was interpreted to mean that poetry ought to be a visual as well as verbal art. Pope's "Eloisa to Abelard," for instance, begins by picturing two rival female personifications: "heavenly-pensive contemplation" and "ever-musing melancholy" (in the older typographical style, the nouns would be capitalized). Readers were expected to *see* these figures: Contemplation, in the habit of a nun, whose eyes roll upward toward heaven; and the black goddess Melancholy, in wings and drapery, who broods upon the darkness. These two competing visions fight for Eloisa's soul throughout the poem, which we see entirely through her perspective. Eighteenth-century readers knew how to translate words into pictures, and modern readers can share their pleasure by learning to see poetic images in the mind's eye.

What poets most tried to see and represent was *Nature*—a word of many meanings. The Augustans focused especially on one: Nature as the universal and permanent elements in human experience. External nature, the landscape, attracted attention throughout the eighteenth century as a source of

pleasure and an object of inquiry. But as Finch muses on the landscape, in "A Nocturnal Reverie," it is her own soul she discovers. Pope's injunction to the critic, "First follow Nature," has primarily *human* nature in view. Nature consists of the enduring, general truths that have been, are, and will be true for everyone in all times, everywhere. Hence the business of the poet, according to Johnson's *Rasselas*, is "to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances . . . to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind." Yet if human nature was held to be uniform, human beings were known to be infinitely varied. Pope praises Shakespeare's characters as "Nature herself," but continues that "every single character in Shakespeare is as much an individual as those in life itself; it is . . . impossible to find any two alike." The general need not exclude the particular. In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson describes the sorrows of an old woman: "Now kindred Merit fills the sable Bier, / Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear." Here "kindred Merit" refers particularly to a worthy relative who has died, and "lacerated Friendship" refers to a friend who has been wasted by violence or disease. Yet Merit and Friendship are also personifications, and the lines imply that the woman may be mourning the passing of goodness like her own or a broken friendship; values and sympathies can die as well as people. This play on words is not a pun. Rather, it indicates a state of mind in which life assumes the form of a perpetual allegory and some abiding truth shines through each circumstance as it passes. The particular is already the general, in good eighteenth-century verse.

To study Nature was also to study the ancients. Nature and Homer, according to Pope, were the same; and both Pope and his readers applied Horace's satires on Rome to their own world, because Horace had expressed the perennial forms of life. Moreover, modern writers could learn from the ancients how to practice their craft. If a poem is an object to be made, the poet (a word derived from the Greek for "maker") must make the object to proper specifications. Thus poets were taught to plan their works in one of the classical "kinds" or genres—epic, tragedy, comedy, pastoral, satire, or ode—to choose a language appropriate to that genre, and to select the right style and tone and rhetorical figures. The rules of art, as Pope had said, "are Nature methodized." At the same time, however, writers needed *wit*: quickness of mind, inventiveness, a knack for conceiving images and metaphors and for perceiving resemblances between things apparently unlike. Shakespeare had surpassed the ancients themselves in wit, and no one could deny that Pope was witty. Hence a major project of the age was to combine good method with wit, or judgment with fancy. Nature intended them to be one, and the role of judgment was not to suppress passion, energy, and originality but to make them more effective through discipline: "The winged courser, like a generous horse, / Shows most true mettle when you check his course."

The test of a poet's true mettle is language. When Wordsworth, in the preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), declared that he wrote "in a selection of the language really used by men," he went on to attack eighteenth-century poets for their use of an artificial and stock "poetic diction." Many poets did employ a special language. It is characterized by personification, representing a thing or abstraction in human form, as when an "Ace of Hearts steps forth" or "Melancholy frowns"; by periphrasis (a roundabout way of avoiding homely words: "finny tribes" for *fish*, or "household feathery people" for *chickens*), by

stock phrases such as "shining sword," "verdant mead," "bounding main," and "checkered shade"; by words used in their original Latin sense, such as "genial," "gelid," and "horrid"; and by English sentences forced into Latin syntax ("Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth / A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown," where *youth* is the subject of the verb *rests*). This language originated in the attempt of Renaissance poets to rival the elegant diction of Virgil and other Roman writers, and Milton depended on it to help him obtain "answerable style" for the lofty theme of *Paradise Lost*. When used mechanically it could become a mannerism. But Thomas Gray contrives subtle, expressive effects from artificial diction and syntax, as in the ironic inflation of "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat" or a famous stanza from "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike the inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

It is easy to misread the first sentence. What is the subject of *awaits*? The answer must be *hour* (the only available singular noun), which lurks at the end of the sentence, ready to spring a trap not only on the reader but on all those aristocratic, powerful, beautiful, wealthy people who forget that their hour will come. Moreover, the intricacy of that sentence sets off the simplicity of the next, which says the same thing with deadly directness. The artful mix in the "Elegy" of a special poetic language—a language that nobody speaks—with sentiments that everybody feels helps account for the poem's enduring popularity.

Versification also tests a poet's skill. The heroic couplet was brought to such perfection by Pope, Johnson thought, that "to attempt any further improvement of versification will be dangerous." Pope's couplets, in rhymed iambic pentameter, typically present a complete statement, closed by a punctuation mark. Within the binary system of these two lines, a world of distinctions can be compressed. The second line of the couplet might closely parallel the first in structure and meaning, for instance, or the two lines might antithetically play against each other. Similarly, because a slight pause called a "caesura" often divides the typical pentameter line ("Know then thyself, presume not God to scan"), one part of the line can be made parallel with or antithetical to the other or even to one part of the following line. An often quoted and parodied passage of Sir John Denham's "Cooper's Hill" (1642) illustrates these effects. The poem addresses the Thames and builds up a witty comparison between the flow of a river and the flow of verse (*italics* are added to highlight the terms compared):

Parallelism:	O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream <i>My great exam-pie,</i>] as it is <i>my theme!</i>
Double balance:	Though <i>deep,</i> yet <i>clear,</i> though <i>gentle,</i> yet not <i>dull,</i>
Double balance:	<i>Strong</i> without <i>rage,</i> without <i>o'erfkrwing, full.</i>

Once Dryden and Pope had bound such passages more tightly together with alliteration and assonance, the typical metrical-rhetorical wit of the new age had been perfected. For most of the eighteenth century its only metrical rival

was blank verse: iambic pentameter that does not rhyme and is not closed in couplets. Milton's blank verse in *Paradise Lost* provided one model, and the dramatic blank verse of Shakespeare and Dryden provided another. This more expansive form appealed to poets who cared less for wit than for stories and thoughts with plenty of room to develop. Blank verse was favored as the best medium for descriptive and meditative poems, from Thomson's *Seasons* (1726—30) to Cowper's *The Task* (1785), and the tradition continued in Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and *Prelude*.

Yet not all poets chose to compete with Pope's wit or Milton's heroic striving. Ordinary people also wrote and read verse, and many of them neither knew nor regarded the classics. Only a minority of men, and very few women, had the chance to study Latin and Greek, but that did not keep a good many from playing with verse as a pastime or writing about their own lives. Hence the eighteenth century is the first age to reflect the modern tension between "high" and "low" art. While the heroic couplet was being perfected, doggerel also thrived, and Milton's blank verse was sometimes reduced to describing a drunk or an oyster. Burlesque and broad humor characterize the common run of eighteenth-century verse. As the audience for poetry became more diversified, so did the subject matter. No readership was too small to address; Isaac Watts, and later Anna Laetitia Barbauld and William Blake, wrote songs for children. The rise of unconventional forms and topics of verse subverted an older poetic ideal: the Olympian art that only a handful of the elect could possibly master. The eighteenth century brought poetry down to earth. In the future, art that claimed to be high would have to find ways to distinguish itself from the low.

BESTORATION LITERATURE, 1660-1700

Dryden brought England a *modern* literature between 1660 and 1700. He combined a cosmopolitan outlook on the latest European trends with some of the richness and variety he admired in Chaucer and Shakespeare. In most of the important contemporary forms—occasional verse, comedy, tragedy, heroic play, ode, satire, translation, and critical essay—both his example and his precepts influenced others. As a critic, he spread the word that English literature, particularly his own, could vie with the best of the past. As a translator, he made such classics as Ovid and Virgil available to a wide public; for the first time, a large number of women and men without a formal education could feel included in the literary world.

Restoration prose clearly indicated the desire to reach a new audience. The styles of Donne's sermons, Milton's pamphlets, or Browne's treatises now seemed too elaborate and rhetorical for simple communication. By contrast, Pepys and Behn head straight to the point, informally and unself-consciously. The Royal Society asked its members to employ a plain, utilitarian prose style that spelled out scientific truths; rhetorical flourishes and striking metaphors might be acceptable in poetry, which engaged the emotions, but they had no place in rational discourse. In polite literature, exemplified by Cowley, Dryden, and Sir William Temple, the ideal of good prose came to be a style with the ease and poise of well-bred urbane conversation. This is a social prose for a sociable age. Later, it became the mainstay of essayists like Addison and Steele, of eighteenth-century novelists, and of the host of brilliant eighteenth-century letter writers, including Montagu, Horace Walpole, Gray, Cowper, and Burney, who still give readers the sense of being their intimate friends.

Yet despite its broad appeal to the public, Restoration literature kept its ties

to an aristocratic heroic ideal. The "fierce wars and faithful loves" of epic poems were expected to offer patterns of virtue for noble emulation. These ideals lived on in popular French prose romances and in Behn's *Oroonoko*. But the ideal was most fully expressed in heroic plays like those written by Dryden, which push to extremes the conflict between love and honor in the hearts of impossibly valiant heroes and impossibly high-minded and attractive heroines. Dryden's best serious drama, however, was his blank verse tragedy *All for Love* (produced 1677), based on the story of Antony and Cleopatra. Instead of Shakespeare's worldwide panorama, his rapid shifts of scene and complex characters, this version follows the unities of time, place, and action, compressing the plot to the tragic last hours of the lovers. Two other tragic playwrights were celebrated in the Restoration and for a long time to come: Nathaniel Lee (ca. 1649—1692), known for violent plots and wild ranting, and the passionately sensitive Thomas Otway (1652—1685).

Rut comedy was the real distinction of Restoration drama. The best plays of Sir George Etherege (*The Man of Mode*, 1676), William Wycherley (*The Country Wife*, 1675), Aphra Behn (*The Rover*, 1677), William Congreve (*Love for Love*, 1695; *The Way of the World*, 1700), and later George Farquhar (*The Beaux' Stratagem*, 1707) can still hold the stage today. These "comedies of manners" pick social behavior apart, exposing the nasty struggles for power among the upper classes, who use wit and manners as weapons. Human nature in these plays often conforms to the worst fears of Hobbes; sensual, false-hearted, selfish characters prey on each other. The male hero lives for pleasure and for the money and women that he can conquer. The object of his game of sexual intrigue is a beautiful, witty, pleasure-loving, and emancipated lady, every bit his equal in the strategies of love. What makes the favored couple stand out is the true wit and well-bred grace with which they step through the minefield of the plot. But during the 1690s "Societies for the Reformation of Manners" began to attack the blasphemy and obscenity they detected in such plays, and they sometimes brought offenders to trial. When Dryden died in 1700, a more respectable society was coming into being.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LITERATURE, 1700-1745

Early in the eighteenth century a new and brilliant group of writers emerged: Swift, with *A Tale of a Tub* (1704—10); Addison, with *The Campaign* (1705), a poetic celebration of the battle of Blenheim; Prior, with *Poems on Several Occasions* (1707); Steele, with the *Tatler* (1709); and the youthful Pope, in the same year, with his *Pastorals*. These writers consolidate and popularize the social graces of the previous age. Determined to preserve good sense and civilized values, they turn their wit against fanaticism and innovation. Hence this is a great age of satire. Deeply conservative but also playful, their finest works often cast a strange light on modern times by viewing them through the screen of classical myths and classical forms. Thus Pope exposes the frivolity of fashionable London, in *The Rape of the Lock*, through the incongruity of verse that casts the idle rich as epic heroes. Similarly, Swift uses epic similes to mock the moderns in *Tine Battle of the Books*, and John Gay's *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London* (1716) uses mock georgics to order his tour of the city. Such incongruities are not entirely negative. They also provide a fresh perspective on things that had once seemed too low for poetry to notice—for instance, in *The Rape of the Lock*, a girl putting on her makeup. In this way a parallel with classical literature can show not only how far the



John Donne, anonymous, ca. 1595

This portrait presents Donne in the guise of a melancholy lover fond of self-display; the signs are his broad-brimmed black hat, soulful eyes, sensual lips, delicate hands, and untied but expensive lace collar. Parts of Donne's *Songs and Sonnets* (pp. 603 ff.) date from this period. Melancholy, supposedly caused by an excess of black bile and often associated with the scholarly and artistic temperament, was identified in Robert Burton's massive and very popular *Anatomy of Melancholy* as a well-nigh universal attribute of the period. It is the temperament of many literary characters, among them Hamlet, Duke Orsino (in *Twelfth Night*, p. 510), Jacques in *As You Like It*, and Milton's Π Pensive (p. 1801). PRIVATE COLLECTION/ BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY.



Lady Sidney and Six of Her Children, Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, ca. 1596

This portrait of Barbara (Gamage) Sidney, wife of Sir Robert Sidney of Penshurst, provides an insight into domestic relations in the period, as well as an illuminating comment on Ben Jonson's poem "To Penshurst" (p. 644). Robert Sidney (brother of Sir Philip Sidney) is absent, serving as governor of the English stronghold in Flushing. Lady Sidney is portrayed as a fruitful, fostering mother. Her hands rest on her two sons—both still in skirts, though the heir wears a sword; the four daughters are arranged in two pairs, the elder of each pair imitating her mother's nurturing gesture. The eldest daughter will become Lady Mary Wroth, author of *Urania* and the sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (pp. 652 ff.). REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF VLSCOUNT DE L'ISLE, FROM HIS PRIVATE COLLECTION AT PENSURST PLACE.



Lucy, Countess of Bedford, as a Masquer, attributed to John de Critz, ca. 1606

Lucy (Harrington) Russell, countess of Bedford, prominent courtier, favorite of Queen Anne, patron of Donne and Jonson, and frequent planner of and participant in court masques, is shown in masquing costume, for the wedding masque *Hymenaei*, by Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones. Jonson describes the masquing ladies as "attired richly and alike in the most celestial colors" associated with the rainbow, with elaborate headdresses and shoes, "all full of splendor, sovereignty, and riches." Their masque dances were "fully of subtlety and device."
WOBURN ABBEY, BEDFORDSHIRE, UK/BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY.



Charles I on Horseback, Sir Anthony Van Dyck, 1637—38

One of Charles I's court painters, knighted and pensioned by the king, Van Dyck produced several portraits of the royal family and their circle at court. This magnificent equestrian portrait of the king in armor on a white horse presents him as hero and warrior, in a pose that looks back to portraits and statues of Roman emperors on horseback. It was painted to be hung at the end of the Long Gallery in St. James Palace. NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON, UK/ BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY, NY.



The Penitent Magdalen, Georges de la Tour, ca. 1638—43

This remarkable image of a young woman in meditative pose, her face lit by candlelight and her hand touching a skull, can serve as an emblem for the extensive meditative literature of the period—the poetry and prose of Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, and Traherne, among others—on such topics as sickness, human mortality, the transience of life and beauty, and the inevitability of death. REUNION DES MUSSES NATIONAUX/ART RESOURCE, NY.

The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century (1660–1785)



Landscape with Apollo and the Muses, Claude Lorrain, 1652

Claude's poetic landscapes inspired many British landscape gardens. In this painting, a river god sprawls by the Castalian spring under Mount Parnassus; the white swans are sacred to Apollo. On the terrace to the left, Apollo plays his lyre, surrounded by the nine Muses, while four poets approach through the woods. At the upper left, below a temple, the fountain of Hippocrene pours forth its inspiring waters. The dreamlike distance of the figures in this mysterious, luminous scene is intended to draw the viewer in. Similarly, in landscape gardens visitors were invited to stroll amid temples, inscriptions, swans, and statues, gradually comprehending the master plan. NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND/BRIDGEIVIAN ART LIBRARY.





Great Fire of London,
Dutch school, 1666

The fire of London, described by Dryden in *Annus Mirabilis* and by Pepys in his diary, destroyed most of the central city. In the foreground of this panorama, huddled refugees carry their goods away from the city. Under a pall of smoke across the Thames, St. Paul's Cathedral blazes in the center, with London Bridge on the far left and the Tower on the far right. The fire raged for four days, after which a new city eventually rose from the ashes.
MUSEUM OF LONDON, UK/
BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY.

JOHN DONNE
1572-1631

Lovers' eyeballs threaded on a string. A god who assaults the human heart with a battering ram. A teardrop that encompasses and drowns the world. John Donne's poems abound with startling images, some of them exalting and others grotesque. With his strange and playful intelligence, expressed in puns, paradoxes, and the elaborately sustained metaphors known as "conceits," Donne has enthralled and sometimes enraged readers from his day to our own. The tired clichés of love poetry—cheeks like roses, hearts pierced by the arrows of love—emerge reinvigorated and radically transformed by his hand, demanding from the reader an unprecedented level of mental alertness and engagement. Donne prided himself on his wit and displayed it not only in his conceits but in his grasp of learned and obscure discourses ranging from theology to alchemy, from cosmology to law. Yet for all their ostentatious intellectuality, Donne's poems never give the impression of being academic exercises put into verse. Rather, they are intense dramatic monologues in which the speaker's ideas and feelings seem to shift and evolve from one line to the next. Donne's prosody is equally dramatic, mirroring in its variable and jagged rhythms the effect of speech (and eliciting from his classically minded contemporary Ben Jonson the gruff observation that "Donne, for not keeping of accent deserved hanging").

Donne began life as an outsider, and in some respects remained one until death. He was born in London in 1572 into a devout Roman Catholic household. The family was prosperous, but, as the poet later remarked, none had suffered more heavily for its loyalty to the Catholic Church: "I have been ever kept awake in a meditation of martyrdom." Donne was distantly related to the great Catholic humanist and martyr Sir Thomas More. Closer to home, a Jesuit uncle was executed by the brutal method of hanging, castrating, disemboweling, and quartering, and his own brother Henry, arrested for harboring a priest, died in prison of the plague. As a Catholic in Protestant England, growing up in decades when anti-Roman feeling reached new heights, Donne could not expect any kind of public career, nor even to receive a university degree (he left Oxford without one and studied law for a time at the Inns of Court). What he could reasonably expect instead was prejudice, official harassment, and crippling financial penalties. He chose not to live under such conditions. At some point in the 1590s, having returned to London after travels abroad, and having devoted some years to studying theological issues, Donne converted to the English church.

The poems that belong with certainty to this period of his life—the five satires and most of the elegies—reveal a man both fascinated by and keenly critical of English society. Four of the satires treat commonplace Elizabethan topics—foppish and obsequious courtiers, bad poets, corrupt lawyers and a corrupt court—but are unique both in their visceral revulsion and in their intellectual excitement. Donne uses striking images of pestilence, itchy lust, vomit, excrement, and pox to create a unique satiric world, busy, vibrant, and corrupt, in which his dramatic speakers have only to step outside the door to be inundated by all the fools and knaves in Christendom. By contrast, the third satire treats the quest for true religion—the question that preoccupied him above all others in these years—in terms that are serious, passionately witty, and deeply felt. Donne argues that honest doubting search is better than the facile acceptance of any religious tradition, epitomizing that point brilliantly in the image of Truth on a high and craggy hill, very difficult to climb. What is certain is that society's values are of no help whatsoever to the individual seeker—none will escape the final judgment by pleading that "A Harry, or a Martin taught [them] this." In the love elegies Donne seems intent on making up for his social powerlessness through witty representations of mastery in the bedroom and of adventurous travel. In "Elegy 16" he imagines his speaker embarking on a journey "O'er the white Alps" and with mingled tenderness and condescension argues down a naive mistress's pro-

posals to accompany him. And in "Elegy 19," his fondling of a naked lover becomes in a famous conceit the equivalent of exploration in America. Donne's interest in satire and elegy—classical Roman genres, which he helped introduce to English verse—is itself significant. He wrote in English, but he reached out to other traditions.

If Donne's conversion to the Church of England promised him security, social acceptance, and the possibility of a public career, that promise was soon to be cruelly withdrawn. In 1596–97 he participated in the Earl of Essex's military expeditions against Catholic Spain in Cadiz and the Azores (the experience prompted two remarkable descriptive poems of life at sea, "The Storm" and "The Calm") and upon his return became secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. This should have been the beginning of a successful public career. But his secret marriage in 1601 to Egerton's seventeen-year-old niece Ann More enraged Donne's employer and the bride's wealthy father; Donne was briefly imprisoned and dismissed from service. The poet was reduced to a retired country life beset by financial insecurity and a rapidly increasing family; Ann bore twelve children (not counting miscarriages) by the time she died at age thirty-three. At one point, Donne wrote despairingly that while the death of a child would mean one less mouth to feed, he could not afford the burial expenses. In this bleak period, he wrote but dared not publish *Biathanatos*, a paradoxical defense of suicide.

As his family grew, Donne made every effort to reinstate himself in the favor of the great. To win the approval of James I, he penned *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), defending the king's insistence that Catholics take the Oath of Allegiance. This set an irrevocable public stamp on his renunciation of Catholicism, and Donne followed up with a witty satire on the Jesuits, *Ignatius His Conclave* (1611). In the same period he was producing a steady stream of occasional poems for friends and patrons such as Somerset (the king's favorite), the Countess of Bedford, and Magdalen Herbert, and for small coteries of courtiers and ladies. Like most gentlemen of his era, Donne saw poetry as a polite accomplishment rather than as a trade or vocation, and in consequence he circulated his poems in manuscript but left most of them uncollected and unpublished. In 1611 and 1612, however, he published the first and second *Anniversaries* on the death of the daughter of his patron Sir Robert Drury.

For some years King James had urged an ecclesiastical career on Donne, denying him any other means of advancement. In 1615 Donne finally consented, overcoming his sense of unworthiness and the pull of other ambitions. He was ordained in the Church of England and entered upon a distinguished career as court preacher, reader in divinity at Lincoln's Inn, and dean of St. Paul's. Donne's metaphorical style, bold erudition, and dramatic wit established him as a great preacher in an age that appreciated learned sermons powerfully delivered. Some 160 of his sermons survive, preached to monarchs and courtiers, lawyers and London magistrates, city merchants and trading companies. As a distinguished clergyman in the Church of England, Donne had traveled an immense distance from the religion of his childhood and the adventurous life of his twenties. Yet in his sermons and late poems we find the same brilliant and idiosyncratic mind at work, refashioning his profane conceits to serve a new and higher purpose. In "Expostulation 19" he praises God as the greatest of literary stylists: "a figurative, a metaphorical God," imagining God as a conceit-maker like himself. In poems, meditations, and sermons, Donne came increasingly to be engaged in anxious contemplation of his own mortality. In "Hymn to God My God, in My Sickness," Donne imagines himself spread out on his deathbed like a map showing the route to the next world. Only a few days before his death he preached "Death's Duel," a terrifying analysis of all life as a decline toward death and dissolution, which contemporaries termed his own funeral sermon. On his deathbed, according to his contemporary biographer Izaak Walton, Donne had a portrait made of himself in his shroud and meditated on it daily. Meditations upon skulls as emblems of mortality were common in the period, but nothing is more characteristic of Donne than to find a way to meditate on his own skull.

Given the shape of Donne's career, it is no surprise that his poems and prose works display an astonishing variety of attitudes, viewpoints, and feelings on the great subjects of love and religion. Yet this variety cannot be fully explained in biographical terms. The poet's own attempt to distinguish between Jack Donne, the young rake, and Dr. Donne, the grave and religious dean of St. Paul's, is (perhaps intentionally) misleading. We do not know the time and circumstances for most of Donne's verses, but it is clear that many of his finest religious poems predate his ordination, and it is possible that he continued to add to the love poems known as his "songs and sonnets" after he entered the church. Theological language abounds in his love poetry, and daringly erotic images occur in his religious verse.

Donne's "songs and sonnets" have been the cornerstone of his reputation almost since their publication in 1633. The title *Songs and Sonnets* associates them with the popular miscellanies of love poems and sonnet sequences in the Petrarchan tradition, but they directly challenge the popular Petrarchan sonnet sequences of the 1590s. The collection contains only one formal sonnet, the "songs" are not notably lyrical, and Donne draws upon and transforms a whole range of literary traditions concerned with love. Like Petrarch, Donne can present himself as the despairing lover of an unattainable lady ("The Funeral"); like Ovid he can be lighthearted, witty, cynical, and frankly lustful ("The Flea," "The Indifferent"); like the Neoplatonists, he espouses a theory of transcendent love, but he breaks from them with his insistence in many poems on the union of physical and spiritual love. What binds these poems together and grants them enduring power is their compelling immediacy. The speaker is always in the throes of intense emotion, and that emotion is not static but constantly shifting and evolving with the turns of the poet's thought. Donne seems supremely present in these poems, standing behind their various speakers. Where Petrarchan poets exhaustively catalogue their beloved's physical features (though in highly conventional terms), Donne's speakers tell us little or nothing about the loved woman, or about the male friends imagined as the audience for many poems. Donne's repeated insistence that the private world of lovers is superior to the wider public world, or that it somehow contains all of that world, or obliterates it, is understandable in light of the many disappointments of his career. Yet this was also a poet who threw himself headlong into life, love, and sexuality, and later into the very visible public role of court and city preacher.

Donne was long grouped with Herbert, Vaughan, Crashaw, Marvell, Traherne, and Cowley under the heading of "Metaphysical poets." The expression was first employed by critics like Samuel Johnson and William Hazlitt, who found the intricate conceits and self-conscious learning of these poets incompatible with poetic beauty and sincerity. Early in the twentieth century, T. S. Eliot sought to restore their reputation, attributing to them a unity of thought and feeling that had since their time been lost. There was, however, no formal "school" of Metaphysical poetry, and the characteristics ascribed to it by later critics pertain chiefly to Donne. Like Ben Jonson, John Donne had a large influence on the succeeding generation, but he remains a singularity.

FROM SONGS AND SONNETS¹The Flea²

- Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
 How little that which thou deniest me is;
 Me it sucked first, and now sucks thee,
 And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
 5 Thou know'st that this cannot be said
 A sin, or shame, or loss of maidenhead,⁰ *virginity*
 Yet this enjoys before it woo,
 And pampered⁰ swells with one blood made of two,³ *overfed*
 And this, alas, is more than we would do.
- 10 Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
 Where we almost, nay more than married are.
 This flea is you and I, and this
 Our marriage bed and marriage temple is;
 Though parents grudge, and you, we are met,
 15 And cloistered⁴ in these living walls of jet.^o *hlack*
 Though use^o make you apt to kill me,⁵ *habit*
 Let not to that, self-murder added be,
 And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.
- Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
 20 Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?
 Wherein could this flea guilty be,
 Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
 Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou
 Find'st not thy self nor me the weaker now;
 25 'Tis true; then learn how false fears be:
 Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,
 Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

1633

The Good-Morrow^o*morning greeting*

- I wonder, by my troth,⁰ what thou and I *good faith*
 Did, till we loved? Were we not weaned till then,
 But sucked on country pleasures, childishly?

I. Donne's love poems were written over nearly two decades, beginning around 1595; they were not published in Donne's lifetime but circulated widely in manuscript. The title *Songs and Sonnets* was supplied in the second edition (1635), which grouped the poems by kind, but neither this arrangement nor the more haphazard organization of the first edition (1633) is Donne's own. In Donne's time the term "sonnet" often meant simply "love lyric," and in fact there is only one formal sonnet in this collection. For the poems we present

we follow the 1635 edition, beginning with the extremely popular poem "The Flea."

2. This insect afforded a popular erotic theme for poets all over Europe, deriving from a pseudo-Ovidian medieval poem in which a lover envies the flea for the liberties it takes with his mistress's body.

3. The swelling suggests pregnancy.

4. As in a convent or monastery.

5. By denying me sexual gratification.

Easter Wings¹

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,⁰ *abundance*
 Though foolishly he lost the same,
 Decaying more and more
 Till he became
 5 Most poor:
 With thee
 O let me rise
 As larks, harmoniously,
 And sing this day thy victories:
 10 Then shall the fall further the flight in me.²

My tender age in sorrow did begin:
 And still with sicknesses and shame
 Thou didst so punish sin,
 That I became
 15 Most thin.
 With thee
 Let me combine,
 And feel this day thy victory;
 For, if I imp³ my wing on thine,
 20 Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

Affliction (1)¹

When first thou didst entice to thee my heart,
 I thought the service brave:⁰ *splendid*
 So many joys I writ down for my part,
 Besides what I might have
 5 Out of my stock of natural delights,
 Augmented with thy gracious benefits.

I looked on thy furniture so fine,
 And made it fine to me;
 Thy glorious household stuff did me entwine,
 10 And 'tice⁰ me unto thee. *entice*
 Such stars I counted mine: both heaven and earth
 Paid me my wages in a world of mirth.

What pleasures could I want,⁰ whose king I served, *lack*
 Where joys my fellows were?
 15 Thus argued into hopes, my thoughts reserved
 No place for grief or fear;

1. Another emblem poem whose shape presents the emblem picture; the lines, increasing and decreasing, imitate flight, and also the spiritual experience of falling and rising. Early editions printed the poem with the lines running vertically, making the wing shape more apparent.

2. Refers to the "Fortunate Fall," which brought humankind so great a redeemer.

3. In falconry, to insert feathers in a bird's wing.
1. Herbert sometimes used the same title for several poems, thereby associating them; editors distinguish them by adding numbers.

My mind to ease
 Ry knowing where 'twas, or where not,
80 It whispered, "Where I please."⁹

"Lord," then said I, "on me one breath,
 And let me die before my death!"

"Arise O North, and come thou South wind,
 and blow upon my garden, that the spices
85 thereof may flow out."¹

1650

The Retreat

Happy those early days! when I
 Shined in my angel infancy.
 Before I understood this place
 Appointed for my second race,¹
5 Or taught my soul to fancy aught⁰ *anything*
 But a white, celestial thought;
 When yet I had not walked above
 A mile or two from my first love,
 And looking back, at that short space,
10 Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
 When on some gilded cloud or flower
 My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
 And in those weaker glories spy
 Some shadows of eternity;
15 Before I taught my tongue to wound
 My conscience with a sinful sound,
 Or had the black art to dispense
 A several⁰ sin to every sense, *different*
 But felt through all this fleshly dress
20 Bright shoots of everlastingness.
 O, how I long to travel back,
 And tread again that ancient track!
 That I might once more reach that plain
 Where first I left my glorious train,
25 From whence th' enlightened spirit sees
 That shady city of palm trees.²
 But, ah! my soul with too much stay⁰ *delay*
 Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
 Some men a forward motion love;

9. John 3.8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

1. Vaughan identifies this verse as Canticles (Song of Solomon) 5.17; it is properly 4.16.

1. The poem alludes throughout to the Platonic doctrine of preexistence, in conjunction with

Christ's words (Mark 10.15): "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Comparisons are often made to Wordsworth's Immortality ode.

2. The New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City (for its identification with Jericho, the "city of Palm Trees," Deuteronomy 34.3).

Cavalier friends a nobler version of the good life and a truer kingship. After 1649 he endured years of penury, largely dependent on the largesse of his friend and fellow royalist, Charles Cotton. His remaining poems appeared in 1659 as *Lucasta: Postume Poems*.

FROM LUCASTA

To Lucasta, Going to the Wars

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

1649

The Grasshopper¹

To My Noble Friend, Mr. Charles Cotton

O thou that swing'st upon the waving hair
Of some well-filled oaten beard,⁰ *head of grain*
Drunk every night with a delicious tear
Dropped thee from heav'n, where now th' art reared,

5 The joys of earth and air are thine entire,
That with thy feet and wings dost hop and fly;
And when thy poppy⁰ works thou dost retire *opiate*
To thy carved acorn bed to lie.

Up with the day, the sun thou welcom'st then,
10 Sport'st in the gilt-plats⁰ of his beams, *golden fields*
And all these merry days mak'st merry men,
Thyself, and melancholy streams.²

1. In *Aesop's Fables* the grasshopper lives in improvident, carefree idleness, in contrast with the industrious ant who lays up stores for the winter. The circumstances of the poem are those of the Interregnum, when a winter of Puritanism seemed,

to royalists, to be settling over England and obliterating their mode of life. The grasshopper may also allude to the recently executed king, Charles I. 2. The three objects of "mak'st merry" are "men," "thyself," and "melancholy streams."

But ah, the sickle! golden ears are cropped,
 Ceres and Bacchus³ bid goodnight;
 15 Sharp frosty fingers all your flow'rs have topped,
 And what scythes spared, winds shave off quite.

Poor verdant fool! and now green ice! thy joys,
 Large and as lasting as thy perch of grass,
 Bid us lay in 'gainst winter rain, and poise⁰ *counterbalance*
 20 Their floods with an o'erflowing glass.

Thou best of men and friends! we will create
 A genuine summer in each other's breast;
 And spite of this cold time and frozen fate
 Thaw us a warm seat to our rest.

25 Our sacred hearths shall burn eternally
 As vestal flames;⁴ the North Wind, he
 Shall strike his frost-stretched wings, dissolve, and fly
 This Etna in epitome.⁵

Dropping December shall come weeping in,
 30 Bewail th' usurping of his reign;
 But when in showers of old Greek we begin,
 Shall cry, he hath his crown again!⁶

Night as clear Hesper⁰ shall our tapers whip *the evening star*
 From the light casements where we play,
 35 And the dark hag⁷ from her black mantle strip,
 And stick there everlasting day.

Thus richer than untempted kings are we,
 That asking nothing, nothing need:
 Though lord of all that seas embrace, yet he
 40 That wants⁰ himself is poor indeed. *lacks*

1649

To Althea, from Prison

When Love with unconfined wings
 Hovers within my gates,
 And my divine Althea brings
 To whisper at the grates;
 5 When I lie tangled in her hair
 And fettered to her eye,

3. Goddess of grain and god of wine.

4. The Vestal Virgins, in Rome, were responsible for tending an eternal flame in the Temple of Vesta.

5. Boreas, the north wind, folding up ("striking") his wings, flees from the heat of the volcano within Mount Etna, a figure for the fires of friendship.

6. Greek wine was especially favored in the classical world. "Crown" here has multiple associations: the crown worn by "King Christmas" at the festivities banned by Puritans; and the crown Cavaliers hoped would soon be restored to Charles II.
 7. Hecate, a daughter of Night.

The gods¹ that wanton⁰ in the air
 Know no such liberty.

play

When flowing cups run swiftly round,
 10 With no allaying Thames,²
 Our careless heads with roses bound,
 Our hearts with loyal flames;
 When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
 When healths and drafts go free,
 i5 Fishes that tipple in the deep
 Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets,⁰ I
 With shriller throat shall sing
 The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
 20 And glories of my king;
 When I shall voice aloud how good
 He is, how great should be,
 Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
 Know no such liberty.

caged finches

25 Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Nor iron bars a cage;
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for an hermitage.
 If I have freedom in my love,
 30 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone, that soar above,
 Enjoy such liberty.

1649

Love Made in the First Age.¹ To Chloris

In the nativity of time,
 Chloris, it was not thought a crime
 In direct Hebrew for to woo.²
 Now we make love as all on fire,
 5 Ring retrograde³ our loud desire,
 And court in English backward too.

Thrice happy was that golden age,
 When compliment was construed rage,⁴
 And fine words in the center hid;
 10 When cursed No stained no maid's bliss,

1. Some versions read "birds" instead of "gods."
 2. No mixture of water (as from the river Thames)
 in the wine.

1. The Golden Age, described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

2. Hebrew, supposed to be the original human language, is read from right to left; we have

reversed this.

3. Backwards, in reverse. The term also has musical connotations, perhaps referring here to a pattern of bell ringing.

4. Passion. Compliments in the Golden Age were understood as ardent propositions.

poem "To Penshurst" to create a poem of epiclike scope that incorporates history and the conflicts of contemporary society. It assimilates to the course of providential history the topographical features of the Fairfax estate, the Fairfax family myth of origin, the experiences of the poet-tutor on his progress around the estate, and the activities and projected future of the daughter of the house. In the poem's rich symbolism, biblical events—Eden, the first temptation, the Fall, the wilderness experience of the Israelites—find echoes in the experiences of the Fairfax family, the speaker, the history of the English Reformation, and the wanton destruction of the recent civil wars.

FROM POEMS¹The Coronet²

When for the thorns with which I long, too long,
 With many a piercing wound,
 My Savior's head have crowned,
 I seek with garlands to redress that wrong,
 5 Through every garden, every mead,
 I gather flowers (my fruits are only flowers),
 Dismantling all the fragrant towers⁰ *high headdress*
 That once adorned my shepherdess's head:
 And now, when I have summed up all my store,
 10 Thinking (so I myself deceive)
 So rich a chaplet⁰ thence to weave *wreath*
 As never yet the King of Glory wore,
 Alas! I find the serpent old,³
 That, twining⁰ in his speckled breast, *entwining*
 is About the flowers disguised does fold
 With wreaths of fame and interest.⁴
 Ah, foolish man, that wouldst debase with them,
 And mortal glory, heaven's diadem!
 But thou who only couldst the serpent tame,
 20 Either his slippery knots at once untie,
 And disentangle all his winding snare,
 Or shatter too with him my curious frame,⁰ *elaborate construction*
 And let these wither, so that he may die,
 Though set with skill and chosen out with care;
 25 That they, while thou on both their spoils dost tread,⁵
 May crown thy feet, that could not crown thy head.

1650-52

1681

1. Marvell's lyrics were published posthumously in 1681.

2. A floral wreath, also a garland of poems of praise.

3. Alludes to the serpent that tempted Eve (Gen-

esis 3), traditionally understood to be an instrument for Satan.

4. Self-glorification, self-advancement.

5. See the curse on the serpent (Genesis 3.15), that the seed of Eve will bruise his head.

Each briar, each bramble, when you went away
 Caught fast your clothes, thinking to make you stay;
 Delightful Echo wanted to reply
 To our last words, did now for sorrow die;
 The house cast off each garment that might grace it,
 Putting on dust and cobwebs to deface it.
 All desolation then there did appear,
 When you were going whom they held so dear.
 This last farewell to Cookham here I give,
 When I am dead thy name in this may live,
 Wherein I have performed her noble hest^o *commission*
 Whose virtues lodge in my unworthy breast,
 And ever shall, so long as life remains,
 Tying my life to her by those rich chains.^o *her virtues*

1611

BEN JONSON

1572-1637

In 1616 Ben Jonson published his *Works*, to the derision of those astounded to see mere plays and poems collected under the same title the king gave to his political treatises. Many of Jonson's contemporaries shied away from publication, either because, like Donne, they wrote for small coterie audiences or because, like Shakespeare, they wrote for theater companies that preferred not to let go of the scripts. Jonson knew and admired both Donne and Shakespeare and more than any Jacobean belonged to both of their very different worlds, but in publishing his *Works* he laid claim to an altogether higher literary status. He had risen from very humble beginnings to become England's unofficial poet laureate, with a pension from the king and honorary degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge. If he was not the first professional author in England, he was the first to invest that role with dignity and respectability. His published *Works*, over which he labored with painstaking care, testify to an extraordinary feat of self-transformation.

Jonson's early life was tough and turbulent. The posthumous son of a London clergyman, he was educated at Westminster School under the great antiquarian scholar William Camden. There he developed his love of classical learning, but lacking the resources to continue his education, Jonson was forced to turn to his step-father's trade of bricklaying, a life he "could not endure." He escaped by joining the English forces in Flanders, where, as he later boasted, he killed a man in single combat before the eyes of two armies. Back in London, his attempt to make a living as an actor and playwright almost ended in early disaster. He was imprisoned in 1597 for collaborating with Thomas Nashe on the scandalous play *The Isle of Dogs* (now lost), and shortly after his release he killed one of his fellow actors in a duel. Jonson escaped the gallows by pleading benefit of clergy (a medieval privilege exempting felons who could read Latin from the death penalty). His learning had saved his life, but he emerged from captivity branded on the thumb, and with another mark against him as well. Under the influence of a priest imprisoned with him, he had converted to Catholicism (around the time that John Donne was abandoning that faith). Jonson was now more than ever a marginal figure, distrusted by the society that he satirized brilliantly in his early plays.

Jonson's fortunes improved with the accession of James I, though not at once. In 1603 he was called before the Privy Council to answer charges of "popery and treason" found in his play *Sejanus*. Little more than a year later he was in jail again for his part in the play *Eastward Ho*, which openly mocked the king's Scots accent and propensity for selling knighthoods. Yet Jonson was now on the way to establishing himself at the new court. In 1605 he received the commission to organize the Twelfth Night entertainment; *The Masque of Blackness* was the first of twenty-four masques he would produce for the court, most of them in collaboration with the architect and scene designer Inigo Jones. In the same years that he was writing the masques he produced his greatest works for the public theater. His first successful play, *Every Man in His Humor* (1598), had inaugurated the so-called comedy of humors, which ridicules the eccentricities or passions of the characters (thought to be caused by physiological imbalance). He capitalized on this success with the comedies *Volpone* (1606), *Epicene* (1609), *The Alchemist* (1610), and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614). Jonson preserved the detached, satiric perspective of an outsider, but he was rising in society and making accommodations where necessary. In 1605, when suspicion fell upon him as a Catholic following the exposure of the Gunpowder Plot, he showed his loyalty by agreeing to serve as a spy for the Privy Council. Five years later he would return to the Church of England.

Although he rose to a position of eminent respectability, Jonson seems to have been possessed all his life by a quarrelsome spirit. Much of his best work emerged out of fierce tensions with collaborators and contemporaries. At the turn of the century he became embroiled in the so-called War of the Theaters, in which he satirized and was satirized by his fellow playwrights John Marston and Thomas Dekker. Later, his long partnership with Inigo Jones was marked by ever more bitter rivalry over the relative importance of words and scenery in the masques. Jonson also poured invective on the theater audiences when they failed, in his view, to appreciate his plays. The failure of his play *The New Inn* elicited his "Ode to Himself" (1629), a disgusted farewell to the "loathed stage." Yet even after a stroke in 1629 left him partially paralyzed and confined to his home, Jonson continued to write for the stage, and was at work on a new play when he died in 1637.

In spite of his antagonistic nature, Jonson had a great capacity for friendship. His friends included Shakespeare, Donne, Francis Bacon, and John Selden. In later years he gathered about himself a group of admiring younger men known as the "Sons of Ben," whose numbers included Robert Herrick, Thomas Carew, and Sir John Suckling. He was a fascinating and inexhaustible conversationalist, as recorded by his friend William Drummond of Hawthornden, who carefully noted down Jonson's remarks on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from his fellow poets to his sexual predilections. Jonson also moved easily among the great of the land. His patrons included Lady Mary Wroth and other members of the Sidney and Herbert families. In "To Penshurst," a celebration of Robert Sidney's country estate, Jonson offers an ideal image of a social order in which a virtuous patriarchal governor offers ready hospitality to guests of all stations, from poets to kings.

"To Penshurst," together with Aemilia Lanyer's "Description of Cookham," inaugurated the small genre of the "country-house poem" in England. Jonson tried his hand, usually with success, at a wide range of poetic genres, including epitaph and epigram, love and funeral elegy, verse satire and verse letter, song and ode. More often than not he looked back to classical precedents. From the Roman poets Horace and Martial he derived not only generic models but an ideal vision of the artist and society against which he measured himself and the court he served. In many poems he adopted the persona of a witty, keenly perceptive, and scrupulously honest judge of men and women. The classical values Jonson most admired are enumerated in "Inviting a Friend to Supper," which describes a dinner party characterized by moderation, civility, graciousness, and pleasure that delights without enslaving—all contrasting sharply with the excess and licentiousness that marked the banquets and

entertainments of imperial Rome and Stuart England. Yet the poet who produced this image of moderation was a man of immense appetites, which found expression in his art as well as in his life. His best works seethe with an almost uncontrollable imaginative energy and lust for abundance. Even his profound classical learning manifests this impulse. The notes and references to learned authorities that spill across the margins of his *Works* can be seen as the literary equivalent of food and drink piled high on the poet's table. Years of hardship had taught Jonson to seek his feasts in his imagination, and he could make the most mundane object the basis for flights of high fancy. As he told Drummond, he once "consumed a whole night in lying looking to his great toe, about which he had seen Tartars and Turks, Romans and Carthaginians fight in his imagination." In Drummond's view, Jonson was "oppressed with fantasy." Perhaps it was so—but Jonson's capacity for fantasy also produced a wide variety of plays, masques, and poems, in styles ranging from witty comedy to delicate lyricism.

The Masque of Blackness After James I and Queen Anne ascended the English throne in 1603, they presided over the development of the court masque as political entertainment, idealizing the Stuart court as the embodiment of all perfections. *Blackness* established Jonson and Inigo Jones as the chief makers of court masques for more than two decades. Jonson provided the words and Jones the spectacle; over the years their rivalry grew ever more intense. For the first decade the queen took an active role in planning and performing court masques, which were usually performed only once—most often on Twelfth Night, as in this case, or sometimes for a wedding or other special occasion. *Blackness* also began the tradition of prodigiously expensive masques: the queen's bills for it came to around £5,000 (more than five hundred times what the young Jonson would have made in a year as an apprentice bricklayer). These entertainments were customarily followed by an elaborate feast and all-night dancing (the revels). On this occasion, as on many that followed, the evening was chaotic. The banquet table was overturned by the crush of diners before the meal began; guests were beaten by the palace guards; light-fingered revelers stole jewels, chains, and purses; and sexual liaisons went on in dark corners.

Court masques differed from performances in the public theater in most respects. Essentially an elaborate dance form, the masque was a multimedia event combining songs, speech, richly ornamented costumes and masks, shifting scene panels depicting elaborate architecture and landscapes, and intricate machines in which gods and goddesses descended from the heavens. They were presented to King James, who occupied the Chair of State, which was placed in the ideal viewing position. While the speaking parts were taken by professionals, the dancers were members of the court, including—to the horror of English Puritans—women. In the reign of Charles I, William Prynne lost his ears for attacking masques and comparing the women who danced in them (including the queen) to whores.

On the surface, *Blackness* asserts the cultural superiority of the English over non-European peoples and celebrates the patriarchal power of James, the "Sun King" of Britain, who can turn black skin to white. But in this and other queen's masques a subversive current is evident. Jonson tells us it was "her Majesty's will" that the ladies appear as black African beauties. Their costumes designed by Inigo Jones conjoin exotic beauty and wildness, associating them with the feared and desired "others" discovered (or imagined) by contemporary explorers. The power of the supposed Sun King is undercut by Niger's lengthy praise of black beauty and by the fact that the promised transformation of the ladies' skin is not staged (though they have become white in the sequel, *The Masque of Beauty*, performed three years later). Some viewers found the work unsettling, one deeming the ladies' apparel "too light and courtesan-like" and their black faces and hands "a very loathsome sight."

In many later Jacobean masques the glorification of the monarch seems less conflicted. Jonson developed a kind of prologue known as the antimasque, in which

wicked, disruptive, or rustic characters played by professional actors invade the court, only to be banished by the aristocratic masquers whose dancing transforms the court into a golden world. They then enact the mixture of the ideal and the real as they unmask, revealing themselves as court personages, and proceed to dance the revels with the other members of the court. Caroline court masques, in which Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria regularly danced, tended to be longer, more elaborate, more dialogic, more spectacular, and even more hyperbolic. But early to late, many masques contain features that subtly resist the politics of Stuart absolutism.

The Masque of Blackness

*The Queen's Masques: the first
Of Blackness
Personated at the Court at Whitehall,
on the Twelfth Night, 1605.*

Pliny, Solinus, Ptolemy, and of late Leo the African,¹ remember unto us a river in Ethiopia famous by the name of Niger,² of which the people were called *Nigritae*, now Negroes, and are the blackest nation of the world. This river taketh spring out of a certain lake,³ eastward, and after a long race, falleth into the western ocean. Hence (because it was her Majesty's will to have them blackamoors at first) the invention was derived by me, and presented thus.

First, for the scene, xvas drawn a Landscape⁴ consisting of small woods, and here and there a void place filled with huntings; which falling, an artificial sea was seen to shoot forth, as if it flowed to the land, raised with waves which seemed to move, and in some places the hillow to break,⁵ as imitating that orderly disorder, which is common in nature. In front of this sea were placed six tritons,⁶ in moving and sprightly actions; their upper parts human, save that their hairs were blue, as partaking of the sea color; their desinent⁷ parts fish, mounted above their heads, and all varied in disposition. From their backs were borne out certain light pieces of taffeta, as if carried by the wind, and their music made out of wreathed shells. Behind these, a pair of sea maids, for song, were as conspicuously seated; between which two great sea horses, as big as the life, put forth themselves; the one mounting aloft, and writhing his head from the other, which seemed to sink forwards; so intended for variation, and that the figure behind might come off better. Upon their backs Qceanus⁸ and Niger were advanced.

Oceanus, presented in a human form, the color of his flesh blue, and shadowed with a robe of sea green; his head gray and horned, as he is described by the ancients; his beard of the like mixed color. He was garlanded with algae or sea-grass, and in his hand a trident.

Niger, inform and color of an Ethiop, his hair and rare beard curled, shadowed with a blue and bright mantle; his front, neck, and wrists adorned with pearl; and crowned with an artificial wreath of cane and paper-rush.

These induced the masquers, which were twelve nymphs, negroes, and the daughters of Niger, attended by so many of the Oceaniae,⁹ which were their light-bearers.

1. This long introductory note is Jonson's. Leo wrote the *Description of Africa* (1526); the other three are classical authorities on geography.

2. Some, though not Pliny, identified it as the Nile. "Niger" means "black."

3. Lake Chad.

4. Painted on the front curtain.

5. Effects created by a series of painted cloths

raised and lowered by a machine.

6. Sea gods.

7. Back.

8. The Atlantic Ocean, father of the river Niger. Both ride on the backs of hippocamps ("sea horses"), mythological creatures with horses' heads and sea serpents' tails.

9. Sea nymphs, daughters of Oceanus and Tethys.

The masquers were placed in a great concave shell, like mother of pearl, curiously made to move on those waters, and rise with the billow; the top thereof was stuck with a chevron of lights which, indented to the proportion of the shell, struck a glorious beam upon them as they were seated one above another; so that they were all seen, but in an extravagant order.¹

On sides of the shell did swim six huge sea monsters, varied in their shapes and dispositions, bearing on their backs the twelve torchbearers, who were planted there in several greces,² so as the backs of some were seen, some in purple³ (or side), others in face, and all having their lights burning out of whelks or murex shells.

The attire of the masquers was alike in all, without difference; the colors azure and silver, their hair thick, and curled upright in tresses, like pyramids, but returned on the top with a scroll and antique dressing of feathers, and jewels interlaced with ropes of pearl. And for the front, ear, neck and wrists, the ornament was of the most choice and orient pearl, best setting off from the black.

For the light-bearers, sea green, waved about the skirts with gold and silver; their hair loose and flowing, garlanded with sea grass, and that stuck with branches of coral.

These thus presented, the scene behind seemed a vast sea (and united with this that flowed forth)⁴ from the termination or horizon of which (being the level of the state,⁵ which was placed in the upper end of the hall) was drawn, by the lines of perspective, the whole work, shooting downwards from the eye; which decorum made it more conspicuous, and caught the eye afar off with a wandering beauty. To which was added an obscure and cloudy night piece,⁶ that made the whole set off. So much for the bodily part, which was of Master Inigo Jones his design and act.

By this, one of the tritons, with the two sea maids, began to sing to the others' loud music, their voices being a tenor and two trebles.

SONG

Sound, sound aloud
 The welcome of the orient flood
 Into the west;
 Fair Niger, son to great Oceanus,
 Now honored thus
 With all his beauteous race,
 Who though but black in face,
 Yet are they bright,
 And full of life and light,
 To prove that beauty best
 Which not the color, but the feature
 Assures unto the creature.

OCEANUS Be silent, now the ceremony's done,
 And Niger, say, how comes it, lovely son,
 That thou, the Ethiop's river, so far east,
 Art seen to fall into th'extremest west
 Of me, the king of floods, Oceanus,

1. Spread out (inside the shell).

2. Steps.

3. Profile. "Whelks" (following): mollusks; "murex": a kind of shellfish.

4. The painted backdrop and the wave machine.

5. The king's throne, placed at the ideal viewing position, the vanishing point of the perspective.

6. The upper part of the scenery, through which the moon later descends.

And in mine empire's heart salute me thus?
 My ceaseless current now amazed stands
 To see thy labor through so many lands
 Mix thy fresh billow with my brackish stream,
 And in thy sweetness, stretch thy diademe⁰ *realm, rule*
 To these far distant and unequaled skies,
 This squared circle of celestial bodies.⁷

NIGER Divine Oceanus, 'tis not strange at all
 That, since the immortal souls of creatures mortal
 Mix with their bodies, yet reserve forever
 A power of separation, I should sever
 My fresh streams from thy brackish, like things fixed,
 Though with thy powerful saltness thus far mixed.
 "Virtue though chained to earth, will still live free;
 And hell itself must yield to industry."⁸

OCEANUS But what's the end of thy Herculean labors,
 Extended to these calm and blessed shores?

NIGER To do a kind and careful father's part,
 In satisfying every pensive⁰ heart *anxious*
 Of these my daughters, my most loved birth;
 Who, though they were the first formed dames of earth,⁹
 And in whose sparkling and refulgent⁰ eyes *radiant*
 The glorious sun did still⁰ delight to rise, *always*
 Though he (the best judge, and most formal cause¹
 Of all dames' beauties) in their firm hues draws
 Signs of his fervent'st love, and thereby shows
 That in their black the perfect'st beauty grows,
 Since the fixed color of their curled hair
 (Which is the highest grace of dames most fair)
 No cares, no age can change, or there display
 The fearful tincture of abhorred gray,
 Since Death herself (herself being pale and blue)
 Can never alter their most faithful hue;
 All which are arguments to prove how far
 Their beauties conquer in great beauty's war;
 And more, how near divinity they be,
 That stand from passion or decay so free.
 Yet, since the fabulous voices of some few
 Poor brainsick men, styled poets² here with you,
 Have, with such envy of their graces, sung
 The painted beauties other empires sprung,
 Letting their loose and winged fictions fly
 To infect all climates, yea, our purity;
 As of one Phaeton, that fired the world,³
 And that before his heedless flames were hurled

7. The squared circle is an image of perfection, a hyperbolic compliment to Britain.

8. Alludes to Horace, *Odes* 1.3.36.

9. The Ethiopian civilization was reputed to be the oldest.

1. Aristotle's formal cause produces the form or essence of anything.

2. English Petrarchan poets, whose ideal of beauty involved fair skin, blonde hair, and blue eyes. See, e.g., the sonnets of Sidney and Spenser.

3. Son of Apollo the sun god, whose ill-fated attempt to drive the sun's chariot scorched the earth and, reportedly, turned the skin of the daughters of Niger black.

About the globe, the Ethiops were as fair
 As other dames, now black with black despair,
 And in respect of their complexions changed,
 Are eachwhere, since, for luckless creatures ranged.
 Which when my daughters heard (as women are
 Most jealous of their beauties) fear and care
 Possessed them whole; yea, and believing them,⁴
 They wept such ceaseless tears into my stream
 That it hath thus far overflowed his shore
 To seek them patience; who have since e'ermore
 As the sun riseth, charged his burning throne
 With volleys of revilings, 'cause he shone
 On their scorched cheeks with such intemperate fires,
 And other dames made queens of all desires.
 To frustrate which strange error oft I sought,
 Though most in vain against a settled thought
 As women's are, till they confirmed at length
 By miracle what I wish so much strength
 Of argument resisted; else they feigned:
 For in the lake where their first spring they gained,
 As they sat cooling their soft limbs one night,
 Appeared a face all circumfused with light;
 (And sure they saw't, for Ethiops never dream)⁵
 Wherein they might decipher through the stream
 These words:

That they a land must forthwith seek,
 Whose termination (of the Greek)
 Sounds *-tania*; where bright Sol, that heat
 Their bloods, doth never rise or set,
 But in his journey passeth by,
 And leaves that climate of the sky
 To comfort of a greater light,⁶
 Who forms all beauty with his sight.

In search of this have we three pryncedoms passed
 That speak out *-tania* in their accents last:
 Black Mauritania⁷ first, and secondly
 Swarth Lusitania,⁰ next we did descry⁰
 Rich Aquitania,⁰ and yet cannot find
 The place unto these longing nymphs designed.⁰
 Instruct and aid me, great Oceanus:
 What land is this that now appears to us?
 OCEANUS This land, that lifts into the temperate air
 His snowy cliff, is Albion the fair,
 So called of Neptune's son,⁸ who ruleth here;
 For whose dear guard, myself four thousand year,
 Since old Deucalion's⁹ days, have walked the round

*Portugal / perceive
 southwest France
 appointed*

4. The poets (line 56).

5. Jonson cites Pliny for this saying.

6. The allusion is to James, the "Sun-King" of Britain.

7. Land of the Moors in North Africa.

8. King James, regularly so styled because of Brit-

ain's close relationship to the sea. Albion (previous line): ancient name for England meaning "white land".

9. A Greek analogue to Noah, as the survivor of a great flood.

About his empire, proud to see him crowned
Above my waves.

At this, the moon was discovered in the upper part of the house, triumphant in a silver throne, made in figure of a pyramis.¹ Her garments white and silver, the dressing of her head antique, and crowned with a luminary or sphere of light, which striking on the clouds, and heightened with silver, reflected as natural clouds do by the splendor of the moon. The heaven about her was vaulted with blue silk, and set with stars of silver which had in them their several lights burning. The sudden sight of which made Niger to interrupt Oceanus with this present passion.²

NIGER —O see, our silver star!

Whose pure auspicious light greets us thus far!
Great /Ethiopia, goddess of our shore,³
Since with particular worship we adore
Thy general brightness, let particular grace
Shine on my zealous daughters. Show the place
Which long their longings urged their eyes to see.
Beautify them, which long have deified thee.

AETHIOPIA Niger, be glad; resume thy native cheer.

Thy daughters' labors have their period here,
And so thy errors. I was that bright face
Reflected by the lake, in which thy race
Read mystic lines (which skill Pythagoras⁴
First taught to men by a reverberate⁰ glass).
This blessed isle doth with that-*tania* end
Which there they saw inscribed, and shall extend
Wished satisfaction to their best desires.
Britannia, which the triple world admires,⁵
This isle hath now recovered for her name;
Where reign those beauties that with so much fame
The sacred Muses' sons have honored,
And from bright Hesperus to Eos spread.⁶
With that great name, Britannia, this blest isle
Hath won her ancient dignity and style,⁰
A *world divided from the world*,⁷ and tried
The abstract of it in his general pride.
For were the world, with all his wealth, a ring,
Britannia (whose new name makes all tongues sing)
Might be a diamond worthy to enchase it,
Ruled by a sun, that to this height doth grace it.
Whose beams shine day and night, and are of force
To blanch an Ethiop and revive a corpse.⁸
His light sciential⁰ is and (past mere nature)
Can salve the rude defects of every creature.

reflecting

title, name

endowed with knowledge

1. Pyramid.

2. Instant outburst.

3. Jonson identifies her as the moon, worshipped by the Ethiopians.

4. Mystical Greek philosopher who taught men how to read writing on the moon.

5. The triple realms of heaven, earth, and underworld, admiring the three kingdoms of England,

Scotland, and Wales united under James. James reintroduced the name "Britain" in 1604, to refer to the united island.

6. West to east.

7. Britain as a separate world, divided from Europe by the English Channel.

8. Corpse. Both are proverbial impossibilities.

Call forth thy honored daughters, then,
 And let them 'fore the Britain men
 Indent the land with those pure traces⁹
 They flow with in their native graces.
 Invite them boldly to the shore,
 Their beauties shall be scorched no more;
 This sun is temperate, and refines
 All things on which his radiance shines.

Here the tritons sounded, and they danced on shore, every couple as they advanced severally presenting their fans, in one of which were inscribed their mixed names, in the other a mute hieroglyphic, expressing their mixed qualities.¹ Which manner of symbol I rather chose than imprese,² as well for strangeness, as relishing of antiquity, and more applying to that original doctrine of sculpture which the Egyptians are said first to have brought from the Ethiopians.

	The Names ³	The Symbols
<i>The Queen Countess of Bedford</i>	<i>Euphoris Aglaia</i>	<i>A golden tree, laden with fruit</i>
<i>Lady Herbert Countess of Derby</i>	<i>Diaphane Eucampse</i>	<i>The figure icosahedron⁴ of crystal</i>
<i>Lady Rich Countess of Suffolk</i>	<i>Ocyte Kathare</i>	<i>A pair of naked feet in a river</i>
<i>Lady Bevill Lady Effingham</i>	<i>Notis Ppsychrote</i>	<i>The salamander simple⁰ unadorned</i>
<i>Lady Elizabeth Howard Lady Susan Vere</i>	<i>Glycyte Malacia</i>	<i>A cloud full of rain dropping</i>
<i>Lady Wroth Lady Walsingham</i>	<i>Baryte Periphere</i>	<i>An urn, sphered with wine</i>

The names of the Oceaniae were

<i>Doris</i>	<i>Cydippe</i>	<i>Beroe</i>	<i>Ianthe</i>
<i>Petrae</i>	<i>Glauce</i>	<i>Acaste</i>	<i>Lycoris</i>
<i>Ocyrhoe</i>	<i>Tyche</i>	<i>Clytia</i>	<i>Plexaure</i>

Their own single dance ended, as they were about to make choice of their men, one from the sea was heard to call 'em with this charm, sung by a tenor voice.

SONG

Come away, come away,
 We grow jealous of your stay.
 If you do not stop your ear,

9. Imprint the land with their dancing feet. This is the call for the main masque dances.

1. The women advanced in pairs holding fans to the audience: on one appeared both names; on the other, an allegorical symbol of their conjoined qualities.

2. Emblems with mottoes.

3. The meaning of the pairs' names and symbols, in order: abundance and splendor, fertility symbol; transparent and flexibility, a twenty-sided water symbol; swiftness and spotless, symbol of purity;

moisture and coldness, symbol, the salamander who lives in fire unharmed; sweetness and delicacy, symbol of education; weight and revolving, symbol, the earth's globe. The women are members of Queen Anne's court, two of them notable in literary circles: Donne and Jonson wrote poems about Lucy, countess of Bedford (see Jonson, p. 1430); Lady Mary Wroth wrote poems and a romance (p. 1453), and see Jonson's poem on Wroth, p. 1438.

4. A solid with twenty plane faces.

We shall have more cause to fear
 Sirens of the land, than they⁵
 To doubt⁰ the sirens of the sea. *fear*

Here they danced with their men several measures and corantos.⁶ All which ended, they were again accited⁷ to sea, with a song of two trebles, whose cadences were iterated by a double echo from several parts of the land.

SONG

Daughters of the subtle flood,
 Do not let earth longer entertain you;
 160 1st ECHO Let earth longer entertain you
 2nd ECHO Longer entertain you

Tis to them enough of good
 That you give this little hope to gain you.
 1st ECHO Give this little hope to gain you.
 2nd ECHO Little hope to gain you.

If they love
 You shall quickly see;
 For when to flight you move,
 They'll follow you, the more you flee.
 170 1st ECHO Follow you, the more you flee.
 2nd ECHO The more you flee.

If not, impute it each to other's matter;
 They are but earth—
 1st ECHO But earth,
 2nd ECHO Earth—
 And what you vowed was water.
 1st ECHO And what you vowed was water
 2nd ECHO You vowed was water.

AETHIOPIA Enough, bright nymphs, the night grows old,
 And we are grieved we cannot hold
 You longer light; but comfort take.
 Your father only to the lake
 Shall make return; yourselves, with feasts,
 Must here remain the Ocean's guests.
 Nor shall this veil the sun hath cast
 Above your blood, more summers last.
 For which, you shall observe these rites:
 Thirteen times thrice, on thirteen nights
 (So often as I fill my sphere
 With glorious light, throughout the year)
 You shall, when all things else do sleep
 Save your chaste thoughts, with reverence steep

5. In Greek mythology the sirens lured seafarers to destruction.

6. Slow and fast dances,
 7. Summoned.

Your bodies in that purer brine
 And wholesome dew, called rosmarine;
 195 Then with that soft and gentler foam,
 Of which the ocean yet yields some,
 Whereof bright Venus, beauty's queen,
 Is said to have begotten been,
 You shall your gentler limbs o'er-lave,
 200 And for your pains, perfection have.
 So that, this night, the year gone round,
 You do again salute this ground;⁸
 And in the beams of yond' bright sun
 Your faces dry, and all is done.

At which, in a dance they returned to the sea, where they took their shell, and with this full song, went out.

Now Dian, ^o with her burning face,	<i>the moon</i>
Declines apace:	
By which our waters know	
To ebb, that late ^o did flow.	<i>recently</i>
Back seas, back nymphs, but with a forward grace	
Keep still your reverence to the place,	
And shout with joy of favor you have won,	
In sight of Albion, Neptune's son.	

1605

Volpone This dark satire on human rapacity is set in Venice, but its true target is the city of London, or the city that, Jonson feared, London was about to become. It is a place devoted to commerce and mired in corruption, populated by greedy fools and conniving rascals. Like Shakespeare, Donne, and Thomas More before him, Jonson was deeply disturbed by the rise of a protocapitalist economic order that seemed to emphasize competition and the acquisition of material goods over reciprocal goodwill and mutual obligation. On the other hand, Jonson was also fascinated by the entrepreneurial potential liberated by the new economic order. His protagonists, Volpone and Mosca, may be morally bankrupt, but they are also the most intelligent, adaptable characters in the play. Moreover, although Jonson was a strong advocate for the educational and morally improving potential of the theater—his theater in particular—the talents of his main characters are essentially those of theatrical performance and improvisation. In fact, as Jonson was well aware, he was himself deeply implicated in what he satirized. The lowborn, unscrupulous, brilliantly inventive Mosca, a flattering aristocratic hanger-on who aspires to high status himself, at times seems to be the author's evil twin. Perhaps his very resemblances to Jonson required Jonson so energetically to repudiate his motives and punish his presumption at the end of the play.

Volpone combines elements from several sources. The classical satirist Lucian provided the theme of the rich old man playing with moneygrubbing scoundrels who

8. Jonson had probably already planned the *Masque of Beauty*, in which the women's black skins are turned white, but intervening masques prevented its production until 1608.

hope to inherit his wealth. Roman comedy provided prototypes for some characters: the wily parasite, the unscrupulous lawyer, the avaricious dotard, the voluble woman. Some scenes, such as that in which Volpone disguised as a mountebank woos Celia at her window, are drawn from the Italian *commedia dell'arte*. Jonson draws as well upon ancient and medieval beast fables: stories about the crafty antihero Reynard the fox, as well as a fable about a fox that plays dead in order to catch greedy birds. But *Volpone* is much more than the sum of its borrowings. It is a work of enormous comic energy, full of black humor, which holds its loathsome characters up for appalled but gleeful inspection.

Volpone was first performed by the King's Men (Shakespeare's company) in the spring of 1606, at the Globe Theater. (See the illustration, in the appendices to this volume, of a contemporary popular theater constructed on similar lines.) The Globe seated some two thousand persons—aristocrats and prosperous citizens in the tiered galleries, lower-class "groundlings" in the pit in the front of the stage. The play was also performed to great applause before learned audiences at Oxford and Cambridge, to whom Jonson dedicated the printed edition of *Volpone*. It was first published in quarto form in 1607 and republished with a few changes in the 1616 *Works*, the basis for the present text.

Volpone

or
The Fox

THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY¹

VOLPONE, a <i>magnifico</i> ^o	Venetian	nobleman
MOSCA, his <i>parasite</i> ^o		
NANO, a <i>dwarf</i>		
ANDROGYNO, a <i>hermaphrodite</i>		
CASTRONE, an <i>eunuch</i>		
VOLTORE, an <i>advocate</i> ^o		lawyer
CORBACCIO, an <i>old gentleman</i>		
BONARIO, a <i>young gentleman</i> [CORBACCIO's son]		
CORVINO, a <i>merchant</i>		
CELIA, <i>the merchant's wife</i>		
<i>Servitore</i> , a SERVANT [to CORVINO]		
[Sir] POLITIC <i>Would-be</i> , a <i>knight</i>		
<i>Fine Madame</i> [LADY] WOULD-BE, <i>the knight's wife</i>		
[Two] WOMEN [<i>servants to</i> LADY WOULD-BE]		
PEREGRINE, a <i>gentleman traveler</i>		
AVOCATORI, ^o <i>four magistrates</i>	public	prosecutors
<i>Notario</i> [NOTARY], <i>the register</i> ^o		court recorder
COMMENDATORI, ^o <i>officers</i>		court deputies
[<i>Other court officials, litter-bearers</i>]		
<i>Mercatori</i> , <i>three</i> MERCHANTS		
<i>Grege</i> [<i>members of a</i> CROWD]		

The Persons of the Play

1. Many of the characters have allegorically apt names. "Volpone" is defined in John Florio's 1598 Italian-English dictionary as "an old fox . . . a sneaking, lurking, wily deceiver." "Mosca" means "fly." "Nano" means "dwarf." "Voltore" means "vulture."

"Corbaccio" means "raven." "Bonario" is derived from *bono*, meaning "good." "Corvino" means "crow." "Celia" means "heaven." "Politic" means "worldly-wise" or "temporizing." "Peregrine" means "traveler" or "small hawk." In many performances the symbolism of the animal names is reinforced by costuming.

SCENE. Venice

The Argument¹

V olpone, childless, rich, feigns sick, despairs, ⁰	<i>is despaired of</i>
O ffers his state ⁰ to hopes of several heirs,	<i>estate</i>
L ies languishing; his parasite receives	
P resents of all, assures, deludes, then weaves	
O ther cross-plots, which ope themselves, ⁰ are told. ⁰	<i>unfold/exposed</i>
N ew tricks for safety are sought; they thrive—when, bold,	
E ach tempts th'other again, and all are sold. ⁰	<i>betrayed</i>

Prologue

Now, luck yet send us, and a little wit	
Will serve to make our play hit	
According to the palates of the season. ⁰	<i>fashionable taste</i>
Here is rhyme not empty of reason.	
This we were bid to credit ⁰ from our poet,	<i>asked to believe</i>
Whose true scope, ⁰ if you would know it,	<i>aim</i>
In all his poems still hath been this measure,	
To mix profit with your pleasure; ¹	
And not as some—whose throats their envy failing ⁰ —	<i>not fully expressing</i>
Cry hoarsely, "all he writes is railing," ⁰	<i>personal insult</i>
And when his plays come forth think they can flout them	
With saying he was a year about them. ²	
To these there needs no lie ⁰ but this his creature, ⁰	<i>denial/creation</i>
Which was, two months since, no feature; ⁰	<i>nonexistent</i>
And, though he dares give them ⁰ five lives to mend it,	<i>his detractors</i>
'Tis known five weeks fully penned it	
From his own hand, without a coadjutor, ⁰	<i>collaborator</i>
Novice, journeyman, ⁰ or tutor.	<i>apprentice</i>
Yet thus much I can give you, as a token	
Of his play's worth: no eggs are broken,	
Nor quaking custards with fierce teeth affrighted, ³	
Wherewith your rout ⁰ are so delighted;	<i>mob</i>
Nor hailes he in a gull, ⁰ old ends ⁰ reciting,	<i>fool/saws</i>
To stop gaps in his loose writing,	
With such a deal of monstrous and forced action	
As might make Bethlehem a faction. ⁴	
Nor made he his play for jests stol'n from each table, ⁰	<i>plagiarized jokes</i>
But makes jests to fit his fable,	
And so presents quick ⁰ comedy, refined	<i>lively</i>
As best critics have designed.	
The laws of time, place, persons he observeth; ⁵	

The Argument

1. Plot summary. Jonson imitates the acrostic "arguments" of the Latin playwright Plautus.

Prologue

1. Rule, as laid down by Horace, that the poet ought both to please his audience and teach it something useful.

2. Thomas Dekker ridiculed the slow pace at which Jonson produced new work in *Satiromastix, or The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet* (1602), and John

Marston did the same in *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605).

3. The satirist John Marston, in a line Jonson had previously ridiculed, boasted: "let custards [cowards] quake, my rage must freely run." Huge custards were a staple feature of city feasts.

4. As might win approval from lunatics (who inhabited Bethlehem hospital in London).

5. He observes the unities of time and place and the consistency of character.

From no needful rule he swerveth.
 All gall and copperas⁶ from his ink he draineth;
 Only a little salt⁷ remaineth
 Wherewith he'll rub your cheeks, till, red with laughter,
 They shall look fresh a week after.

Act 1

SCENE 1. VOLPONE'S house.

[Enter] VOLPONE [and] MOSCA.¹

VOLPONE Good morning to the day, and, next, my gold!

Open the shrine that I may see my saint.

[Mosca reveals the treasure.]²

Hail the world's soul,^o and mine! More glad than is *animating principle*

The teeming earth to see the longed-for sun
 Peep through the horns of the celestial Ram³

Am I to view thy splendor darkening his,^o *outshining the sun's*

That, lying here amongst my other hoards,
 Show'st like a flame by night, or like the day

Struck out of chaos, when all darkness fled
 Unto the center.^o O thou son of Sol⁴— *center of the earth*

But brighter than thy father—let me kiss
 With adoration thee and every relic
 Of sacred treasure in this blessed room.

Well did wise poets by thy glorious name
 Title that age which they would have the best,⁵

Thou being the best of things, and far transcending
 All style of joy in children, parents, friends,
 Or any other waking dream on earth.

Thy looks when they to Venus did ascribe,
 They should have giv'n her twenty thousand Cupids,⁶ *our love of thee*

Such are thy beauties and our loves.^o Dear saint,
 Riches, the dumb god, that giv'st all men tongues,
 That canst do naught and yet mak'st men do all things,
 The price of souls; even hell, with thee to boot,^o *in the bargain*

Is made worth heaven! Thou art virtue, fame,
 Honor, and all things else. Who^o can get thee, *Whoever*
 He shall be noble, valiant, honest, wise—

MOSCA And what he will, sir. Riches are in fortune

A greater good than wisdom is in nature.

VOLPONE True, my beloved Mosca. Yet I glory

More in the cunning purchase^o of my wealth *acquisition*
 Than in the glad possession, since I gain

6. Ferrrous sulfate, like gall a corrosive substance used in ink.

7. A traditional metaphor for satiric wit.

1.1

1. Alternatively, the play may begin with Volpone rising from his onstage bed.

2. The treasure is probably hidden behind a curtain in the alcove at the back of the stage.

3. Aries, the constellation ascendant in early spring.

4. Alchemists believed gold to have issued from the

sun ("Sol"). Volpone blasphemously applies this metaphor to God's creation of the world in Genesis.

5. The mythical Golden Age (when, ironically, gold was not yet in use) was influentially described by Ovid in *The Metamorphoses*.

6. In Latin poetry, Venus was commonly described as *aurea*, meaning "golden." The throng of Cupids Volpone imagines around her suggests gold's irresistible, and for him highly sexual, appeal.

No common way. I use no trade, no venture;⁰ *risky commerce*
 I wound no earth with plowshares; fat no beasts
 To feed the shambles;⁰ have no mills for iron, *slaughterhouse*
 Oil, corn, or men, to grind 'em into powder;
 I blow no subtle⁷ glass; expose no ships
 To threat'nings of the furrow-faced sea;
 I turn⁰ no moneys in the public bank, *exchange*
 Nor usure⁰ private— *lend money at interest*

MOSCA No, sir, nor devour
 Soft prodigals. You shall ha' some will swallow
 A melting⁰ heir as glibly as your Dutch *financially dwindling*
 Will pills⁰ of butter, and ne'er purge for't;⁸ *morsels*
 Tear forth the fathers of poor families
 Out of their beds and coffin them alive
 In some kind, clasping⁰ prison, where their bones *manacling*
 May be forthcoming⁰ when the flesh is rotten. *protruding; carted away*
 But your sweet nature doth abhor these courses;
 You loathe the widow's or the orphan's tears
 Should wash your pavements, or their piteous cries
 Ring in your roofs and beat the air for vengeance.

VOLPONE Right, Mosca, I do loathe it.

MOSCA And besides, sir,
 You are not like the thresher that doth stand
 With a huge flail, watching a heap of corn,
 And, hungry, dares not taste the smallest grain,
 But feeds on mallows⁰ and such bitter herbs; *unpalatable weeds*
 Nor like the merchant who hath filled his vaults
 With Romagna and rich Candian wines,
 Yet drinks the lees of Lombard's vinegar.⁹
 You will not lie in straw whilst moths and worms
 Feed on your sumptuous hangings⁰ and soft beds. *bed curtains*
 You know the use of riches, and dare give now
 From that bright heap to me, your poor observer,⁰ *folllmver*
 Or to your dwarf, or your hermaphrodite,
 Your eunuch, or what other household⁰ trifle *menial*
 Your pleasure allows maint'nance⁰—

VOLPONE [*giving money*] Hold thee, Mosca, *You're pleased to support*
 Take of my hand; thou strik'st on truth in all,
 And they are envious term⁰ thee parasite.
 Call forth my dwarf, my eunuch, and my fool,
 And let 'em make me sport. [*Exit MOSCA.*] *ivho term*

What should I do
 But cocker up my genius,⁰ and live free *indulge my appetite*
 To all delights my fortune calls me to?
 I have no wife, no parent, child, ally
 To give my substance to, but whom I make⁰ *he whom I designate*
 Must be my heir, and this makes men observe⁰ me. *flatter*

7. (1) Delicate; (2) artful. (Venice was and is renowned for its art glass.)

8. Never use a remedy for gastric distress. (The Dutch were notoriously fond of butter.)

9. Romagna and rich Candian wines are expensive wines from Greece and Crete. The lees of Lombard's vinegar are the dregs of cheap Italian wine.

This draws new clients⁰ daily to my house, *petitioners*
 Women and men of every sex and age,
 That bring me presents, send me plate,⁰ coin, jewels, *gold or silver plate*
 With hope that when I die—which they expect
 Each greedy minute—it shall then return
 Tenfold upon them; whilst some, covetous
 Above the rest, seek to engross⁰ me whole, *swallow; monopolize*
 And counterwork,⁰ the one unto the other, *compete; undermine*
 Contend in gifts as they would seem in love;
 All which I suffer, playing with their hopes,
 And am content to coin 'em into profit,
 And look upon their kindness and take more,
 And look on that, still bearing them in hand,⁰ *leading them on*
 Letting the cherry knock against their lips,
 And draw it by their mouths and back again.¹—
 How now!

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] MOSCA, NANO, ANDROGYNO, [and] CASTRONE.

NANO Now, room for fresh gamesters,⁰ who do will you to know *entertainers*
 They do bring you neither play nor university show,¹
 And therefore do entreat you that whatsoever they rehearse
 May not fare a whit the worse for the false pace of the verse.²
 If you wonder at this, you will wonder more ere we pass,
 For know here [indicating ANDROGYNO] is enclosed the soul of
 Pythagoras,³
 That juggler⁰ divine, as hereafter shall follow; *trickster*
 Which soul (fast and loose, sir) came first from Apollo,
 And was breathed into Aethalides,⁴ Mercurius his⁰ son, *Mercury's*
 Where it had the gift to remember all that ever was done.
 From thence it fled forth and made quick transmigration
 To goldilocked Euphorbus,⁵ who was killed in good fashion
 At the siege of old Troy, by the cuckold of Sparta.⁶
 Hermotimus⁷ was next—I find it in my *charta*⁰— *record*
 To whom it did pass, where no sooner it was missing
 But with one Pyrrhus of Delos⁰ it learned to go a-fishing; *another philosopher*
 And thence did it enter the Sophist of Greece.⁰ *Pythagoras*
 From Pythagore she went into a beautiful piece⁰ *slut*
 Hight⁰ Aspasia the meretrix,⁸ and the next toss of her *named*

]. In the game of chop-cherry, one player dangles a cherry in front of another, who tries to bite it.

1.2

1. University students performed classical plays or their imitations to hone their abilities in Latin oratory.

2. The four-stress meter of the skit Nano, Androgyno, and Castrone here perform was common in medieval drama but old-fashioned by Jonson's time.

3. Ancient Greek philosopher, mathematician, and music theorist who believed in the transmigration of souls and in the mystical properties of geometrical relationships (especially triangles [triangles = trigon]). His followers observed strict dietary restrictions and took five-year vows of silence. His thigh was rumored to be made of gold. Jonson adapts much of the career

of Pythagoras's soul from *The Dialogue of the Cobbler and the Cock*, by the Greek satirist Lucian.

4. The herald of the Greek Argonauts and son of the god Mercury, who inherited his father's divine gift of memory. Thus, unlike other souls, which forget their previous lives, Aethalides' soul can recall its transmigrations.

5. Trojan youth who injured Achilles' beloved friend, Patroclus, in the *Iliad*.

6. Menelaus, the Spartan king whose wife, Helen, was stolen by the Trojan prince Paris.

7. Greek philosopher of about 500 B.C.E.

8. Whore. Aspasia was the mistress of the Athenian statesman Pericles.

103

My muse now happy, lay thyself to rest,
 Sleep in the quiet of a faithful love,
 Write you no more, but let these fancies move
 Some other hearts, wake not to new unrest.
 5 But if you study, be those thoughts addressed
 To truth, which shall eternal goodness prove;
 Enjoying of true joy, the most, and best,
 The endless gain which never will remove.
 Leave the discourse of Venus and her son
 10 To young beginners,⁹ and their brains inspire
 With stories of great love, and from that fire
 Get heat to write the fortunes they have won.
 And thus leave off, what's past shows you can love,
 Now let your constancy your honor prove.¹

1621

9. In Neoplatonic love philosophy, "beginners" in love are attracted to physical beauty and sensory delights, while more advanced lovers love virtue and spiritual beauty. Writing love sonnets is traditionally the business of young lovers.

1. In a symbolic episode in the *Urania*, Pamphilia embodies the virtue of Constancy; she accepts the keys to the Throne of Love, "at which instant Constancy vanished as metamorphosing herself into her breast" (1.1.141).

JOHN WEBSTER

1580?—1625?

John Webster's fame rests on two remarkable tragedies, both set in Boman Catholic Italy and both evoking the common Jacobean stereotype of that land as a place of sophisticated corruption. Both have at their center bold and brave heroines who choose for themselves in love and refuse to submit to male authority. *The White Devil*, first performed in 1608, is based on events that took place in Italy in 1581—85; in this play Vittoria Corombona boldly defies a courtroom full of corrupt magistrates who convict her of adultery and murder. *The Duchess of Malfi*, first performed in 1614 and published in 1623, is based on an Italian novella. In this play, the spirited ruler of Malfi secretly marries her steward for love, defying her brothers, a duke and a cardinal, who demand that she remain a widow. Their dark motives include greed for her fortune, overweening pride in their noble blood, and incestuous desire. The play weds sublime poetry and gothic horror in the devious machinations set in motion against the duchess by her brothers' melancholy spy Bosola, in the macabre mental and physical torments to which they subject her, in the desperate lunatic ravings of the duke after having her strangled, and in the final scenes in which the stage is littered with the slaughtered bodies of all the principal characters. Webster's portrayal of the independent spirit and courage of the duchess invites comparison with the royal heroine of Elizabeth Cary's tragedy *Mariam*, written at about the same date.

Webster was the son of a London tailor and a member of the Merchant Tailors' Company, but we know little else about him. He wrote a tragicomedy, *The Devil's*

Law Case (1621), and collaborated on several plays with contemporary playwrights, among them Thomas Dekker in *Westward Ho* (1607) and John Marston in *The Malcontent* (1604). Of all the Stuart dramatists, Webster is the one who comes closest to Shakespeare in his power of tragic utterance and his flashes of poetic brilliance.

The Duchess of Malfi

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

FERDINAND, <i>Duke of Calabria</i>	DOCTOR
THE CARDINAL, <i>his brother</i>	<i>Several</i> MADMEN, PILGRIMS,
ANTONIO BOLOGNA, <i>steward of</i>	EXECUTIONERS, OFFICERS,
<i>the household to the</i> DUCHESS	ATTENDANTS &C.
DELIO, <i>his friend</i>	THE DUCHESS OF MALFI, <i>sister</i>
DANIEL DE BOSOLA, <i>gentleman</i>	<i>of</i> FERDINAND <i>and the</i>
<i>of the horse to the</i> DUCHESS	CARDINAL
CASTRUCCIO, <i>an old lord</i>	CARIOLA, <i>her woman</i>
MARQUIS OF PESCARA	JULIA, CASTRUCCIO'S <i>wife, and the</i>
COUNT MALATESTA	CARDINAL'S <i>mistress</i>
SILVIO, <i>a lord, of Milan</i>	OLD LADY, LADIES, <i>and</i>
RODERIGO I <i>gentlemen attending</i>	CHILDREN
GRISOLAN <i>on the</i> DUCHESS	

SCENE. *Amalfi, Rome, Loreto, and Milan*

Act 1

SCENE 1. *Amalfi; a hall in the* DUCHESS'S *palace.*

[*Enter* ANTONIO *and* DELIO.]

DELIO You are welcome to your country, dear Antonio;
You have been long in France, and you return
A very formal Frenchman in your habit.¹
How do you like the French court?

ANTONIO I admire it:
5 In seeking to reduce both state and people
To a fixed order, their judicious king
Begins at home; quits⁰ first his royal palace *rids*
Of flattering sycophants, of dissolute
And infamous persons—which he sweetly terms
10 His Master's masterpiece, the work of heaven²—
Considering duly that a prince's court
Is like a common fountain, whence should flow
Pure silver drops in general, but if't chance
Some cursed example poison't near the head,
15 Death and diseases through the whole land spread.
And what is't makes this blessed government
But a most provident council, who dare freely

i.i

1. An absolute Frenchman in your dress.

2. Alludes to Christ ridding the temple of moneychangers (John 2.13—22).

Inform him the corruption of the times?
 Though some o' th' court hold it presumption
 To instruct princes what they ought to do,
 It is a noble duty to inform them
 What they ought to foresee.—Here comes Bosola,
 The only court-gall;³ yet I observe his railing
 Is not for simple love of piety.
 Indeed, he rails at those things which he wants;
 Would be as lecherous, covetous, or proud,
 Bloody, or envious, as any man,
 If he had means to be so. Here's the cardinal.

[Enter the CARDINAL and BOSOLA.]

BOSOLA I do haunt you still.

CARDINAL So.

BOSOLA I have done you better service than to be slighted thus. Miserable
 age, where the only reward of doing well is the doing of it!

CARDINAL You enforce your merit too much.

BOSOLA I fell into the galleys⁴ in your service; where, for two years
 together, I wore two towels instead of a shirt, with a knot on the shoul-
 der, after the fashion of a Roman mantle. Slighted thus? I will thrive some
 way. Blackbirds fatten best in hard weather; why not I in these dog days?⁵

CARDINAL Would you could become honest!

BOSOLA With all your divinity do but direct me the way to it. I have known
 many travel far for it, and yet return as arrant knaves as they went forth,
 because they carried themselves always along with them. [Exit CARDINAL.]
 Are you gone? Some fellows, they say, are possessed with the devil, but
 this great fellow were able to possess the greatest devil, and make him
 worse.

ANTONIO He hath denied thee some suit?

BOSOLA He and his brother are like plum trees that grow crooked over
 standing pools;⁶ they are rich and o'erladen with fruit, but none but crows,
 pies,⁷ and caterpillars feed on them. Could I be one of their flattering
 panders, I would hang on their ears like a horse leech till I were full and
 then drop off. I pray, leave me. Who would rely upon these miserable
 dependencies, in expectation to be advanced tomorrow? What creature
 ever fed worse than hoping Tantalus?⁸ Nor ever died any man more fear-
 fully than he that hoped for a pardon. There are rewards for
 hawks and dogs when they have done us service; but for a soldier that haz-
 ards his limbs in a battle, nothing but a kind of geometry is his last
 supportation.⁹

DELIO Geometry?

BOSOLA Aye, to hang in a fair pair of slings, take his latter swing in the
 world upon an honorable pair of crutches, from hospital to hospital.¹ Fare
 ye well, sir: and yet do not you scorn us; for places in the court are but like

3. One who frets the court, but with the overtone of a disease, a blight.

4. Forced labor at the oar of a Mediterranean galley was the last penalty this side of torture and execution, and was likely to be a death sentence.

5. The hot, sultry season of midsummer.

6. Stagnant waters.

7. Magpies, birds of evil omen like blackbirds.

8. Tantalus, in classical mythology, was "tantalized" by the constant presence of delectable food and drink that, though he was desperate, he could never reach.

9. Support.

1. In the 17th century, a place of last resort for the indigent dying.

beds in the hospital, where this man's head lies at that man's foot, and so lower and lower. [Exit.]

DELIO I knew this fellow seven years² in the galleys
For a notorious murder; and 'twas thought
The cardinal suborned it. He was released
By the French general, Gaston de Foix,
When he recovered Naples.³

ANTONIO 'Tis great pity
He should be thus neglected; I have heard
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy
Will poison all his goodness; for, I'll tell you,
If too immoderate sleep be truly said
To be an inward rust unto the soul,
It then doth follow want of action
Breeds all black malcontents; and their close rearing,
Like moths in cloth, do hurt for want of wearing.⁴

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[Enter CASTRUCCIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN.]

DELIO The presence⁰ gins to fill: you promised me audience hall
To make me the partaker of the natures
Of some of your great courtiers.

ANTONIO The Lord Cardinal's,
And other strangers' that are now in court?
I shall. Here comes the great Calabrian duke.

[Enter FERDINAND and ATTENDANTS.]

FERDINAND Who took the ring oftenest?¹

SILVIO Antonio Bologna, my lord.

FERDINAND Our sister duchess' great master of her household? Give him the
jewel. When shall we leave this sportive action, and fall to action
indeed?

CASTRUCCIO Methinks, my lord, you should not desire to go to war in person.

FERDINAND Now for some gravity. Why, my lord?

CASTRUCCIO It is fitting a soldier arise to be a prince, but not necessary
a prince descend to be a captain.

FERDINAND No?

CASTRUCCIO No, my lord, he were far better do it by a deputy.

FERDINAND Why should he not as well sleep or eat by a deputy? This might
take idle, offensive, and base office from him, whereas the other
deprives him of honor.

CASTRUCCIO Believe my experience, that realm is never long in quiet where
the ruler is a soldier.

FERDINAND Thou told'st me thy wife could not endure fighting.

CASTRUCCIO True, my lord.

2. In speaking to the cardinal himself (line 34), Bosola had mentioned only two years.

3. Gaston de Foix, French commander, was active in Italy during the early 1500s; hence, the time of the tragedy is about a hundred years before Webster wrote. Ferdinand and the cardinal are Spaniards established in Italy, like the infamous house of Borgia.

4. I.e., enforced idleness breeds discontent, as moths breed in unused clothing.

1.2

1. A common game around court, used in training for tournaments, involved catching a hanging ring on the tip of a lance. But some of Webster's audience would have caught a sexual analogy.

FERDINAND And of a jest she broke of a captain she met full of wounds.
I have forgot it.

CASTRUCCIO She told him, my lord, he was a pitiful fellow, to lie, like the children of Israel, all in tents.²

FERDINAND Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the chirurgeons³ o' the city; for although gallants should quarrel and had drawn their weapons and were ready to go to it, yet her persuasions would make them put up.

CASTRUCCIO That she would, my lord.

FERDINAND How do you like my Spanish gennet?⁴

RODERIGO He is all fire.

FERDINAND I am of Pliny's opinion, I think he was begot by the wind; he runs as if he were ballasted⁵ with quicksilver.

SILVIO True, my lord, he reels from the tilt often.⁶

RODERIGO *and* GRISOLAN Ha, ha, ha!

FERDINAND Why do you laugh? Methinks, you that are courtiers should be my touchwood, take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh but when I laugh, were the subject never so witty.

CASTRUCCIO True, my lord, I myself have heard a very good jest, and have scorned to seem to have so silly a wit as to understand it.

FERDINAND But I can laugh at your fool, my lord.

CASTRUCCIO He cannot speak, you know, but he makes faces: my lady cannot abide him.

FERDINAND No?

CASTRUCCIO Nor endure to be in merry company, for she says too much laughing and too much company fills her too full of the wrinkle.

FERDINAND I would, then, have a mathematical instrument made for her face, that she might not laugh out of compass.⁷ I shall shortly visit you at Milan, Lord Silvio.

SILVIO Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

FERDINAND You are a good horseman, Antonio. You have excellent riders in France. What do you think of good horsemanship?

ANTONIO Nobly, my lord: as out of the Grecian horse issued many famous princes,⁸ so out of brave horsemanship arise the first sparks of growing resolution that raise the mind to noble action.

FERDINAND You have bespoke it worthily.

SILVIO Your brother, the Lord Cardinal, and sister duchess.
[Reenter CARDINAL, *with* DUCHESS, CARIOLA, *and* JULIA.]

CARDINAL Are the galleys come about?

GRISOLAN They are, my lord.

FERDINAND Here's the Lord Silvio, is come to take his leave.

DELIO *[Aside to* ANTONIO] Now, sir, your promise. What's that Cardinal? I mean his temper? They say he's a brave fellow,
Will play⁹ his five thousand crowns at tennis, dance,
Court ladies, and one that hath fought single combats.

ANTONIO Some such flashes superficially hang on him for form; but observe

2. Lint bandages were called "tents."

3. Surgeons.

4. Sometimes "jennet": a small Spanish horse of Arabian stock.

5. Ballasted. Pliny in his *Natural History* tells about some Spanish horses generated by a swift wind (8.67).

6. Veers away from the target, undesirable in a war horse.

7. Excessively; with a pun on the draftsman's compass.

8. The Trojan horse, in which the Greek warriors hid, to overrun Troy.

9. Wager. "Brave": fine; ostentatious.

- his inward character: he is a melancholy churchman; the spring in his face is nothing but the engendering of toads; where he is jealous of any man, he lays worse plots for them than ever was imposed on Hercules,¹ for
- 70 he strews in his way flatterers, panders, intelligencers,² atheists, and a thousand such political monsters. He should have been Pope; but instead of coming to it by the primitive decency of the church, he did bestow bribes so largely and so impudently as if he would have carried it away without heaven's knowledge. Some good he hath done—
- 75 DELIO YOU have given too much of him. What's his brother?
ANTONIO The duke there? A most perverse and turbulent nature.
What appears in him mirth is merely outside;
If he laugh heartily, it is to laugh
All honesty out of fashion.
- DELIO Twins?
- 80 ANTONIO In quality.
He speaks with others' tongues, and hears men's suits
With others' ears; will seem to sleep o' th' bench
Only to entrap offenders in their answers;
Dooms men to death by information;⁰ *testimony of spies*
Rewards by hearsay.⁰ *random report*
- 85 DELIO Then the law to him
Is like a foul black cobweb to a spider:
He makes of it his dwelling and a prison
To entangle those shall feed him.
- ANTONIO Most true:
He ne'er pays debts unless they be shrewd turns,⁰ *hurtful acts*
- 90 And those he will confess that he doth owe.
Last, for his brother there, the Cardinal,
They that do flatter him most say oracles
Hang at his lips; and verily I believe them,
For the devil speaks in them.
- 95 But for their sister, the right noble duchess,
You never fixed your eye on three fair medals
Cast in one figure, of so different temper.
For her discourse, it is so full of rapture,
You only will begin then to be sorry
- 100 When she doth end her speech, and wish, in wonder,
She held it less vainglory⁰ to talk much, *excessive pride*
Than your penance to hear her: whilst she speaks,
She throws upon a man so sweet a look,
That it were able to raise one to a galliard⁰ *gay and lively dance*
- 105 That lay in a dead palsy, and to dote
On that sweet countenance; but in that look
There speaketh so divine a continence
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
Her days are practiced in such noble virtue
- 110 That sure her nights, nay, more, her very sleeps,
Are more in heaven than other ladies' shrifts.⁰ *confessions*

1. Hercules' uncle, King Eurystheus, sent him on twelve suicide missions to get rid of him, but Her-

cules performed all these "labors" successfully,
2. Spies, "political" schemers.

Let all sweet ladies break their flattering glasses,⁰ *mirrors*
 And dress themselves in her.

DELIO Fie, Antonio,
 You play the wire-drawer³ with her commendations.

ANTONIO I'll case⁰ the picture up only thus much; *frame*
 All her particular worth grows to this sum:
 She stains⁰ the time past, lights the time to come. *darkens*

CARDINAL YOU must attend my lady in the gallery,
 Some half an hour hence.

ANTONIO I shall. *[Exeunt ANTONIO and DELIO.]*

FERDINAND Sister, I have a suit to you.

DUCHESS To me, sir?

FERDINAND A gentleman here, Daniel de Bosola,
 One that was in the galleys—

DUCHESS Yes, I know him.

FERDINAND A worthy fellow he is. Pray, let me entreat for
 The provisorship of your horse.⁴

DUCHESS Your knowledge of him
 Commends him and prefers him.

FERDINAND Call him hither. *[Exit ATTENDANT.]*
 We are now upon⁰ parting. Good Lord Silvio, *at the point of*
 Do us commend to all our noble friends
 At the leaguer.⁰ *camp*

SILVIO Sir, I shall.

DUCHESS YOU are for Milan?

SILVIO I am.

DUCHESS Bring the caroches. We'll bring you down to the haven.'
[Exeunt all but FERDINAND and the CARDINAL.]

CARDINAL Be sure you entertain⁰ that Bosola *hire*
 For your intelligence:⁰ I would not be seen in't; *spy*
 And therefore many times I have slighted him
 When he did court our furtherance, as this morning.

FERDINAND Antonio, the great master of her household,
 Had been far fitter.

CARDINAL You are deceived in him:
 His nature is too honest for such business.
 He comes: I'll leave you. *[Exit.]*
[Reenter BOSOLA.]

BOSOLA I was lured to you.

FERDINAND My brother here the cardinal could never
 Abide you.

BOSOLA Never since he was in my debt.

FERDINAND Maybe some oblique character⁰ in your face *crooked feature*
 Made him suspect you.

BOSOLA Doth he study physiognomy?
 There's no more credit to be given to th' face
 Than to a sick man's urine, which some call
 The physician's whore, because she cozens⁰ him. *tricks*

3. Draw out her praises excessively.

of your horse.

4. Let me beg (for him) the position of supervisor

5. Harbor. "Caroches": carriages.

He did suspect me wrongfully.

FERDINAND For that
You must give great men leave to take their times.
Distrust doth cause us seldom be deceived:
You see, the oft shaking of the cedar tree
Fastens it more at root.

BOSOLA Yet, take heed;
For to suspect a friend unworthily
Instructs him the next⁰ way to suspect you, *nearest*
And prompts him to deceive you.

FERDINAND [*giving him money*] There's gold.

BOSOLA SO:
What follows? Never rained such showers as these
Without thunderbolts i' th' tail of them.
Whose throat must I cut?

FERDINAND Your inclination to shed blood rides post⁰ *hurries*
Before my occasion to use you. I give you that
To live i' th' court here, and observe the duchess;
To note all the particulars of her 'havior,
What suitors do solicit her for marriage,
And whom she best affects. She's a young widow:
I would not have her marry again.

BOSOLA NO, sir?

FERDINAND Do not you ask the reason, but be satisfied
I say I would not.

BOSOLA It seems you would create me
One of your familiars.⁰ *diabolical s-pirits*

FERDINAND Familiar? What's that?

BOSOLA Why, a very quaint invisible devil in flesh,
An intelligencer.⁰ *spy*

FERDINAND Such a land of thriving thing
I would wish thee, and ere long thou may'st arrive
At a higher place by't.

BOSOLA Take your devils,
Which hell calls angels;⁵ these cursed gifts would make
You a corrupter, me an impudent traitor;
And should I take these, they'd take me to hell.

FERDINAND Sir, I'll take nothing from you that I have given:
There is a place that I procured for you
This morning, the provisorship o' th' horse;
Have you heard on't?

BOSOLA NO.

FERDINAND Tis yours. Is't not worth thanks?

BOSOLA I would have you curse yourself now, that your bounty,
Which makes men truly noble, e'er should make me
A villain. Oh, that to avoid ingratitude
For the good deed you have done me, I must do
All the ill man can invent! Thus the devil
Candies all sins o'er; and what heaven terms vile,

6. Gold coins, marked with the image of the archangel Michael.

That names he complimentary.⁰

gracious

FERDINAND

Be yourself;
Keep your old garb of melancholy; 'twill express
You envy those that stand above your reach,
Yet strive not to come near 'em: this will gain
Access to private lodgings, where yourself
May, like a politic dormouse—

BOSOLA

As I have seen some
Feed in a lord's dish, half asleep, not seeming
To listen to any talk; and yet these rogues
Have cut his throat in a dream. What's my place?
The provisorship o' th' horse? Say, then, my corruption
Grew out of horse dung. I am your creature.

FERDINAND

Away!

BOSOLA

Let good men, for good deeds, covet good fame,
Since place and riches oft are bribes of shame:
Sometimes the devil doth preach.

[Exit.]

SCENE 3. *The scene continues.*

[Enter DUCHESS, CARDINAL, and CARIOLA.]

CARDINAL

We are to part from you, and your own discretion
Must now be your director.

FERDINAND

You are a widow:
You know already what man is; and therefore
Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence—

CARDINAL

NO, nor any thing without the addition, honor,
Sway your high blood.

FERDINAND

Marry! They are most luxurious⁰
Will wed twice.

lecherous

CARDINAL

Oh, fie!

FERDINAND

Their livers are more spotted
Than Laban's sheep.¹

DUCHESS

Diamonds are of most value,
They say, that have passed through most jewelers' hands.

FERDINAND

Whores by that rule are precious.

DUCHESS

Will you hear me?
I'll never marry.

CARDINAL

So most widows say;
But commonly that motion⁰ lasts no longer
Than the turning of an hourglass; the funeral sermon
And it end both together.

impulse

FERDINAND

Now hear me:
You live in a rank pasture, here, i' th' court;
There is a kind of honeydew² that's deadly;
'Twill poison your fame⁰ look to't; be not cunning;
For they whose faces do belie their hearts

reputation

1.3

1. Dividing his flock with Jacob, Laban took the speckled sheep (Genesis 30.31—33); the liver as seat of the passions was thought to be diseased

when discolored.

2. A sweet, sticky substance left on plants by aphids.

up to the writing that was above, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him; but he was asked by the men that looked over the top of the gate, Whence came you? and what would you have? He answered, I have eat and drank in the presence of the King, and he has taught in our streets. Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the King; so he fumbled in his bosom for one, and found none. Then said they, Have you none? But the man answered never a word. So they told the King, but he would not come down to see him, but commanded the two Shining Ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the City, to go out and take Ignorance, and bind him hand and foot, and have him away. Then they took him up, and carried him through the air, to the door that I saw in the side of the hill, and put him in there. Then I saw that there was a way to hell, even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction. So I awoke, and behold it was a dream.

1 6 7 8

JOHN LOCKE

1632-1704

John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) is "a history-book," according to Laurence Sterne, "of what passes in a man's own mind." Like Montaigne's essays, it aims to explore the human mind in general by closely watching one particular mind. When Locke analyzed his ideas, the ways they were acquired and put together, he found they were clear when they were based on direct experience and adequate when they were clear. Usually, it appeared, problems occurred when basic ideas were blurred or confused or did not refer to anything determinate. Thus a critical analysis of the ideas in an individual mind could lead straight to a rule about adequate ideas in general and the sort of subject where adequate ideas were possible. On the basis of such a limitation, individuals might reach rational agreement with one another and so set up an area of natural law, within which a common rule of understanding was available.

Locke's new "way of ideas" strikes a humble, antidogmatic note, but readers quickly perceived its far-reaching implications. By basing knowledge on the ideas immediately "before the mind," Locke comports with and helps codify the movement of his times away from the authority of traditions of medieval, scholastic philosophy. His approach also alarmed some divines who argued that the foundation of human life—the mysteries of faith—could never be reduced to clear, distinct ideas. Locke indirectly accepts the Christian scriptures in the *Essay* in the midst of his famous critique of "enthusiasm," the belief in private revelation, but his main impulse is to restrain rather than to encourage religious speculations. (His fullest theological work, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1695, argues that scriptural revelation is necessary for right-thinking people but not incompatible with ordinary reasonable beliefs gathered from personal experience and history.) The *Essay* also contains an unsettling discussion of personal identity (in the chapter "Of Identity and Diversity" added to the second edition in 1694). Locke argues that a person's sense of selfhood derives not from the "identity of soul" but rather from "consciousness of present and past actions": I am myself now because I remember my past, not because a unique substance ("me") underlies everything I experience. This account drew critical responses from numerous distinguished thinkers throughout the eighteenth century, notably Bishop Joseph Butler (1692-1752).

of this world than the world that was before it, while they lay obscure in the chaos of preordination and night of their forebeings. And if any have been so happy as truly to understand Christian annihilation, ecstasy, exolution,¹ liquefaction, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, gustation of God, and ingression into the divine shadow, they have already had an handsome anticipation of heaven; the glory of the world is surely over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

To "subsist in lasting monuments, to live in their productions, to exist in their names and predicament of chimeras,² was large satisfaction unto old expectations, and made one part of their Elysiums.³ But all this is nothing in the metaphysics of true belief. To live indeed is to be again ourselves, which being not only an hope but an evidence in noble believers, 'tis all one to lie in St. Innocent's churchyard, as in the sands of Egypt:⁴ ready to be anything, in the ecstasy of being ever, and as content with six foot as the *moles* of Adrianus.⁵

—*Tabesne cadavera solvat,
An rogos, haud refert.*

LUCAN

1658

1. The loosening or freeing of the spirit.
2. In the condition of phantasms.
3. The pagan afterworld.
4. In Paris, where bodies soon decompose, contrasted with the desert, where they last a long time.
5. Adrian's (Hadrian's) tomb, now Castel San

Angelo in Rome, the type of a magnificent mausoleum. The Latin tag following is translated, "By the swift funeral pyre or slow decay / (No matter which) the bodies pass away" (Lucan, *Pharsalia* 7.809-10).

THOMAS HOBBS

1588-1679

The English civil war and its aftermath raised fundamental questions about the nature and legitimacy of state power. In 1651 Thomas Hobbes attempted to answer those questions in his ambitious masterwork of political theory, *Leviathan*. A gifted mathematician, Hobbes believed in working rigorously from clearly defined first principles to conclusions, so he grounded his political vision upon a comprehensive philosophy of nature and of knowledge. Hobbes held that everything in the universe is composed only of matter; spirit does not exist. All knowledge is gained through sensory impressions, which are nothing but matter in motion. What we call the self is, for Hobbes, simply a tissue of sensory impressions—clear and immediate in the presence of the objects that evoke them, vague and less vivid in their absence. As a result, an iron determinism of cause and effect governs everything in the universe, including human action.

Human beings, Hobbes thought, seek self-preservation as a primary goal, and power as a means to secure that goal. His politics spring directly from these premises. Because all humans are roughly equal, physically and mentally, they possess equal hopes of attaining goods, as well as equal fears of danger from others. In the state of nature, before the foundation of some sovereign power to keep them all in awe,

idea is present in it, or should be present in it, when a man gives a name to it. I say "should be"; because it is not everyone, nor perhaps anyone, who is so careful of his language as to use no word till he views in his mind the precise determined idea which he resolves to make it the sign of. The want of this is the cause of no small obscurity and confusion in men's thoughts and discourses.

I know there are not words enough in any language to answer all the variety of ideas that enter into men's discourses and reasonings. But this hinders not but that when anyone uses any term, he may have in his mind a determined idea which he makes it the sign of, and to which he should keep it steadily annexed during that present discourse. Where he does not or cannot do this, he in vain pretends to clear or distinct ideas: it is plain his are not so; and therefore there can be expected nothing but obscurity and confusion, where such terms are made use of which have not such a precise determination.

Upon this ground I have thought "determined ideas" a way of speaking less liable to mistake than "clear and distinct"; and where men have got such determined ideas of all that they reason, inquire, or argue about, they will find a great part of their doubts and disputes at an end; the greatest part of the questions and controversies that perplex mankind depending on the doubtful and uncertain use of words, or (which is the same) indetermined ideas, which they are made to stand for. I have made choice of these terms to signify, 1. Some immediate object of the mind, which it perceives and has before it, distinct from the sound it uses as a sign of it. 2. That this idea, thus determined, i.e., which the mind has in itself, and knows and sees there, be determined without any change to that name, and that name determined to that precise idea. If men had such determined ideas in their inquiries and discourses, they would both discern how far their own inquiries and discourses went, and avoid the greatest part of the disputes and wranglings they have with others.

s & s

1690, 1700

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

1642-1727

Isaac Newton was the posthumous son of a Lincolnshire farmer. As a boy, he invented machines; as an undergraduate, he made major discoveries in optics and mathematics; and in 1667—at twenty-five—he was elected a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Two years later his teacher, Isaac Barrow, resigned the Lucasian Chair of Mathematics in his favor. By then, in secret, Newton had already begun to rethink the universe. His mind worked incessantly, at the highest level of insight, both theoretical and experimental. He designed the first reflecting telescope and explained why the sky looks blue; contemporaneously with Leibniz, he invented calculus; he revolutionized the study of mechanics and physics with three basic laws of motion; and as everyone knows, he discovered the universal law of gravity. Although Newton's *Principia* (*Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, 1687) made possible the

is, the rational parts of matter, which are the parts of my mind; which creation was more easily and suddenly effected, than the conquests of the two famous monarchs of the world, Alexander and Caesar:² neither have I made such disturbances, and caused so many dissolutions of particulars, otherwise named deaths, as they did; for I have destroyed but some few men in a little boat, which died through the extremity of cold, and that by the hand of justice, which was necessitated to punish their crime of stealing away a young and beautiful lady.³ And in the formation of those worlds, I take more delight and glory, than ever Alexander or Caesar did in conquering this terrestrial world; and though I have made my Blazing World, a peaceable world, allowing it but one religion, one language, and one government; yet could I make another world, as full of factions, divisions, and wars, as this is of peace and tranquility; and the rational figures of my mind might express as much courage to fight, as Hector and Achilles had; and be as wise as Nestor, as eloquent as Ulysses, and as beautiful as Helen.⁴ But I esteeming peace before war, wit before policy,⁵ honesty before beauty; instead of the figures of Alexander, Caesar, Hector, Achilles, Nestor, Ulysses, Helen, etc. chose rather the figure of honest Margaret Newcastle, which now I would not change for all this terrestrial world; and if any should like the world I have made, and be willing to be my subjects, they may imagine themselves such, and they are such, I mean, in their minds, fancies, or imaginations; but if they cannot endure to be subjects, they may create worlds of their own, and govern themselves as they please: but yet let them have a care, not to prove unjust usurpers, and to rob me of mine; for concerning the Philosophical World, I am empress of it myself; and as for the Blazing World, it having an empress already, who rules it with great wisdom and conduct, which empress is my dear platonic friend; I shall never prove so unjust, treacherous, and unworthy to her, as to disturb her government, much less to depose her from her imperial throne, for the sake of any other; but rather choose to create another world for another friend.

1666, 1668

2. Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar were both famed as conquerors of much of the world known to them.

3. A reference to the romancelike incident with which *The Blazing World* begins, the abduction of a young woman by a party of adventurers whose boat is blown in a tempest to the North Pole, where they perish (except for the woman, who enters into

the Blazing World).

4. Hector the Trojan and Achilles the Greek are the principal heroes of Homer's *Iliad*; Nestor, wise adviser to the Greeks; Ulysses, hero of Homer's *Odyssey*, Helen, the one whose beauty caused the Trojan War, as it prompted the Trojan Paris to steal her away from her Greek husband, Menelaus.

5. Intelligence before cunning.

JOHN MILTON

1608-1674

As a young man, John Milton proclaimed himself the future author of a great English epic. He promised a poem devoted to the glory of the nation, centering on the deeds of King Arthur or some other ancient hero. When Milton finally published his epic thirty years later, readers found instead a poem about the Fall of Satan and humankind, set in Heaven, Hell, and the Garden of Eden, in which traditional heroism is denigrated and England not once mentioned. What lay between the youthful promise and the eventual fulfillment was a career marked by private tragedy and public controversy.

In his poems and prose tracts Milton often explores or alludes to crises in his own life: worries about fleeting time, the choice of a vocation and early death, painful disappointment in marriage, and the catastrophe of blindness, manifesting in this the heightened seventeenth-century concern with the self. At the same time, no other major English poet has been so deeply involved in the great questions and political crises of his times. His works inscribe and help construct some basic Western institutions, concepts, and attitudes that were taking on modern form in his lifetime: companionate marriage, the new science and the new astronomy, freedom of the press, religious liberty and toleration, republicanism, and more. It is scarcely possible to treat Milton's career separately from the history of England in his lifetime, not only because he was an active participant in affairs of church and state, but also because when he signed himself, as he often did, "John Milton, Englishman," he was presenting himself as England's prophetic bard, the spokesman for the nation as a whole even when he found himself in a minority of one.

As well, no English poet before Milton fashioned himself quite so self-consciously as an author. The young Milton deliberately set out to follow the steps of the ideal poetic career—beginning with pastoral (the mode prominent in several of his early English poems) and ending with epic. His models for this progression were Virgil and Spenser: he called the latter "a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas." In this approach to his vocation he stood at the opposite end of the spectrum from such Cavalier contemporaries as John Suckling and Richard Lovelace, who turned to verse with an air of studied carelessness. Milton resembles Spenser especially in his constant use of myth and archetype and also in his readiness to juxtapose biblical and classical stories. He is everywhere concerned with the conventions of genre, yet he infused every genre he used with new energy, transforming it for later practitioners. The Western literary and intellectual heritage impinged on his writing as immediately and directly as the circumstances of his own life, but he continually reconceived the ideas, literary forms, and values of this heritage to make them relevant to himself and to his age.

Milton's family was bourgeois, cultured, and staunchly Protestant. His father was a scrivener—a combination of solicitor, investment adviser, and moneylender—as well as an amateur composer with some reputation in musical circles. Milton had a younger brother, Christopher, who practiced law, and an elder sister, Anne. At age seventeen he wrote a funeral elegy for the death of Anne's infant daughter and later educated her two sons, Edward and John (Edward wrote his biography). Milton had private tutors at home and also attended one of the finest schools in the land, St. Paul's. At school he began a long and close friendship with Charles Diodati, with whom he exchanged Latin poems and letters over several years, and for whose death in 1638 he wrote a moving Latin elegy. Milton was deeply grateful to his father for his excellent early education, especially in languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew and its dialects, Italian, and French: later he learned Spanish and Dutch).

In 1625 Milton entered Christ's College, Cambridge. He was briefly suspended during his freshman year over some dispute with his tutor, but he graduated in 1629 and was made Master of Arts three years later. As his surviving student orations indicate, he was profoundly disappointed in his university education, reviling the scholastic logic and Latin rhetorical exercises that still formed its core as "futile and barren controversies and wordy disputes" that "stupify and benumb the mind." He went to university with the serious intention of taking orders in the Church of England—the obvious vocation for a young man of his scholarly and religious bent—but became increasingly disenchanted with the lack of reformation in the church under Archbishop William Laud, and in the hindsight of 1642 he proclaimed himself "church-outed by the prelates." No doubt his change of direction was also linked to the fastidious contempt he expressed for the ignorant and clownish clergymen-in-the-making who were his fellow students at Cambridge: "They thought themselves gallant men, and I thought them fools." Those students retaliated by dubbing Milton "the Lady of Christ's College."

Above all, Milton came to believe more and more strongly that he was destined to

serve his language, his country, and his God as a poet. He began by writing occasional poetry in Latin, the usual language for collegiate poets and for poets who sought a European audience. Milton wrote some of the century's best Latin poems, but as early as 1628 he announced to a university audience his determination to glorify England and the English language in poetry. In his first major English poem (at age twenty-one), the hymn "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," Milton already portrayed himself as a prophetic bard. This poem is very different from Richard Crashaw's Nativity hymn, with its Spenserian echoes, its allusion to Roman Catholic and Laudian "idolatry" in the long passage on the expulsion of the pagan gods, and its stunning moves from the Creation to Doomsday, from the manger at Bethlehem to the cosmos, and from the shepherd's chatter to the music of the spheres. Two or three years later, probably, Milton wrote the companion poems "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," achieving a stylistic tour de force by creating from the same meter (octosyllabic couplets) entirely different sound qualities, rhythmic effects, and moods. These poems celebrate, respectively, Mirth and Melancholy, defining them by their ancestry, lifestyles, associates, landscapes, activities, music, and literature. In 1634, at the invitation of his musician friend Henry Lawes, he wrote the masque called *Comus*, in which the villain is portrayed as a refined, seductive, and dissolute Cavalier, and which challenges the absolutist politics of court masques like Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* or Thomas Carew's *Coelum Britannicum* by locating true virtue and good pleasure in the households of the country aristocracy rather than at court.

After university, as part of his preparation for a poetic career, Milton undertook a six-year program of self-directed reading in ancient and modern theology, philosophy, history, science, politics, and literature. He was profoundly grateful to his father for sparing him the grubby business of making money and also for financing these years of private study, followed by a fifteen-month "grand tour" of France, Italy, and Switzerland. In 1638 Milton contributed the pastoral elegy "Lycidas" to a Cambridge volume lamenting the untimely death of a college contemporary. This greatest of English funeral elegies explores Milton's deep anxieties about poetry as a vocation, confronts the terrors of mortality in language of astonishing resonance and power, and incorporates a furious apocalyptic diatribe on the corrupt Church of England clergy. Nonetheless, while he was in Italy he exchanged verses and learned compliments with various Catholic intellectuals and men of letters, some of whom became his friends. Milton could always maintain friendships and family relationships across ideological divides. In 1645 his English and Latin poems were published together in a two-part volume. *Poems of Mr. Iohn Milton.*

Upon his return to England, Milton opened a school and was soon involved in Presbyterian efforts to depose the bishops and reform church liturgy, writing five "antiprelatical tracts" denouncing and satirizing bishops. These were the first in a series of political interventions Milton produced over the next twenty years, characterized by remarkable courage and independence of thought. He wrote successively on church government, divorce, education, freedom of the press, regicide, and republicanism. From the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642 until his death, Milton allied himself with the Puritan cause, but his religious opinions developed throughout his life, from relative orthodoxy in his youth to ever more heretical positions in his later years. And while his family belonged to the class that benefited most directly from Europe's first bourgeois revolution, his brother, Christopher, fought on the royalist side. The Milton brothers, like most of their contemporaries, did not see these wars as a confrontation of class interests, but as a conflict between radically differing theories of government and, above all, religion.

Some of Milton's treatises were prompted by personal concerns or crises. He interrupted his polemical tract, *The Reason of Church Government Urged Against Prelaty* (1642), to devote several pages to a discussion of his poetic vocation and the great works he hoped to produce in the future. His tracts about divorce, which can hardly have seemed the most pressing of issues in the strife-torn years 1643–45, were motivated by his personal experience of a disastrous marriage. Aged thirty-three, inexpe-

rienced with women, and idealistic about marriage as in essence a union of minds and spirits, he married a young woman of seventeen, Mary Powell, who returned to her royalist family just a few months after the marriage. In response, Milton wrote several tracts vigorously advocating divorce on the grounds of incompatibility and with the right to remarry—a position almost unheard of at the time and one that required a boldly antiliteral reading of the Gospels. The fact that these tracts could not be licensed and were roundly denounced in Parliament, from pulpits, and in print prompted him to write *Areopagitica* (1644), an impassioned defense of a free press and the free commerce in ideas against a Parliament determined to restore effective censorship. He saw these personal issues—reformed poetry, domestic liberty achieved through needful divorce, and a free press—as vital to the creation of a reformed English culture.

In 1649, just after Charles I was executed, Milton published *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (go to page 1748 and to Norton Literature Online for extracts from the *Tenure*), which defends the revolution and the regicide and was of considerable importance in developing a "contract theory" of government based on the inalienable sovereignty of the people—a version of contract very different from that of Thomas Hobbes. Milton was appointed Latin Secretary to the Commonwealth government (1649–53) and to Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate (1654–58), which meant that he wrote the official letters—mostly in Latin—to foreign governments and heads of state. He also wrote polemical defenses of the new government: *Eikonoklastes* (1649), to counter the powerful emotional effect of *Eikon Basilike*, supposedly written by the king just before his death (an excerpt is included on Norton Literature Online), and two Latin *Defenses* upholding the regicide and the new republic to European audiences.

During these years Milton suffered a series of agonizing tragedies. Mary Powell returned to him in 1645 but died in childbirth in 1652, leaving four children; the only son, John, died a few months later. That same year Milton became totally blind; he thought his boyhood habit of reading until midnight had weakened his eyesight and that writing his first *Defense* to answer the famous French scholar Claudius Salmasius had destroyed it. Milton married again in 1656, apparently happily, but his new wife, Katherine Woodcock, was dead two years later, along with their infant daughter. Katherine is probably the subject of his sonnet "Methought I Saw My Late Espoused Saint," a moving dream vision poignant with the sense of loss—both of sight and of love. Milton had little time for poetry in these years, but his few sonnets revolutionized the genre, overlaying the Petrarchan metrical structure with an urgent rhetorical voice and using the small sonnet form, hitherto confined mainly to matters of love, for new and grand subjects: praises of Cromwell and other statesmen mixed with admonition and political advice; a prophetic denunciation calling down God's vengeance for Protestants massacred in Piedmont; and an emotion-filled account of his continuing struggle to come to terms with his blindness as part of God's providence.

Cromwell's death in 1658 led to mounting chaos and a growing belief that a restored Stuart monarchy was inevitable. Milton held out against that tide. His several tracts of 1659–60 developed radical arguments for broad toleration, church disestablishment, and republican government. And just as he was among the first to attack the power of the bishops, so he was virtually the last defender of the "Good Old Cause" of the Revolution; the second edition of his *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* appeared in late April 1660, scarcely two weeks before the Restoration, when the monarchy was restored. For several months after that event, Milton was in hiding, his life in danger. Friends, especially the poet Andrew Marvell, managed to secure his pardon and later his release from a brief imprisonment. He lived out his last years in reduced circumstances, plagued by ever more serious attacks of gout but grateful for the domestic comforts provided by his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, whom he married in 1663 and who survived him.

In such conditions, dismayed by the defeat of his political and religious cause, totally blind and often ill, threatened by the horrific plague of 1665 and the great fire

of 1666, and entirely dependent on amanuenses and friends to transcribe his dictation, he completed his great epic poem. *Paradise Lost* (1667/74) radically reconceives the epic genre and epic heroism, choosing as protagonists a domestic couple rather than martial heroes and degrading the military glory celebrated in epic tradition in favor of "the better fortitude / Of patience and heroic martyrdom." It offers a sweeping imaginative vision of Hell, Chaos, and Heaven; prelapsarian life in Eden; the power of the devil's political rhetoric; the psychology of Satan, Adam, and Eve; and the high drama of the Fall and its aftermath.

In his final years, Milton published works on grammar and logic chiefly written during his days as a schoolmaster, a history of Britain (1670) from the earliest times to the Norman Conquest, and a treatise urging toleration for Puritan dissenters (1673). He also continued work on his *Christian Doctrine*, a Latin treatise that reveals how far he had moved from the orthodoxies of his day. The work denies the Trinity (making the Son and the Holy Spirit much inferior to God the Father), insists upon free will against Calvinist predestination, and privileges the inspiration of the Spirit even above the Scriptures and the Ten Commandments. Such radical and heterodox positions could not be made public in his lifetime, certainly not in the repressive conditions of the Restoration, and Milton's *Christian Doctrine* was subsequently lost to view for over 150 years.

In 1671 Milton published two poems that resonated with the harsh repression and the moral and political challenges all Puritan dissenters faced after the Restoration. *Paradise Regained*, a brief epic in four books, treats Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness as an intellectual struggle through which the hero comes to understand both himself and his mission and through which he defeats Satan by renouncing the whole panoply of false or faulty versions of the good life and of God's kingdom. *Samson Agonistes*, a classical tragedy, is the more harrowing for the resemblances between its tragic hero and its author. The deeply flawed, pain-wracked, blind, and defeated Samson struggles, in dialogues with his visitors, to gain self-knowledge, discovering at last a desperate way to triumph over his captors and offer his people a chance to regain their freedom. (The tragedy in its entirety is available on Norton Literature Online.) In these last poems Milton sought to educate his readers in moral and political wisdom and virtue. Only through such inner transformation, Milton now firmly believed, would men and women come to value—and so perhaps reclaim—the intellectual, religious, and political freedom he so vigorously promoted in his prose and poetry.

FROM POEMS

On the Morning of Christ's Nativity¹

1

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the son of Heaven's eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;

1. This ode was written on Christmas] 629, a few weeks after Milton's twenty-first birthday. He placed it first in the 1645 edition of his poems, claiming in it his vocation as inspired poet. The poem often looks back to Spenser: the first four stanzas are an adaptation of the Spenserian stanza;

there are several Spenserian archaisms (]- prefixes) and some Spenser-like onomatopoeia (lines 156, 172). Comparison with Crashaw's Nativity poem (p. 1645) will highlight some important differences between Roman Catholic and Puritan aesthetics in this period.

5 For so the holy sages once did sing,
 That he our deadly forfeit² should release,
 And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

2

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,⁰ *unable to be endured*
 And that far-beaming blaze of majesty
 io Wherewith he wont⁰ at Heaven's high council-table *was accustomed*
 To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,³
 He laid aside; and here with us to be,
 Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
 And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

3

15 Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
 Afford a present to the infant God?
 Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
 To welcome him to this his new abode,
 Now while the heaven by the sun's team untrod⁴
 20 Hath took no print of the approaching light,
 And all the spangled host⁰ keep watch in squadrons bright? *angels*

4

See how from far upon the eastern road
 The star-led wizards⁵ haste with odors sweet:
 O run, prevent⁰ them with thy humble ode, *anticipate*
 25 And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
 Have thou the honor first thy Lord to greet,
 And join thy voice unto the angel choir,
 From out His secret altar touched with hallowed fire.⁶

The Hymn

1

It was the winter wild
 30 While the Heaven-born child
 All meanly wrapped in the rude manger lies;
 Nature in awe to him
 Had doffed her gaudy trim⁷
 With her great Master so to sympathize;
 35 It was no season then for her
 To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

2. The sentence of death consequent on the Fall. "Holy sages": for example, the prophet Isaiah (chaps. 9 and 40) and Job (chap. 19) were thought to have foretold Christ as Messiah.

3. The Trinity: Father, Son (incarnate in Christ), and Holy Ghost.

4. In classical myth, the sun (Phoebus Apollo)

drove across heaven in a chariot drawn by horses.

5. The Magi who followed the star of Bethlehem to find and adore the infant Christ.

6. Isaiah's lips were touched by a burning coal from the altar, purifying him and confirming him as a prophet (Isaiah 6.7).

7. Put off her garments of leaves and flowers.

Paradise Lost The setting of Milton's great epic encompasses Heaven, Hell, primordial Chaos, and the planet earth. It features battles among immortal spirits, voyages through space, and lakes of fire. Yet its protagonists are a married couple living in a garden, and its climax consists in the eating of a piece of fruit. *Paradise Lost* is ultimately about the human condition, the Fall that caused "all our woe," and the promise and means of restoration. It is also about knowing and choosing, about free will. In the opening passages of Books 1, 3, 7, and 9, Milton highlights the choices and difficulties he faced in creating his poem. His central characters—Satan, Beelzebub, Abdiel, Adam, and Eve—are confronted with hard choices under the pressure of powerful desires and sometimes devious temptations. Milton's readers, too, are continually challenged to choose and to reconsider their most basic assumptions about freedom, heroism, work, pleasure, language, nature, and love. The great themes of *Paradise Lost* are intimately linked to the political questions at stake in the English Revolution and the Restoration, but the connection is by no means simple or straightforward. This is a poem in which Satan leads a revolution against an absolute monarch and in which questions of tyranny, servitude, and liberty are debated in a parliament in Hell. Milton's readers are hereby challenged to rethink these topics and, like Abdiel debating with Satan in Books 5 and 6, to make crucial distinctions between God as monarch and earthly kings.

In Milton's time, the conventions of epic poetry followed a familiar recipe. The action was to begin in *medias res* (in the middle of things), following the poet's statement of his theme and invocation of his Muse. The reader could expect grand battles and love affairs, supernatural intervention, a descent into the underworld, catalogues of warriors, and epic similes. Milton had absorbed the epic tradition in its entirety, and his poem abounds with echoes of Homer and Virgil, the fifteenth-century Italians Tasso and Ariosto, and the English Spenser. But in *Paradise Lost* he at once heightens epic conventions and values and utterly transforms them. This is the epic to end all epics. Milton gives us the first and greatest of all wars (between God and Satan) and the first and greatest of love affairs (between Adam and Eve). His theme is the destiny of the entire human race, caught up in the temptation and Fall of our first "grand parents."

Milton challenges his readers in *Paradise Lost*, at once fulfilling and defying all of our expectations. Nothing in the epic tradition or in biblical interpretation can prepare us for the Satan who hurtles into view in Book 1, with his awesome energy and defiance, incredible fortitude, and, above all, magnificent rhetoric. For some readers, including Blake and Shelley, Satan is the true hero of the poem. But Milton is engaged in a radical reevaluation of epic values, and Satan's version of heroism must be contrasted with those of the loyal Abdiel and the Son of God. Moreover, the poem's truly epic action takes place not on the battlefield but in the moral and domestic arena. Milton's Adam and Eve are not conventional epic heroes, but neither are they the conventional Adam and Eve. Their state of innocence is not childlike, tranquil, and free of sexual desire. Instead, the first couple enjoy sex, experience tension and passion, make mistakes of judgment, and grow in knowledge. Their task is to prune what is unruly in their own natures as they prune the vegetation in their garden, for both have the capacity to grow wild. Their relationship exhibits gender hierarchy, but Milton's early readers may have been surprised by the fullness and complexity of Eve's character and the centrality of her role, not only in the Fall but in the promised restoration.

We expect in epics a grand style, and Milton's style engulfs us from the outset with its energy and power, as those rushing, enjambed, blank-verse lines propel us along with only a few pauses for line endings or grammar (there is only one full stop in the first twenty-six lines). The elevated diction and complex syntax, the sonorities and patternings make a magnificent music. But that music is an entire orchestra of tones, including the high political rhetoric of Satan in Books 1 and 2, the evocative sensuousness of the descriptions of Eden, the delicacy of Eve's love lyric to Adam in Book 4, the relatively plain speech of God in Book 3, and the speech rhythms of Adam

and Eve's marital quarrel in Book 9. This majestic achievement depends on the poet's rejection of heroic couplets, the norm for epic and tragedy in the Restoration, vigorously defended by Dryden but denounced by Milton in his note on "The Verse." The choice of verse form was, like so many other things in Milton's life, in part a question of politics. Milton's terms associate the "troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming" with Restoration monarchy and the repression of dissidents and present his use of unrhymed blank verse as a recovery of "ancient liberty."

The first edition (1667) presented *Paradise Lost* in ten books; the second (1674) recast it into twelve books, after the Virgilian model, splitting the original Books 7 and 10. We present the twelve-book epic in its entirety, to allow readers to experience the impact of the whole.

PARADISE LOST

SECOND EDITION (1674)

The Verse

The measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter¹ and lame meter; graced indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets,² carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause therefore some both Italian³ and Spanish poets of prime note have rejected rhyme both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers,⁴ fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rhyme so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming.

Book 1

*The Argument*¹

This first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed: then touches

1. Perhaps the bawdy content of the Latin songs composed by goliardic poets of the Middle Ages; they learned rhyme from medieval hymns.

2. Notably, Dryden. See his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, p. 2125.

3. Trissino and Tasso.

4. Appropriate rhythm.

1. *Paradise Lost* appeared originally without any sort of prose aid to the reader, but the printer asked Milton for some "Arguments," or summary explanations of the action in the various books, and these were prefixed to later issues of the poem. We reprint the "Argument" for the first book.

the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the Serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastes into the midst of things,² presenting Satan with his angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the center³ (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: here Satan with his angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; they rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers.⁴ To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine⁵ thereon he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium the palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit¹
 Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal⁹ taste *deadly*
 Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
 With loss of Eden, till one greater Man²
 5 Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
 Sing Heav'nly Muse,³ that on the secret top
 Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
 That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
 In the beginning how the heav'ns and earth
 10 Rose out of Chaos: or if Sion hill⁴
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
 Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 is Above th' Aonian mount,⁵ while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.⁶
 And chiefly thou O Spirit,⁷ that dost prefer
 Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,

2. According to Horace, the epic poet should begin, "in medias res."

3. I.e., of the earth.

4. Church Fathers, the Christian writers of the first centuries.

5. I.e., what action to take.

1. Eve's apple, and all the consequences of eating it. This first proem (lines 1—26) combines the epic statement of theme and invocation.

2. Christ, the second Adam.

3. In Greek mythology, Urania, Muse of astronomy; here, however, by the references to Oreb (Horeb) and Sinai (following), identified with the Muse who inspired Moses ("that shepherd") to

write Genesis and the other four books of the Pentateuch for the instruction of the Jews ("the chosen seed").

4. Mount Zion: the site of Solomon's Temple. "Siloa's brook" (next line): a spring near the Temple where Christ cured a blind man.

5. Helicon, home of the classical Muses. Milton will attempt to surpass Homer and Virgil.

6. Paradoxically, Milton vaunts his originality in a translated line from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* 1.2. The allusion also challenges the romantic epic in Ariosto's tradition.

7. Here identified with God's creating power.

Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
 Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
 Dove-like sat'st brooding⁸ on the vast abyss
 And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
 Illumine, what is low raise and support;
 That to the height of this great argument" *subject, theme*
 I may assert Eternal Providence,
 And justify⁰ the ways of God to men. *show the justice of*

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view
 Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause⁹
 Moved our grand parents in that happy state, .
 Favored of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
 From their Creator, and transgress his will
 For^o one restraint, lords of the world besides?" *because of/ otherwise*
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
 Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile
 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
 The mother of mankind, what time⁰ his pride *when*
 Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
 Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,⁰ *equals*
 He trusted to have equaled the Most High,
 If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God
 Raised impious war in Heav'n and battle proud
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky
 With hideous ruin and combustion down
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
 In adamantin¹ chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
 Nine times the space² that measures day and night
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
 Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf
 Confounded though immortal: but his doom
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful⁰ eyes *malignant*
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
 At once as far as angels' ken^o he views *range of sight*
 The dismal situation waste and wild,
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round
 As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Served only to discover sights of woe,

8. A composite of phrases and ideas from Genesis 1.2 ("And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"). Only a small number of Milton's many allusions to the Bible (in many versions) can be indicated in the notes. Milton's brooding dove

image comes from the Latin (Tremellius) Bible version, *incubabat*, "incubated."

9. An opening question like this is an epic convention.

1. A mythical substance of great hardness.
 2. Extent of time.

- 65 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all;³ but torture without end
 Still urges,⁰ and a fiery deluge, fed *always provokes*
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:
- 70 Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
 For those rebellious, here their prison ordained
 In utter darkness, and their portion set
 As far removed from God and light of Heav'n
 As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.⁴
- 75 O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns, and welt'ring⁰ by his side *rolling in the waves*
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,
- 50 Long after known in Palestine, and named
 Beelzebub.⁵ To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
 And thence in Heav'n called Satan,⁶ with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began.
 "If thou beest he; but O how fall'n!⁷ how changed
- 85 From him, who in the happy realms of light
 Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine
 Myriads though bright: if he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
- 90 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
 In equal ruin: into what pit thou seest
 From what height fall'n, so much the stronger proved
 He with his thunder:⁰ and till then who knew *thunderbolt*
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
- 95 Nor what the potent victor in his rage
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though changed in outward luster, that fixed mind
 And high disdain, from sense of injured merit,
 That with the mightiest raised me to contend,
- 100 And to the fierce contention brought along
 Innumerable force of spirits armed
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed
 In dubious⁰ battle on the plains of Heav'n, *of uncertain outcome*
- 105 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
 And study⁰ of revenge, immortal hate, *intense consideration*

3. The phrase alludes to Dante ("All hope abandon, ye who enter here").

4. Milton makes use of various images of the cosmos in *Paradise Lost*: (1) the earth is the center of the (Ptolemaic) cosmos of ten concentric spheres; (2) the earth and the whole cosmos are an appendage hanging from Heaven by a golden chain; (3) the cosmos seems Copernican from the angels' perspective (see Book 8). Here, the fall from Heaven to Hell is described as thrice as far as the distance from the center (earth) to the outermost sphere.

5. A Phoenician deity, or Baal (the name means "Lord of Flies"). He is called the prince of devils in Matthew 12.24. As with the other fallen angels, his angelic name has been obliterated, and he is now called by the name he will bear as a pagan deity. That literary strategy evokes all the evil associations attaching to those names in human history.

6. In Hebrew the name means "adversary."

7. Alludes to Isaiah 14.12: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning."

And courage never to submit or yield:
 And what is else not to be overcome?⁸
 1 io That glory never shall his wrath or might
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power
 Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted⁰ his empire, that were low indeed, *feared for*
 ii5 That were an ignominy and shame beneath
 This downfall; since by fate the strength of gods⁹
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail,⁰ *cease to exist*
 Since through experience of this great event
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 120 We may with more successful hope resolve
 To wage by force or guile eternal war
 Irreconcilable, to our grand foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heav'n."
 125 So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain,
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair:
 And him thus answered soon his bold compeer.⁰ *comrade*
 "O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
 That led th' embattled Seraphim¹ to war
 130 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
 Fearless, endangered Heav'n's perpetual King;
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,⁰ *outcome*
 135 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
 Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as gods and heav'nly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 140 Invincible, and vigor soon returns,
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.
 But what if he our conqueror (whom I now
 Of force⁰ believe almighty, since no less *necessarily*
 145 Than such could have o'erpow'ed such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice⁰ his vengeful ire, *satisfy'*
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls
 150 By right of war, whate'er his business be
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
 What can it then avail though yet we feel
 Strength undiminished, or eternal being

8. I.e., what else does it mean not to be overcome?
 9. A term commonly used in the poem for angels.
 But to Satan and his followers it means more, as
 Satan claims the position of a god, subject to fate
 but nothing else. Their substance is "empyrean"
 (next line), of the empyrean.

1. According to tradition, there were nine orders
 of angels, arranged hierarchically—seraphim,
 cherubim, thrones, dominions, virtues, powers,
 principalities, archangels, and angels. The poem
 makes use of some of these titles but does not keep
 this hierarchy.

- 155 To undergo eternal punishment?"
 Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend replied.
 "Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable
 Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
 To do aught⁰ good never will be our task, *anything*
- 160 But ever to do ill our sole delight,
 As being the contrary to his high will
 Whom we resist. If then his providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labor must be to pervert that end,
- 165 And out of good still to find means of evil;
 Which ofttimes may succeed, so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail" not, and disturb *err*
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
 But see the angry victor hath recalled
- no His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
 Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulphurous hail
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid^o *calmed*
 The fiery surge, that from the precipice
 Of Heav'n received us falling, and the thunder,
- 175 Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
 Let us not slip^o th' occasion, whether scorn, *let slip*
 Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
- 180 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid^o flames *bluish*
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
- 185 There rest, if any rest can harbor there,
 And reassembling our afflicted powers," *armies*
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend^o *harm, vex*
 Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
 How overcome this dire calamity,
- 190 What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
 If not what resolution from despair."²
- Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed, his other parts besides
- 195 Prone on the flood, extended long and large
 Lay floating many a rood,³ in bulk as huge
 As whom^o the fables name of monstrous size, *as those whom.*
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
 Briareos or Typhon,⁴ whom the den
- 200 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
 Leviathan,⁵ which God of all his works

2. Five of the last nine lines of Satan's speech rhyme.

3. An old unit of measure, between six and eight yards.

4. Both the Titans, led by Briareos (said to have had a hundred hands), and the earth-born Giants, represented by Typhon (who lived in Cilicea near

Tarsus and was said to have had a hundred heads), fought with Jove. They were punished by being thrown into the underworld. Christian mythographers found in these stories an analogy to Satan's revolt and punishment.

5. The whale, often identified with the great sea monster and enemy of the Lord in Isaiah 17.1 and

- Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
 Him haply^o slumb'ring on the Norway foam
 The pilot of some small night-founded^o skiff,
 205 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,⁶
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
 Moors by his side under the lee,^o while night
 Invests^o the sea, and wished morn delays:
 So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay
 210 Chained on the burning lake, nor ever thence
 Had ris'n or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 215 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others, and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown
 On man by him seduced, but on himself
 220 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
 Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires,^o and rolled
 In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid^o vale.
 225 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on^o the dusky air
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
 He lights,^o if it were land that ever burned
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
 230 And such appeared in hue; as when the force
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
 Of thund'ring Etna,⁷ whose combustible
 And fueled entrails thence conceiving fire,
 235 Sublimed^o with mineral fury, aid the winds,
 And leave a singed bottom all involved^o
 With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,
 Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian^o flood
 240 As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
 Not by the sufferance^o of supernal power.
 "Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
 Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat^o
 That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
 245 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
 Who now is sov'reign can dispose and bid
 What shall be right: farthest from him is best
 Whom reason hath equaled, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell happy fields
 250 Where joy forever dwells: Hail horrors, hail

the crocodile-like dragon of Job 41. Both were also identified with Satan.

6. The story of the deceived sailor and the illusory island was a commonplace, but the reference to

Norway suggests a 16th-century version by Olaus Magnus, a Swedish historian.

7. Pelorus and Etna are volcanic mountains in Sicily.

Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
 Receive thy new possessor: one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 255 Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.⁸
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than⁰ he *barely less than*
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
 260 Here for his envy,⁹ will not drive us hence:
 Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
 To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n.¹
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 265 Th' associates and copartners of our loss
 Lie thus astonished⁰ on th' oblivious pool,² *stunned*
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet
 270 Regained in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?"
 So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
 Thus answered. "Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foiled,
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 275 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge⁰ *front lines*
 Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, though now they lie
 280 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed,
 No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth."
 He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield
 285 Ethereal temper,³ massy, large and round,
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views⁴
 At evening from the top of Fesole,
 290 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
 His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
 Of some great ammiral,⁰ were but a wand *admiral's ship*
 295 He walked with to support uneasy steps
 Over the burning marl,⁰ not like those steps *soil*

8. Compare Satan's soliloquy, 4.32-113.

9. I.e., because he desires this place.

1. An ironic echo of *Odyssey* 11.489-91, where the shade of Achilles tells Odysseus that it is better to be a farmhand on earth than king among the dead.

2. The epithet "oblivious" is transferred from the fallen angels to the pool into which they have

fallen.

3. I.e., tempered in celestial fire.

4. Galileo, who looked through a telescope ("optic glass") from the hill town of Fiesole, outside Florence, in the valley of the Arno River ("Valdarno," val d'Arno, line 290). In 1610 he published a book describing the mountains on the moon.

On heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire;
 Nathless⁰ he so endured, till on the beach *nevertheless*
 Of that inflamed⁰ sea, he stood and called *flaming*
 His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa,⁵ where th' Etrurian shades
 High overarched embow'r;⁰ or scattered sedge⁰ *form bowers I seaweed*
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
 Hath vexed the Red Sea coast,⁶ whose waves o'erthrew
 Busiris⁷ and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses
 And broken chariot wheels; so thick bestrown
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He called so loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of Hell resounded. "Princes, Potentates,
 Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal Spirits: or have ye chos'n this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue,⁰ for the ease you *find* *strength, valor*
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To adore the conqueror? who now beholds
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
 With scattered arms and ensigns,⁰ till anon *battle flags*
 His swift pursuers from Heav'n gates discern
 Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
 Awake, arise, or be forever fall'n."
 They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing, as when men wont⁰ to watch *accustomed*
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;⁸
 Yet to their general's voice they soon obeyed
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's son⁹ in Egypt's evil day
 Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud
 Of locusts, warping⁰ on the eastern wind, *swarming*

5. The name means "shady valley" and refers to a region high in the Apennines, about twenty miles from Florence, in Tuscany ("Etruria"). Similes comparing the numberless dead to falling leaves are frequent in epic (e.g., *Aeneid* 6.309—10).

6. Orion is a constellation whose rising near sunset in late summer and autumn was associated with storms in the Red Sea.

7. Mythical Egyptian pharaoh, whom Milton asso-

ciates with the pharaoh of Exodus 14, who pursued the Israelites ("sojourners of Goshen," line 309) into the Red Sea, which God parted for them. His "chivalry" (following) are horsemen from Memphis.

8. The double negatives make a positive: they did perceive both plight and pain.

9. Moses, who drew down a plague of locusts on Egypt (Exodus 10.12-15).

That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile:
 So numberless were those bad angels seen
 345 Hovering on wing under the cope^o of Hell *roof*
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
 Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear
 Of their great Sultan¹ waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 350 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
 A multitude, like which the populous north
 Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
 355 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.²
 Forthwith from every squadron and each band
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
 Their great commander; godlike shapes and forms
 Excelling human, princely dignities,
 360 And powers that erst^o in Heaven sat on thrones; *formerly*
 Though of their names in heav'nly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and razed^o *erased*
 By their rebellion, from the Books of Life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 365 Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth,
 Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
 God their Creator, and th' invisible
 370 Glory of him that made them, to transform
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
 With gay religions^o full of pomp and gold, *showy rites*
 And devils to adore for deities:
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 375 And various idols through the heathen world.
 Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,³
 Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,
 At their great emperor's call, as next in worth
 Came singly^o where he stood on the bare strand, *one at a time*
 380 While the promiscuous^o crowd stood yet aloof. *mixed*
 The chief were those who from the pit of Hell
 Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
 Their seats long after next the seat of God,⁴
 Their altars by his altar, gods adored
 385 Among the nations round, and durst abide
 Jehovah thund'ring out of Zion, throned
 Between the Cherubim;⁵ yea, often placed
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,

1. A first use of this description of Satan as an Oriental despot.

2. The barbarian invasions of Rome began with crossings of the Rhine ("Rhene") and Danube ("Danaw") rivers and spread across Spain, via Gibraltar, to North Africa.

3. The catalogue of gods here is an epic conven-

tion; Homer catalogues ships; Virgil, warriors.

4. The first group of devils come from the Middle East, close neighbors of Jehovah "throned" in his sanctuary in Jerusalem.

5. Golden cherubim adorned opposite ends of the gold cover on the Ark of the Covenant.

JOHN DRYDEN

1631-1700

Although John Dryden's parents seem to have sided with Parliament against the king, there is no evidence that the poet grew up in a strict Puritan family. His father, a country gentleman of moderate fortune, gave his son a gentleman's education at Westminster School, under the renowned Dr. Richard Busby, who used the rod as a pedagogical aid in imparting a sound knowledge of the learned languages and literatures to his charges (among others John Locke and Matthew Prior). From Westminster, Dryden went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took his A.B. in 1654. His first important poem, "Heroic Stanzas" (1659), was written to commemorate the death of Cromwell. The next year, however, in "Astraea Redux," Dryden joined his countrymen in celebrating the return of Charles II to his throne. During the rest of his life Dryden was to remain entirely loyal to Charles and to his successor, James II.

Dryden is the commanding literary figure of the last four decades of the seventeenth century. Every important aspect of the life of his times—political, religious, philosophical, artistic—finds expression somewhere in his writings. Dryden is the least personal of poets. He is not at all the solitary, subjective poet listening to the murmur of his own voice and preoccupied with his own feelings but rather a citizen of the world commenting publicly on matters of public concern.

From the beginning to the end of his literary career, Dryden's nondramatic poems are most typically occasional poems, which commemorate particular events of a public character—a coronation, a military victory, a death, or a political crisis. Such poems are social and often ceremonial, written not for the self but for the nation. Dryden's principal achievements in this form are the two poems on the king's return and his coronation; *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), which celebrates the English naval victory over the Dutch and the fortitude of the people of London and the king during the Great Fire, both events of that "wonderful year," 1666; the political poems; the lines on the death of Oldham (1684); and odes such as "Alexander's Feast."

Between 1664 and 1681, however, Dryden was mainly a playwright. The newly chartered theaters needed a modern repertory, and he set out to supply the need. Dryden wrote his plays, as he frankly confessed, to please his audiences, which were not heterogeneous like Shakespeare's but were largely drawn from the court and from people of fashion. In the style of the time, he produced rhymed heroic plays, in which incredibly noble heroes and heroines face incredibly difficult choices between love and honor; comedies, in which male and female rakes engage in intrigue and bright repartee; and later, libretti for the newly introduced dramatic form, the opera. His one great tragedy, *All for Love* (1677), in blank verse, adapts Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* to the unities of time, place, and action. As his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668) shows, Dryden had studied the works of the great playwrights of Greece and Rome, of the English Renaissance, and of contemporary France, seeking sound theoretical principles on which to construct the new drama that the age demanded. Indeed, his fine critical intelligence always supported his creative powers, and because he took literature seriously and enjoyed discussing it, he became, almost casually, what Samuel Johnson called him: "the father of English criticism." His abilities as both poet and dramatist brought him to the attention of the king, who in 1668 made him poet laureate. Two years later the post of historiographer royal was added to the laureateship at a combined stipend of £200, enough money to live comfortably on.

Between 1678 and 1681, when he was nearing fifty, Dryden discovered his great gift for writing formal verse satire. A quarrel with the playwright Thomas Shadwell prompted the mock-heroic episode "Mac Flecknoe," probably written in 1678 or 1679 but not published until 1682. Out of the stresses occasioned by the Popish Plot (1678) and its political aftermath came his major political satires, *Absalom and Ach-*

itophel (1681), and "The Medal" (1682), his final attack on the villain of *Absalom and Achitophel*, the earl of Shaftesbury. Twenty years' experience as poet and playwright had prepared him technically for the triumph of *Absalom and Achitophel*. He had mastered the heroic couplet, having fashioned it into an instrument suitable in his hands for every sort of discourse from the thrust and parry of quick logical argument, to lyric feeling, rapid narrative, or forensic declamation. Thanks to this long discipline, he was able in one stride to rival the masters of verse satire: Horace, Juvenal, Persius, in ancient Rome, and Boileau, his French contemporary.

The consideration of religious and political questions that the events of 1678-81 forced on Dryden brought a new seriousness to his mind and works. In 1682 he published *Religio Laid*, a poem in which he examined the grounds of his religious faith and defended the middle way of the Anglican Church against the rationalism of Deism on the one hand and the authoritarianism of Rome on the other. But he had moved closer to Rome than he perhaps realized when he wrote the poem. Charles II died in 1685 and was succeeded by his Catholic brother, James II. Within a year Dryden and his two sons converted to Catholicism. Though his enemies accused him of opportunism, he proved his sincerity by his steadfast loyalty to the Roman Church after James abdicated and the Protestant William and Mary came in; as a result he was to lose his offices and their much-needed stipends. From his new position as a Roman Catholic, Dryden wrote in 1687 *The Hind and the Panther*, in which a milk-white Hind (the Roman Church) and a spotted Panther (the Anglican Church) eloquently debate theology. The Hind has the better of the argument, but Dryden already knew that James's policies were failing, and with them the Catholic cause in England.

Dryden was now nearing sixty, with a family to support on a much-diminished income. To earn a living, he resumed writing plays and turned to translations. In 1693 appeared his versions of Juvenal and Persius, with a long dedicatory epistle on satire; and in 1697, his greatest achievement in this mode, the works of Virgil. At the very end, two months before his death, came the *Fables Ancient and Modern*, prefaced by one of the finest of his critical essays and made up of translations from Ovid, Boccaccio, and Chaucer. (For additional works by Dryden, go to Norton Literature Online.)

Dryden's foremost achievement was to bring the pleasures of literature to the ever-increasing reading public of Britain. As a critic and translator, he made many classics available to men and women who lacked a classical education. His canons of taste and theoretical principles would set the standard for the next generation. As a writer of prose, he helped establish a popular new style, shaped to the cadences of good conversation. Johnson praised its apparent artlessness: "every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous . . . though all is easy, nothing is feeble; though all seems careless, there is nothing harsh." Although Dryden's plays went out of fashion, his poems did not. His satire inspired the most brilliant verse satirist of the next century, Alexander Pope, and the energy and variety of his metrics launched the long-standing vogue of heroic couplets. Augustan style is at its best in his poems: lively, dignified, precise, and always musical—a flexible instrument of public speech. "By him we were taught *sapere et fari*, to think naturally and express forcibly," Johnson concluded. "What was said of Rome, adorned by Augustus, may be applied by an easy metaphor to English poetry embellished by Dryden, *lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*, he found it brick, and he left it marble."

*From Annus Mirabilis*¹

. s s

[LONDON REBORN]

845 Yet London, empress of the northern clime,
 By an high fate thou greatly didst expire;
 Oreat as the world's, which at the death of time
 Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire.²

As when some dire usurper Heaven provides,
 850 To scourge his country with a lawless sway:³
 His birth, perhaps, some petty village hides,
 And sets his cradle out of fortune's way:

Till fully ripe his swelling fate breaks out,
 And hurries him to mighty mischiefs on:
 855 His Prince, surprised at first, no ill could doubt,⁰ *fear*
 And wants the power to meet it when 'tis known:

Such was the rise of this prodigious fire,
 Which in mean buildings first obscurely bred,
 From thence did soon to open streets aspire,
 860 And straight to palaces and temples spread.

. . #

Me-thinks already, from this chymic⁰ flame, *alchemic, transmuting*
 ii70 I see a city of more precious mold:
 Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,⁰ *Mexico*
 With silver paved, and all divine with gold.

Already, laboring with a mighty fate,
 She shakes the rubbish from her mounting brow,
 1175 And seems to have renewed her charter's date,
 Which Heaven will to the death of time allow.

More great than human, now, and more August,⁴
 New deified she from her fires does rise:

1. 1666 was a "year of wonders" (*annus mirabilis*)-war, plague, and the Great Fire of London. According to the enemies of Charles II, God was visiting His wrath on the English people to signify that the reign of an unholy king would soon come to an end. Dryden's long "historical poem" *Annus Mirabilis*, written the same year, interprets the wonders differently: as trials sent by God to punish rebellious spirits and to bind the king and his people together. "Never had prince or people more mutual reason to love each other," Dryden wrote, "if suffering for each other can endear affection." Charles had endured rejection and exile, England had been torn by civil wars. Dryden views these sufferings as a covenant, a pledge of better times to come. Out of Charles's troubles, he predicts in heroic stanzas modeled on Virgil, the king shall

arise like a new Augustus, the ruler of a great empire, and out of fire, London shall arise like the phoenix, ready to take its place as trade center for the world, in the glory of a new Augustan age.

2. Dryden's footnote cites Ovid, *Metamorphoses* I, which foretells that the world will be purged by fire. The fire of London, which utterly consumed the central city, burned for four days, September 2-6. By September 10, Christopher Wren had already submitted a plan, much of it later adopted, for rebuilding the city on a grander scale. For a dramatic contemporary depiction of the event, see *The Great Fire of London*, 1666, in the color insert in this volume.

3. Probably a reference to Oliver Cromwell.

4. Augusta, the old name of London [Dryden's note].

Her widening streets on new foundations trust,
 1180 And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

Before, she like some shepherdess did show,
 Who sat to bathe her by a river's side:
 Not answering to her fame, but rude and low,
 Nor taught the beauteous arts of modern pride.

us? - Now, like a Maiden Queen, she will behold,
 From her high turrets, hourly suitors come:
 The East with incense, and the West with gold,
 Will stand, like suppliants, to receive her doom.⁰

judgment, decree

H90 The silver Thames, her own domestic flood,
 Shall bear her vessels like a sweeping train;
 And often wind (as of his mistress proud)
 With longing eyes to meet her face again.

The wealthy Tagus, and the wealthier Rhine,
 The glory of their towns no more shall boast;
 1195 And Seine, that would with Belgian rivers join,⁵
 Shall find her luster stained, and traffic lost.

The venturous merchant, who designed⁰ more far,
 And touches on our hospitable shore,
 Charmed with the splendor of this northern star,
 1200 Shall here unlade him, and depart no more.

intended to go

Our powerful navy shall no longer meet,
 The wealth of France or Holland to invade;
 The beauty of this Town, without a fleet,
 From all the world shall vindicate⁰ her trade.

defend, protect

1205 And while this famed emporium we prepare,
 The British ocean shall such triumphs boast,
 That those who now disdain our trade to share,
 Shall rob like pirates on our wealthy coast.

1210 Already we have conquered half the war,
 And the less dangerous part is left behind:
 Our trouble now is but to make them dare,
 And not so great to vanquish as to find.

Thus to the eastern wealth through storms we go,
 But now, the Cape once doubled,⁰ fear no more;
 1215 A constant trade-wind will securely blow,
 And gently lay us on the spicy shore.

sailed around

1666

1667

5. France and Holland (which then included Belgium) had made an alliance for trade, as well as war, against England. The river Tagus flows into the Atlantic at Lisbon.

Song from *Marriage a la Mode*

Why should a foolish marriage vow,
 Which long ago was made,
 Oblige us to each other now,
 When passion is decayed?
 5 We loved, and we loved, as long as we could,
 Till our love was loved out in us both;
 But our marriage is dead when the pleasure is fled:
 'Twas pleasure first made it an oath.

2

If I have pleasures for a friend,
 10 And farther love in store,
 What wrong has he whose joys did end,
 And who could give no more?
 'Tis a madness that he should be jealous of me,
 Or that I should bar him of another:
 15 For all we can gain is to give ourselves pain,
 When neither can hinder the other.

ca. 1672

1673

Absalom and Achitophel In 1678 a dangerous crisis, both religious and political, threatened to undo the Restoration settlement and to precipitate England once again into civil war. The Popish Plot and its aftermath not only whipped up extreme anti-Catholic passions, but led between 1679 and 1681 to a bitter political struggle between Charles II (whose adherents came to be called Tories) and the earl of Shaftesbury (whose followers were termed Whigs). The issues were nothing less than the prerogatives of the crown and the possible exclusion of the king's Catholic brother, James, duke of York, from his position as heir-presumptive to the throne. Charles's cool courage and brilliant, if unscrupulous, political genius saved the throne for his brother and gave at least temporary peace to his people.

Charles was a Catholic at heart—he received the last rites of that church on his deathbed—and was eager to do what he could do discreetly for the relief of his Catholic subjects, who suffered severe civil and religious disabilities imposed by their numerically superior Protestant compatriots. James openly professed the Catholic religion, an awkward fact politically, for he was next in line of succession because Charles had no legitimate children. The household of the duke, as well as that of Charles's neglected queen, Catherine of Braganza, inevitably became the center of Catholic life and intrigue at court and consequently of Protestant prejudice and suspicion.

No one understood, however, that the situation was explosive until 1678, when Titus Oates (a renegade Catholic convert of infamous character) offered sworn testimony of the existence of a Jesuit plot to assassinate the king, burn London, massacre Protestants, and reestablish the Roman Church.

The country might have kept its head and come to realize (what no historian has doubted) that Oates and his confederates were perjured rascals, as Charles himself quickly perceived. But panic was created by the discovery of the body of a prominent

London justice of the peace, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, who a few days before had received for safekeeping a copy of Oates's testimony. The murder, immediately ascribed to the Catholics, has never been solved. Fear and indignation reached a hysterical pitch when the seizure of the papers of the duke of York's secretary revealed that he had been in correspondence with the confessor of Louis XIV regarding the reestablishment of the Roman Church in England. Before the terror subsided many innocent men were executed on the increasingly bold and always false evidence of Oates and his accomplices.

The earl of Shaftesbury, the duke of Buckingham, and others quickly took advantage of the situation. With the support of the Commons and the City of London, they moved to exclude the duke of York from the succession. Between 1679 and 1681 Charles and Shaftesbury were engaged in a mighty struggle. The Whigs found a candidate of their own in the king's favorite illegitimate son, the handsome and engaging duke of Monmouth, whom they advanced as a proper successor to his father. They urged Charles to legitimize him, and when he refused, they whispered that there was proof that the king had secretly married Monmouth's mother. The young man allowed himself to be used against his father. He was sent on a triumphant progress through western England, where he was enthusiastically received. Twice an Exclusion Bill nearly passed both houses. But by early 1681 Charles had secured his own position by secretly accepting from Louis XIV a three-year subsidy that made him independent of Parliament, which had tried to force his hand by refusing to vote him funds. He summoned Parliament to meet at Oxford in the spring of 1681, and a few moments after the Commons had passed the Exclusion Bill, in a bold stroke he abruptly dissolved Parliament, which never met again during his reign. Already, as Charles was aware, a reaction had set in against the violence of the Whigs. In mid-summer, when he felt it safe to move against his enemies, Shaftesbury was sent to the Tower of London, charged with high treason. In November, the grand jury, packed with Whigs, threw out the indictment, and the earl was free, but his power was broken, and he lived only two more years.

Shortly before the grand jury acted, Dryden published anonymously the first part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, apparently hoping to influence their verdict. The issues in question were grave; the chief actors, the most important men in the realm. Dryden, therefore, could not use burlesque and caricature as had Butler, or the mock heroic as he himself had done in "Mac Flecknoe." Only a heroic style and manner were appropriate to his weighty material, and the poem is most original in its blending of the heroic and the satiric. Dryden's task called for all his tact and literary skill; he had to mention, but to gloss over, the king's faults: his indolence and love of pleasure; his neglect of his wife, and his devotion to his mistresses—conduct that had left him with many children, but no heir except his Catholic brother. He had to deal gently with Monmouth, whom Charles still loved. And he had to present, or appear to present, the king's case objectively.

The remarkable parallels between the rebellion of Absalom against his father King David (2 Samuel 13–18) had already been remarked in sermons, satires, and pamphlets. Dryden took the hint and gave contemporary events a due distance and additional dignity by approaching them indirectly through their biblical analogues. The poem is famous for its brilliant portraits of the king's enemies and friends, but equally admirable are the temptation scene (which, like other passages, is indebted to *Paradise Lost*) and the remarkably astute analysis of the Popish Plot itself.

A second part of *Absalom and Achitophel* appeared in 1682. Most of it is the work of Nahum Tate, but lines 310–509, which include the devastating portraits of Doeg and Og (two Whig poets, Elkanah Settle and Thomas Shadwell), are certainly by Dryden.

Absalom and Achitophel: A Poem

In pious times, ere priestcraft¹ did begin,
 Before polygamy was made a sin;
 When man on many multiplied his kind,
 Ere one to one was cursedly confined;
 5 When nature prompted and no law denied
 Promiscuous use of concubine and bride;
 Then Israel's monarch after Heaven's own heart,²
 His vigorous warmth did variously impart
 To wives and slaves; and, wide as his command,
 10 Scattered his Maker's image through the land.
 Michal,³ of royal blood, the crown did wear,
 A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care:
 Not so the rest; for several mothers bore
 To godlike David several sons before.
 15 But since like slaves his bed they did ascend,
 No true succession could their seed attend.
 Of all this numerous progeny was none
 So beautiful, so brave, as Absalom:⁴
 Whether, inspired by some diviner lust,
 20 His father got him with a greater gust,^o *relish, -pleasure*
 Or that his conscious destiny made way,
 By manly beauty, to imperial sway.
 Early in foreign fields he won renown,
 With kings and states allied to Israel's crown:⁵
 25 In peace the thoughts of war he could remove,
 And seemed as he were only born for love.
 Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,
 In him alone 'twas natural to please;
 His motions all accompanied with grace;
 30 And paradise was opened in his face.
 With secret joy indulgent David viewed
 His youthful image in his son renewed:
 To all his wishes nothing he denied;
 And made the charming Annabel⁶ his bride.
 35 What faults he had (for who from faults is free?)
 His father could not, or he would not see.
 Some warm excesses which the law forbore,
 Were construed youth that purged by boiling o'er:
 And Amnon's murder,⁷ by a specious name,
 40 Was called a just revenge for injured fame.
 Thus praised and loved the noble youth remained,
 While David, undisturbed, in Sion^o reigned. *London*

1. "Religious frauds; management of wicked priests to gain power" (Johnson's *Dictionary*).
 2. David ("a man after [God's] own heart," according to 1 Samuel 13.14) represents Charles II.
 3. One of David's wives, who represents the childless queen, Catherine of Braganza.
 4. James Scott, duke of Monmouth (1649-1685).
 5. Monmouth had won repute as a soldier fighting for France against Holland and for Holland against

France.
 6. Anne Scott, duchess of Buccleuch (pronounced *Bue-cloo*), a beauty and a great heiress.
 7. Absalom killed his half-brother Amnon, who had raped Absalom's sister Tamar (2 Samuel 13.28-29). The parallel with Monmouth is vague. He is known to have committed acts of violence in his youth, but certainly not fratricide.

But life can never be sincerely⁰ blest;
 Heaven punishes the bad, and proves⁰ the best.
 The Jews,⁰ a headstrong, moody, murmuring race,
 As ever tried the extent and stretch of grace;
 God's pampered people, whom, debauched with ease,
 No king could govern, nor no God could please
 (Gods they had tried of every shape and size
 That god-smiths could produce, or priests devise);⁸
 These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
 Began to dream they wanted liberty;⁹
 And when no rule, no precedent was found,
 Of men by laws less circumscribed and bound,
 They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
 And thought that all but savages were slaves.
 They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow,
 Made foolish Ishbosheth¹ the crown forgo;
 Who banished David did from Hebron² bring,
 And with a general shout proclaimed him king:
 Those very Jews, who, at their very best,
 Their humor⁰ more than loyalty expressed,
 Now wondered why so long they had obeyed
 An idol monarch, which their hands had made;
 Thought they might ruin him they could create,
 Or melt him to that golden calf,³ a state.⁰
 But these were random bolts;⁰ no formed design
 Nor interest made the factious crowd to join:
 The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
 Well knew the value of a peaceful reign;
 And, looking backward with a wise affright,
 Saw seams of wounds, dishonest⁰ to the sight:
 In contemplation of whose ugly scars
 They cursed the memory of civil wars.
 The moderate sort of men, thus qualified,⁰
 Inclined the balance to the better side;
 And David's mildness managed it so well,
 The bad found no occasion to rebel.
 But when to sin our biased⁴ nature leans,
 The careful Devil is still at hand with means;
 And providently pimps for ill desires:
 The Good Old Cause⁵ revived, a plot requires.
 Plots, true or false, are necessary things,
 To raise up commonwealths and ruin kings.
 The inhabitants of old Jerusalem
 Were Jebusites;⁶ the town so called from them;

wholly
tests
English

caprice

epuhlic
shots

disgraceful

assuaged

8. Dryden recalls the political and religious controversies that, since the Reformation, had divided England and finally caused civil wars.

9. Adam rebelled because he felt that he lacked ("wanted") liberty, because he was forbidden to eat the fruit of one tree.

1. Saul's son. He stands for Richard Cromwell, who succeeded his father as lord protector. "Saul": Oliver Cromwell.

2. Where David reigned over Judah after the death of Saul and before he became king of Israel (2

Samuel 1–5). Charles had been crowned in Scotland in 1651.

3. The image worshiped by the children of Israel during the period that Moses spent on Mount Sinai, receiving the law from God.

4. Inclined (cf. "Mac Flecknoe," line 189 and n. 5, p. 2116).

5. The Commonwealth. Dryden stigmatizes the Whigs by associating them with subversion.

6. Roman Catholics. The original name of Jerusalem (here, London) was Jebus.

And theirs the native right.
 But when the chosen people⁰ grew more strong, *Protestants*
 The rightful cause at length became the wrong;
 90 And every loss the men of Jebus bore,
 They still were thought God's enemies the more.
 Thus worn and weakened, well or ill content,
 Submit they must to David's government:
 Impoverished and deprived of all command,
 95 Their taxes doubled as they lost their land;
 And, what was harder yet to flesh and blood,
 Their gods disgraced, and burnt like common wood.⁷
 This set the heathen priesthood⁰ in a flame; *Roman Catholic clergy*
 For priests of all religions are the same:
 100 Of whatsoe'er descent their godhead be,
 Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,
 In his defense his servants are as bold,
 As if he had been born of beaten gold.
 The Jewish rabbins,⁰ though their enemies, *Anglican clergy*
 105 In this conclude them honest men and wise:
 For 'twas their duty, all the learned think,
 To espouse his cause, by whom they eat and drink.
 From hence began that Plot, the nation's curse,
 Bad in itself, but represented worse;
 no Raised in extremes, and in extremes decried;
 With oaths affirmed, with dying vows denied;
 Not weighed or winnowed by the multitude;
 But swallowed in the mass, unchewed and crude.
 Some truth there was, but dashed⁰ and brewed with lies, *adulterated*
 115 To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise.
 Succeeding times did equal folly call,
 Believing nothing, or believing all.
 The Egyptian rites the Jebusites embraced,
 Where gods were recommended by their taste.⁸
 120 Such savory deities must needs be good,
 As served at once for worship and for food.
 By force they could not introduce these gods,
 For ten to one in former days was odds;
 So fraud was used (the sacrificer's trade):
 125 Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade.
 Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews,
 And raked for converts even the court and *s t e w s b r o t h e l s*
 Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,
 Because the fleece accompanies the flock.⁹
 130 Some thought they God's anointed⁰ meant to slay *the king*
 By guns, invented since full many a day:
 Our author swears it not; but who can know
 How far the Devil and Jebusites may go?
 This Plot, which failed for want of common sense,

7. Such oppressive laws against Roman Catholics date from the time of Elizabeth I.

8. Here Dryden sneers at the doctrine of transubstantiation. "Egyptian": French, therefore Catholic.

9. Dryden charges that the Anglican clergy ("Hebrew priests") resented proselytizing by Catholics chiefly because they stood to lose their tithes ("fleece").

- 135 Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence:
 For, as when raging fevers boil the blood,
 The standing lake soon floats into a flood,
 And every hostile humor,¹ which before
 Slept quiet in its channels, bubbles o'er;
- 140 So several factions from this first ferment
 Work up to foam, and threat the government.
 Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
 Opposed the power to which they could not rise.
 Some had in courts been great, and thrown from thence,
- 145 Like fiends were hardened in impenitence;
 Some, by their monarch's fatal mercy, grown
 From pardoned rebels kinsmen to the throne,
 Were raised in power and public office high;
 Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.
- 150 Of these the false Achitophel² was first;
 A name to all succeeding ages cursed:
 For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;⁰ *unruly imagination*
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place;
- 155 In power unpleas'd, impatient of disgrace:
 A fiery soul, which, working out its way, 1
 Fretted the pygmy body to decay, f
 And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.³ J
 A daring pilot in extremity;
- 160 Pleas'd with the danger, when the waves went high,
 He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
 Would steer too nigh the sands, to boast his wit.
 Great wits^o are sure to madness near allied,⁴ *men of genius*
 And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
- 165 Else why should he, with wealth and honor blest,
 Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
 Punish a body which he could not please;
 Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
 And all to leave what with his toil he won,
- 170 To that unfeathered two-legged thing,⁵ a son;
 Got, while his soul did huddled^o notions try; *confused, hurried*
 And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
 In friendship false, implacable in hate,
 Resolved to ruin or to rule the state.
- 175 To compass this the triple bond⁶ he broke, 1
 The pillars of the public safety shook,
 And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke; J

1. Bodily fluid. Such fluids were thought to determine health and temperament.

2. Anthony Ashley Cooper, first earl of Shaftesbury (1621—1683). He had served in the parliamentary army and been a member of Cromwell's council of state. He later helped bring back Charles and, in 1670, was made a member of the notorious Cabal Ministry, which formed an alliance with Louis XIV in which England betrayed her ally, Holland, and joined France in war against that country. In 1672 he became lord chancellor, but with the dissolution of the cabal in 1673, he was removed from

office. Lines 146—49 apply perfectly to him.

3. The soul is thought of as the animating principle, the force that puts the body in motion. Shaftesbury's body seemed too small to house his fiery, energetic soul.

4. That genius and madness are akin is a very old idea.

5. Cf. Plato's definition of a human: "a featherless biped."

6. The triple alliance of England, Sweden, and Holland against France, 1668. Shaftesbury helped bring about the war against Holland in 1672.

Then seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
 Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.
 180 So easy still it proves in factious times,
 With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
 How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
 Where none can sin against the people's will!
 Where crowds can wink, and no offense be known,
 185 Since in another's guilt they find their own!
 Yet fame deserved, no enemy can grudge;
 The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
 In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin⁷
 With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean;
 190 Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress;
 Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.
 Oh, had he been content to serve the crown,
 With virtues only proper to the gown" *judge's robe*
 Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
 195 From cockle," that oppressed the noble seed; *weeds*
 David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
 And Heaven had wanted one immortal song.⁸
 But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
 And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
 200 Achitophel, grown weary to possess
 A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
 Disdained the golden fruit to gather free,
 And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
 Now, manifest oP crimes contrived long since, *detected in*
 205 He stood at bold defiance with his prince;
 Held up the buckler of the people's cause
 Against the crown, and skulked behind the laws.
 The wished occasion of the Plot he takes;
 Some circumstances finds, but more he makes.
 210 By buzzing emissaries fills the ears
 Of listening crowds with jealousies" and fears *suspicious*
 Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
 And proves the king himself a Jebusite.
 Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well
 215 Were strong with people easy to rebel.
 For, governed by the moon, the giddy Jews
 Tread the same track when she the prime renews;
 And once in twenty years, their scribes record,⁹
 By natural instinct they change their lord.
 220 Achitophel still wants a chief, and none
 Was found so fit as warlike Absalom:
 Not that he wished his greatness to create

7. The chief of the seventy elders who composed the Jewish supreme court. The allusion is to Shaftesbury's serving as lord chancellor from 1672 to 1673. Dryden's praise of Shaftesbury's integrity in this office, by suggesting a balanced judgment, makes his condemnation of the statesman more effective than it might otherwise have been.

8. I.e., David would have had occasion to write one fewer song of praise to heaven. The reference

may be to 2 Samuel 22 or to Psalm 4.

9. The moon "renews her prime" when its several phases recur on the same day of the solar calendar (i.e., complete a cycle) as happens approximately every twenty years. The crisis between Charles I and Parliament began to grow acute about 1640; Charles II returned in 1660; it is now 1680 and a full cycle has been completed.

(For politicians neither love nor hate),
 But, for he knew his title not allowed,
 225 Would keep him still depending on the crowd,
 That⁰ kingly power, thus ebbing out, might be *so that*
 Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.¹
 Him he attempts with studied arts to please,
 And sheds his venom in such words as these:
 230 "Auspicious prince, at whose nativity
 Some royal planet² ruled the southern sky;
 Thy longing country's darling and desire;
 Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire:
 Their second Moses, whose extended wand
 235 Divides the seas, and shows the promised land;³
 Whose dawning day in every distant age
 Has exercised the sacred prophet's rage:
 The people's prayer, the glad diviners' theme,
 The young men's vision, and the old men's dream!⁴
 240 Thee, savior, thee, the nation's vows' confess,
 And, never satisfied with seeing, bless:
 Swift unspoken⁰ pomps thy steps proclaim, *spontaneous*
 And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.
 How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
 245 Starve and defraud the people of thy reign?
 Content ingloriously to pass thy days
 Like one of Virtue's fools that feeds on praise;
 Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,
 Grow stale and tarnish with our daily sight.
 250 Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be
 Or gathered ripe, or rot upon the tree.
 Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
 Some lucky revolution of their fate;
 Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill
 255 (For human good depends on human will),
 Our Fortune rolls as from a smooth descent,
 And from the first impression takes the bent;
 But, if unseized, she glides away like wind,
 And leaves repenting Folly far behind.
 260 Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize,
 And spreads her locks before her as she flies.⁶
 Had thus old David, from whose loins you spring,
 Not dared, when Fortune called him, to be Icing,
 At Gath⁷ an exile he might still remain,
 265 And heaven's anointing⁸ oil had been in vain.
 Let his successful youth your hopes engage;

1. I.e., mob rub. To Dryden, *democracy* meant popular government.

2. A planet whose influence destines him to kingship.

3. After their exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, whose "extended wand" separated the waters of the Red Sea so that they crossed over on dry land, the Israelites were led in their forty-year wandering in the wilderness by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13-14).

4. Cf. Joel 2.28.

5. Solemn promises of fidelity.

6. Achitophel gives to Fortune the traditional attributes of the allegorical personification of Opportunity: bald except for a forelock, she can be seized only as she approaches.

7. Brussels, where Charles spent his last years in exile. David took refuge from Saul in Gath (1 Samuel 27.4).

8. After God rejected Saul, he sent Samuel to anoint the boy David, as a token that he should

But shun the example of declining age;
 Behold him setting in his western skies,
 The shadows lengthening as the vapors rise.
 270 He is not now, as when on Jordan's sand⁹ |
 The joyful people thronged to see him land, >
 Covering the beach, and blackening all the strand; J
 But, like the Prince of Angels, from his height
 Comes tumbling downward with diminished light;¹
 275 Betrayed by one poor plot to public scorn
 (Our only blessing since his cursed return),
 Those heaps of people which one sheaf did bind,
 Blown off and scattered by a puff of wind.
 What strength can he to your designs oppose,
 280 Naked of friends, and round beset with foes?
 If Pharaoh's² doubtful succor he should use,
 A foreign aid would more incense the Jews:
 Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship bring;
 Foment the war, but not support the king:
 285 Nor would the royal party e'er unite
 With Pharaoh's arms to assist the Jebusite;
 Or if they should, their interest soon would break,
 And with such odious aid make David weak.
 All sorts of men by my successful arts,
 290 Abhorring kings, estrange their altered hearts
 From David's rule: and 'tis the general cry,
 'Religion, commonwealth, and liberty.'³
 If you, as champion of the public good,
 Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,
 295 What may not Israel hope, and what applause
 Might such a general gain by such a cause?
 Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower
 Fair only to the sight, but solid power;
 And nobler is a limited command,
 300 Given by the love of all your native land,
 Than a successive title,⁴ long and dark,
 Drawn from the moldy rolls of Noah's ark."
 What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
 When flattery soothes, and when ambition blinds!
 305 Desire of power, on earth a vicious weed,
 Yet, sprung from high, is of celestial seed:
 In God 'tis glory; and when men aspire,
 'Tis but a spark too much of heavenly fire.
 The ambitious youth, too covetous of fame,
 310 Too full of angels' metal⁵ in his frame,
 Unwarily was led from virtue's ways,
 Made drunk with honor, and debauched with praise.

finally come to the throne (1 Samuel 16.1—13).

9. The seashore at Dover, where Charles landed (May 25, 1660).

1. Cf. the fall of Satan in *Paradise Lost* 1.50-124, which dims the brightness of the archangel. The choice of the undignified word *tumbling* is deliberate.

2. Pharaoh is Louis XIV of France.

3. Cf. line 82 and n. 5.

4. A title to the crown based on succession.

5. An alternative spelling of *mettle* (i.e., spirit). But a pun on *metal* is intended, as is obvious from the pun *angel* (a purely intellectual being and a coin). Ambition caused the revolt of the angels in heaven.

Half loath, and half consenting to the ill
 (For loyal blood within him struggled still),
 315 He thus replied: "And what pretense have I
 To take up arms for public liberty?
 My father governs with unquestioned right;
 The faith's defender, and mankind's delight,
 Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws:
 320 And heaven by wonders has espoused his cause.
 Whom has he wronged in all his peaceful reign?
 Who sues for justice to his throne in vain?
 What millions has he pardoned of his foes,
 Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose?
 325 Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good,
 Inclined to mercy, and averse from blood;
 If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,
 His crime is God's beloved attribute.
 What could he gain, his people to betray,
 330 Or change his right for arbitrary sway?
 Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign
 His fruitful Nile, and yoke a servile train.
 If David's rule Jerusalem displease,
 The Dog Star⁶ heats their brains to this disease.
 335 Why then should I, encouraging the bad,
 Turn rebel and run popularly mad?
 Were he a tyrant, who, by lawless might
 Oppressed the Jews, and raised the Jebusite,
 Well might I mourn; but nature's holy bands
 340 Would curb my spirits and restrain my hands:
 The people might assert⁹ their liberty, *claim*
 But what was right in them were crime in me.
 His favor leaves me nothing to require,
 Prevents my wishes, and outruns desire.
 345 What more can I expect while David lives?
 All but his kingly diadem he gives:
 And that"—But there he paused; then sighing, said—
 "Is justly destined for a worthier head.
 For when my father from his toils shall rest
 350 And late augment the number of the blest,
 His lawful issue shall the throne ascend,
 Or the collateral line,⁷ where that shall end.
 His brother, though oppressed with vulgar spite,⁸
 Yet dauntless, and secure of native right,
 355 Of every royal virtue stands possessed;
 Still dear to all the bravest and the best.
 His courage foes, his friends his truth proclaim;
 His loyalty the king, the world his fame.
 His mercy even the offending crowd will find,
 360 For sure he comes of a forgiving kind.⁹
 Why should I then repine at heaven's decree,

6. Sirius, which in midsummer rises and sets with the sun and is thus associated with the maddening heat of the "dog days."

7. In the event of Charles's dying without legitimate issue, the throne would constitutionally pass

to his brother, James, or his descendants, the "collateral line."

8. Anger of the common people.

9. Race, in the sense of family.

Which gives me no pretense to royalty?
 Yet O that fate, propitiously inclined,
 Had raised my birth, or had debased my mind;
 365 To my large soul not all her treasure lent,
 And then betrayed it to a mean descent!
 I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,
 And David's part disdains my mother's mold.
 Why am I scanted by a niggard birth?¹
 370 My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth;
 And, made for empire, whispers me within,
 'Desire of greatness is a godlike sin.' "
 Him staggering so when hell's dire agent found,
 While fainting Virtue scarce maintained her ground,
 375 He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies:
 "The eternal god, supremely good and wise,
 Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain:
 What wonders are reserved to bless your reign!
 Against your will, your arguments have shown,
 380 Such virtue's only given to guide a throne.
 Not that your father's mildness I contemn,
 But manly force becomes the diadem.
 'Tis true he grants the people all they crave;
 And more, perhaps, than subjects ought to have:
 385 For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame,
 And more his goodness than his wit° proclaim.
 But when should people strive their bonds to break,
 If not when kings are negligent or weak?
 Let him give on till he can give no more,
 390 The thrifty Sanhedrin² shall keep him poor;
 And every shekel which he can receive,
 Shall cost a limb of his prerogative.³
 To ply him with new plots shall be my care;
 Or plunge him deep in some expensive war;
 395 Which when his treasure can no more supply,
 He must, with the remains of kingship, buy.
 His faithful friends our jealousies and fears
 Call Jebusites, and Pharaoh's pensioners;
 Whom when our fury from his aid has torn,
 400 He shall be naked left to public scorn.
 The next successor, whom I fear and hate,
 My arts have made obnoxious to the state;
 Turned all his virtues to his overthrow,
 And gained our elders⁴ to pronounce a foe.
 405 His right, for sums of necessary gold,
 Shall first be pawned, and afterward be sold;
 Till time shall ever-wanting David draw,
 To pass your doubtful title into law:
 If not, the people have a right supreme

intelligence

1. I.e., why does my mean birth impose such limits on me?

2. The highest judicial counsel of the Jews, here, Parliament.

3. The Whigs hoped to limit the special privileges of the Crown (the royal "prerogative") by refusing

to vote money to Charles. He circumvented them by living on French subsidies and refusing to summon Parliament.

4. The chief magistrates and rulers of the Jews. Shaftesbury had won over ("gained") country gentlemen and nobles to his hostile view of James.

410 To make their kings; for kings are made for them.
 All empire is no more than power in trust,
 Which, when resumed,⁰ can be no longer just. *taken back*
 Succession, for the general good designed,
 In its own wrong a nation cannot bind;
 415 If altering that the people can relieve,
 Better one suffer than a nation grieve.
 The Jews well know their power: ere Saul they chose,⁵
 God was their king, and God they durst depose.
 Urge now your piety,⁶ your filial name,
 420 A father's right and fear of future fame;
 The public good, that universal call,
 To which even heaven submitted, answers all.
 Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;
 Tis Nature's trick to propagate her kind.
 425 Our fond begetters, who would never die,
 Love but themselves in their posterity.
 Or let his kindness by the effects be tried,
 Or let him lay his vain pretense aside.
 God said he loved your father; could he bring
 430 A better proof than to anoint him king?
 It surely showed he loved the shepherd well,
 Who gave so fair a flock as Israel.
 Would David have you thought his darling son?
 What means he then, to alienate⁷ the crown?
 435 The name of godly he may blush to bear:
 'Tis after God's own heart⁸ to cheat his heir.
 He to his brother gives supreme command;
 To you a legacy of barren land,⁹
 Perhaps the old harp, on which he thrums his lays,
 440 Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your praise.
 Then the next heir, a prince severe and wise,
 Already looks on you with jealous eyes;
 Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,
 And marks your progress in the people's hearts.
 445 Though now his mighty soul its grief contains,
 He meditates revenge who least complains;
 And, like a lion, slumbering in the way,
 Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
 His fearless foes within his distance draws,
 450 Constrains his roaring, and contracts his paws;
 Till at the last, his time for fury found,
 He shoots with sudden vengeance from the ground;
 The prostrate vulgar⁰ passes o'er and spares, *common people*
 But with a lordly rage his hunters tears.
 455 Your case no tame expedients will afford:
 Besolve on death, or conquest by the sword,

5. Before Saul, the first king of Israel, came to the throne, the Jews were governed by judges. Similarly Oliver Cromwell as lord protector took over the reins of government, after he had dissolved the Rump Parliament in 1653.

6. Dutifulness to a parent.

7. In law, to convey the title to property to another person.

8. An irony (cf. line 7 and n. 2).

9. James was given the title of generalissimo in 1678. In 1679 Monmouth was banished and withdrew to Holland.

Which for no less a stake than life you draw;
 And self-defense is nature's eldest law.
 Leave the warm people no considering time;
 460 For then rebellion may be thought a crime.
 Prevail yourself of what occasion gives,
 But try your title while your father lives;
 And that your arms may have a fair pretense," pretext
 Proclaim you take them in the king's defense;
 465 Whose sacred life each minute would expose
 To plots, from seeming friends, and secret foes.
 And who can sound the depth of David's, soul?
 Perhaps his fear his kindness may control.
 He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
 470 For plighted vows too late to be undone.
 If so, by force he wishes to be gained,
 Like women's lechery, to seem constrained.⁰ forced
 Doubt not; but when he most affects the frown,
 Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
 475 Secure his person to secure your cause:
 They who possess the prince, possess the laws."
 He said, and this advice above the rest
 With Absalom's mild nature suited best:
 Unblamed of life (ambition set aside),
 480 Not stained with cruelty, nor puffed with pride,
 How happy had he been, if destiny
 Had higher placed his birth, or not so high!
 His kingly virtues might have claimed a throne,
 And blest all other countries but his own.
 485 But charming greatness since so few refuse,
 'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.
 Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,
 With blandishments to gain the public love;
 To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
 490 And popularly prosecute the Plot.
 To further this, Achitophel unites
 The malcontents of all the Israelites;
 Whose differing parties he could wisely join,
 For several ends, to serve the same design:
 495 The best (and of the princes some were such),
 Who thought the power of monarchy too much;
 (Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts;
 Not wicked, but seduced by impious arts.
 By these the springs of property were bent,
 500 And wound so high, they cracked the government.
 The next for interest sought to embroil the state,
 To sell their duty at a dearer rate;
 And make their Jewish markets of the throne,
 Pretending public good, to serve their own.
 505 Others thought kings an useless heavy load,
 Who cost too much, and did too little good.
 These were for laying honest David by,
 On principles of pure good husbandry.⁰ economy
 With them joined all the haranguers of the throng,

510 That thought to get preferment by the tongue.
 Who follow next, a double danger bring,
 Not only hating David, but the king:
 The Solymaeen rout,¹ well-versed of old
 In godly faction, and in treason bold;
 515 Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword,
 But lofty to a lawful prince restored;
 Saw with disdain an ethnic² plot begun,
 And scorned by Jebusites to be outdone.
 Hot Levites³ headed these; who, pulled before
 520 From the ark, which in the Judges' days they bore,
 Resumed their cant, and with a zealous cry
 Pursued their old beloved theocracy:
 Where Sanhedrin and priest enslaved the nation,
 And justified their spoils by inspiration:
 525 For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race,⁴
 If once dominion they could found in grace?
 These led the pack; though not of surest scent,
 Yet deepest-mouthed⁵ against the government.
 A numerous host of dreaming saints⁶ succeed,
 530 Of the true old enthusiastic breed:
 'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
 Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.
 But far more numerous was the herd of such,
 Who think too little, and who talk too much.
 535 These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,
 Adored their fathers' God and property;
 And, by the same blind benefit of fate,
 The Devil and the Jebusite did hate:
 Born to be saved, even in their own despite,
 540 Because they could not help believing right.
 Such were the tools; but a whole Hydra more
 Remains, of sprouting heads too long to score.⁰ *count*
 Some of their chiefs were princes of the land:
 In the first rank of these did Zimri⁷ stand;
 545 A man so various, that he seemed to be
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome:

1. I.e., London rabble. Solyma was a name for Jerusalem.

2. Gentile; here, Roman Catholic.

3. I.e., Presbyterian clergymen. The tribe of Levi, assigned to duties in the tabernacle, carried the Ark of the Covenant during the forty-year sojourn in the wilderness (Numbers 4). Under the Commonwealth ("in the Judges' days") Presbyterianism became the state religion, and its clergy, therefore, "bore the ark." The Act of Uniformity (1662) forced the Presbyterian clergy out of their livings: in short, before the Popish Plot, they had been "pulled from the ark." They are represented here as joining the Whigs in the hope of restoring the commonwealth, "their old beloved theocracy."

4. Priests had to be descendants of Aaron (Exodus 28.1, Numbers 18.7).

5. Loudest. The phrase is applied to hunting dogs. "Pack" and "scent" sustain the image.

6. Term used by certain Dissenters for those

elected to salvation. The extreme fanaticism of the "saints" and their claims to inspiration are characterized as a form of religious madness ("enthusiastic," line 530).

7. George Villiers, second duke of Buckingham (1628-1687), wealthy, brilliant, dissolute, and unstable. He had been an influential member of the cabal, but after 1673 had joined Shaftesbury in opposition to the court party. This is the least political of the satirical portraits in the poem. Buckingham had been the chief author of *The Rehearsal* (1671), the play that satirized heroic tragedy and ridiculed Dryden in the character of Mr. Bayes. Politics gave Dryden an opportunity to retaliate. He comments on this portrait in his "A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire." Dryden had two biblical Zimris in mind: the Zimri destroyed for his lustfulness and blasphemy (Numbers 25) and the conspirator and regicide of 1 Kings 16.8-20 and 2 Kings 9.31.

Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
 Was everything by starts, and nothing long;
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,
 550 Was chymist,^o fiddler, statesman, and buffoon: *chemist*
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
 Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
 With something new to wish, or to enjoy!
 555 Railing^o and praising were his usual themes; *reviling, abusing*
 And both (to show his judgment) in extremes:
 So over-violent, or over-civil,
 That every man, with him, was God or Devil.
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art:
 560 Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
 Beggared by fools, whom still^o he found^o too late, *constantly / found out*
 He had his jest, and they had his estate.
 He laughed himself from court; then sought relief
 By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief;
 565 For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
 On Absalom and wise Achitophel:
 Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
 He left not faction, but of that was left.
 Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse
 570 Of lords, below the dignity of verse.
 Wits, warriors, Commonwealth's men, were the best;
 Kind husbands, and mere nobles, all the rest.
 And therefore, in the name of dullness, be
 The well-hung Balaam and cold Caleb, free;
 575 And canting Nadab let oblivion damn,
 Who made new porridge for the paschal lamb.⁸
 Let friendship's holy band some names assure;
 Some their own worth, and some let scorn secure.
 Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place,
 580 Whom kings no titles gave, and God no grace:
 Not bull-faced Jonas,⁹ who could statutes draw
 To mean rebellion, and make treason law.
 But he, though bad, is followed by a worse,
 The wretch who heaven's anointed dared to curse:
 585 Shimei,¹ whose youth did early promise bring
 Of zeal to God and hatred to his king,
 Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,
 And never broke the Sabbath, but for gain;
 Nor ever was he known an oath to vent,

8. The lamb slain during Passover; here, Christ. The identities of Balaam, Caleb, and Nadab have not been certainly established, although various Whig nobles have been suggested. For Balaam see Numbers 22-24; for Caleb, Numbers 13-14; and for Nadab, Leviticus 10.1-2. "Well-hung": fluent of speech or sexually potent or both. "Cold": contrasts with the second meaning of *xvell-hung*. "Canting": points to a Nonconformist, as does "new porridge," for Dissenters referred to the Book of Common Prayer contemptuously as "porridge," a hodgepodge, unsubstantial stuff.

9. Sir William Jones, attorney general, had been largely responsible for the passage of the first Exclusion Bill by the House of Commons. He prosecuted the accused in the Popish Plot.

1. Shimei cursed and stoned David when he fled into the wilderness during Absalom's revolt (2 Samuel 16.5-14). His name is used here for one of the two sheriffs of London: Slingsby Bethel, a Whig, former republican, and virulent enemy of Charles. He packed juries with Whigs and so secured the acquittal of enemies of the court, among them Shaftesbury himself.

580 Or curse, unless against the government.
 Thus heaping wealth, by the most ready way
 Among the Jews, which was to cheat and pray,
 The city, to reward his pious hate
 Against his master, chose him magistrate.
 595 His hand a vare^o of justice did uphold; staff
 His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.
 During his office, treason was no crime;
 The sons of Belial² had a glorious time;
 For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,
 600 Yet loved his wicked neighbor as himself.
 When two or three were gathered to declaim 1
 Against the monarch of Jerusalem, >•
 Shimei was always in the midst of them; J
 And if they cursed the king when he was by,
 605 Would rather curse than break good company.
 If any durst his factious friends accuse,
 He packed a jury of dissenting Jews;
 Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
 Would free the suffering saint from human laws.
 610 For laws are only made to punish those
 Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.
 If any leisure time he had from power
 (Because 'tis sin to misemploy an hour),
 His business was, by writing, to persuade
 615 That kings were useless, and a clog to trade;
 And, that his noble style he might refine,
 No Rechabite³ more shunned the fumes of wine.
 Chaste were his cellars, and his shrieval board⁴
 The grossness of a city feast abhorred:
 620 His cooks, with long disuse, their trade forgot;
 Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot,
 Such frugal virtue malice may accuse,
 But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews:
 For towns once burnt⁵ such magistrates require
 625 As dare not tempt God's providence by fire.
 With spiritual food he fed his servants well,
 But free from flesh that made the Jews rebel;
 And Moses' laws he held in more account,
 For forty days of fasting in the mount.⁶
 630 To speak the rest, who better are forgot,
 Would tire a well-breathed witness of the Plot.
 Yet, Corah,⁷ thou shalt from oblivion pass:
 Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
 High as the serpent of thy metal made,⁸

2. Sons of wickedness (cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost* 1.490–505). Dryden probably intended a pun on Balliol, the Oxford college in which leading Whigs stayed during the brief and fateful meeting of Parliament at Oxford in 1681.

3. An austere Jewish sect that drank no wine (Jeremiah 35.2–19).

4. Sheriff's dinner table.

5. London burned in 1666.

6. Mount Sinai, where, during a fast of forty days.

Moses received the law (Exodus 34.28).

7. Or Korah, a rebellious Levite, swallowed up by the earth because of his crimes (Numbers 16). Corah is Titus Oates, the self-appointed, perjured, and "well-breathed" (long-winded) witness of the plot.

8. Moses erected a brazen serpent to heal the Jews bitten by fiery serpents (Numbers 21.4–9). Brass also means impudence or shamelessness.

- 635 While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.
 What though his birth were base, yet comets rise
 From earthy vapors, ere they shine in skies.
 Prodigious actions may as well be done
 By weaver's issue,⁹ as by prince's son.
- 640 This arch-attestor for the public good
 By that one deed ennobles all his blood.
 Who ever asked the witnesses' high race
 Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen¹ grace?
 Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,
- 645 His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen.
 Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,
 Sure signs he neither choleric⁰ was nor proud: *prone to anger*
 His long chin proved his wit; his saintlike grace
 A church vermilion, and a Moses' face.²
- 650 His memory, miraculously great,
 Could plots, exceeding man's belief, repeat;
 Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,
 For human wit could never such devise.
 Some future truths are mingled in his book;
- 655 But where the witness failed, the prophet spoke:
 Some things like visionary flights appear;
 The spirit caught him up, the Lord knows where,
 And gave him his rabbinical degree,
 Unknown to foreign university.³
- 660 His judgment yet his memory did excel;
 Which pieced his wondrous evidence so well,
 And suited to the temper of the times,
 Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.
 Let Israel's foes suspect his heavenly call,
- 665 And rashly judge his writ apocryphal;⁴
 Our laws for such affronts have forfeits made:
 He takes his life, who takes away his trade.
 Were I myself in witness Corah's place,
 The wretch who did me such a dire disgrace
- 670 Should whet my memory, though once forgot,
 To make him an appendix of my plot.
 His zeal to heaven made him his prince despise,
 And load his person with indignities;
 But zeal peculiar privilege affords,
- 675 Indulging latitude to deeds and words;
 And Corah might for Agag's⁵ murder call,
 In terms as coarse as Samuel used to Saul.
 What others in his evidence did join

9. Oates's father, a clergyman, belonged to an obscure family of ribbon weavers.

1. The first Christian martyr, accused by false witnesses (Acts 6–7).

2. Moses' face shone when he came down from Mount Sinai with the tables of the law (Exodus 34.29–30). Oates's face suggests high living, not spiritual illumination.

3. Oates falsely claimed to be a doctor of divinity in the University of Salamanca.

4. Not inspired and hence excluded from Holy Writ.

5. Agag is probably one of the five Catholic peers executed for the Popish Plot in 1680, most likely Lord Stafford, against whom Oates fabricated testimony. He is almost certainly not, as is usually suggested, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey (see headnote, pp. 2087–88). "Agag's murder" and Samuel's coarse terms to Saul are in 1 Samuel 15.

(The best that could be had for love or coin),
 680 In Corah's own predicament will fall;
 For *witness* is a common name to all.
 Surrounded thus with friends of every sort,
 Deluded Absalom forsakes the court:
 Impatient of high hopes, urged with renown,
 685 And fired with near possession of a crown.
 The admiring crowd are dazzled with surprise,
 And on his goodly person feed their eyes:
 His joy concealed, he sets himself to show,
 On each side bowing popularly⁶ low;
 690 His looks, his gestures, and his words he frames,
 And with familiar ease repeats their names.
 Thus formed by nature, furnished out with arts,
 He glides unfelt into their secret hearts.
 Then, with a kind compassionating look,
 695 And sighs, bespeaking pity ere he spoke,
 Few words he said; but easy those and fit,
 More slow than Hybla-drops,⁷ and far more sweet.
 "I mourn, my countrymen, your lost estate;
 Though far unable to prevent your fate:
 700 Behold a banished man, for your dear cause
 Exposed a prey to arbitrary laws!
 Yet oh! that I alone could be undone,
 Cut off from empire, and no more a son!
 Now all your liberties a spoil are made;]
 705 Egypt" and Tyrus° intercept your trade, t
 And Jebusites your sacred rites invade. J
 My father, whom with reverence yet I name,
 Charmed into ease, is careless of his fame;
 And, bribed with petty sums of foreign gold,
 710 Is grown in Bathsheba's⁸ embraces old;
 Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys;
 And all his power against himself employs.
 He gives, and let him give, my right away;
 But why should he his own, and yours betray?
 715 He only, he can make the nation bleed,
 And he alone from my revenge is freed.
 Take then my tears (with that he wiped his eyes),
 'Tis all the aid my present power supplies:
 No court-informer can these arms accuse;
 720 These arms may sons against their fathers use:
 And 'tis my wish, the next successor's reign
 May make no other Israelite complain."
 Youth, beauty, graceful action seldom fail;
 But common interest always will prevail;
 725 And pity never ceases to be shown
 To him who makes the people's wrongs his own.
 The crowd (that still believe their kings oppress)

France/Holland

6. "So as to please the crowd" (Johnson's *Dictionary*).

7. The famous honey of Hybla in Sicily.

8. Bathsheba is the woman with whom David

committed adultery (2 Samuel 11). Here, Charles II's French mistress, Louise de Keroualle, duchess of Portsmouth.

With lifted hands their young Messiah bless:
 Who now begins his progress to ordain
 730 With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train;
 From east to west his glories he displays,⁹
 And, like the sun, the promised land surveys.
 Fame runs before him as the morning star,
 And shouts of joy salute him from afar:
 735 Each house receives him as a guardian god,
 And consecrates the place of his abode:
 But hospitable treats did most commend
 Wise Issachar,¹ his wealthy western friend.
 This moving court, that caught the people's eyes,
 740 And seemed but pomp, did other ends disguise:
 Achitophel had formed it, with intent
 To sound the depths, and fathom, where it went,
 The people's hearts; distinguish friends from foes,
 And try their strength, before they came to blows.
 745 Yet all was colored with a smooth pretense
 Of specious love, and duty to their prince.
 Religion, and redress of grievances,
 Two names that always cheat and always please,
 Are often urged; and good King David's life
 750 Endangered by a brother and a wife.²
 Thus, in a pageant show, a plot is made,
 And peace itself is war in masquerade.
 O foolish Israel! never warned by ill,
 Still the same bait, and circumvented still!
 755 Did ever men forsake their present ease,
 In midst of health imagine a disease;
 Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,
 Make heirs for monarchs, and for God decree?
 What shall we think! Can people give away
 760 Both for themselves and sons, their native sway?
 Then they are left defenseless to the sword
 Of each unbounded, arbitrary lord:
 And laws are vain, by which we right enjoy,
 If kings unquestioned can those laws destroy.
 765 Yet if the crowd be judge of fit and just,
 And kings are only officers in trust,
 Then this resuming covenant was declared
 When kings were made, or is forever barred.
 If those who gave the scepter could not tie
 770 By their own deed their own posterity,
 How then could Adam bind his future race?
 How could his forfeit on mankind take place?
 Or how could heavenly justice damn us all,
 Who ne'er consented to our father's fall?
 775 Then kings are slaves to those whom they command,

9. In 1680 Monmouth made a progress through the west of England, seeking popular support for his cause.

1. Thomas Thynne of Longleat. He entertained Monmouth on his journey in the west. *Wise is, of*

course, ironic.

2. Titus Oates had sworn that both James, duke of York, and the queen were involved in a similar plot to poison Charles II.

And tenants to their people's pleasure stand.
 Add, that the power for property allowed
 Is mischievously seated in the crowd;
 For who can be secure of private right,
 780 If sovereign sway may be dissolved by might?
 Nor is the people's judgment always true:
 The most may err as grossly as the few;
 And faultless kings run down, by common cry,
 For vice, oppression, and for tyranny.
 785 What standard is there in a fickle rout,
 Which, flowing to the mark,⁰ runs faster out? *highwater mark*
 Nor only crowds, but Sanhedrins may be
 Infected with this public lunacy,³
 And share the madness of rebellious times,
 790 To murder monarchs for imagined crimes.⁴
 If they may give and take whene'er they please,
 Not kings alone (the Godhead's images),
 But government itself at length must fall
 To nature's state, where all have right to all.
 795 Yet, grant our lords the people kings can make,
 What prudent men a settled throne would shake?
 For whatsoever their sufferings were before,
 That change they covet makes them suffer more.
 All other errors but disturb a state,
 800 But innovation is the blow of fate.
 If ancient fabrics nod, and threat to fall,
 To patch the flaws, and buttress up the wall,
 Thus far 'tis duty; but here fix the mark;
 For all beyond it is to touch our ark.⁵
 805 To change foundations, cast the frame anew,
 Is work for rebels, who base ends pursue,
 At once divine and human laws control,
 And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.
 The tampering world is subject to this curse,
 810 To physic their disease into a worse.
 Now what relief can righteous David bring?
 How fatal 'tis to be too good a king!
 Friends he has few, so high the madness grows:
 Who dare be such, must be the people's foes:
 815 Yet some there were, even in the worst of days;
 Some let me name, and naming is to praise.
 In this short file Barzillai⁶ first appears;
 Barzillai, crowned with honor and with years:
 Long since, the rising rebels he withstood
 820 In regions waste, beyond the Jordan's flood:
 Unfortunately brave to buoy the State;
 But sinking underneath his master's fate:

3. The fickle crowd flows and ebbs like the tide, which is pulled back and forth by the moon (hence "lunacy," after the Latin *luna*, or "moon").

4. An allusion to the execution of Charles I.

5. U/zah was struck dead because he sacrilegiously touched the Ark of the Covenant (2 Samuel 6.6-7).

6. James Butler, duke of Ormond (1610-1688).

He was famous for his loyalty to the Stuart cause. He fought for Charles I in Ireland, and when that cause was hopeless, he joined Charles II in his exile abroad. He spent a large fortune on behalf of the king and continued to serve him loyally after the Restoration. Six of his ten children were dead (see line 830). Cf. 2 Samuel 19.31-39.

In exile with his godlike prince he mourned;
 For him he suffered, and with him returned.
 825 The court he practiced, not the courtier's art:
 Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart:
 Which well the noblest objects knew to choose,
 The fighting warrior, and recording Muse.
 His bed could once a fruitful issue boast;
 830 Now more than half a father's name is lost.
 His eldest hope,⁷ with every grace adorned,
 By me (so Heaven will have it) always mourned,
 And always honored, snatched in manhood's prime
 By unequal fates, and Providence's crime:
 835 Yet not before the goal of honor won,
 All parts fulfilled of subject and of son; r
 Swift was the race, but short the time to run. J
 O narrow circle, but of power divine,
 Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line!
 840 By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was known,
 Arms thy delight, and war was all thy own:
 Thy force, infused, the fainting Tyrians⁹ propped; *the Dutch*
 And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stopped.
 Oh ancient honor! Oh unconquered hand,
 845 Whom foes unpunished never could withstand!
 But Israel was unworthy of thy name:
 Short is the date of all immoderate fame.
 It looks as Heaven our ruin had designed,
 And durst not trust thy fortune and thy mind.
 850 Now, free from earth, thy disencumbered soul
 Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds and starry pole:
 From thence thy kindred legions mayst thou bring,
 To aid the guardian angel of thy king.
 Here stop my Muse, here cease thy painful flight;
 855 No pinions can pursue immortal height:
 Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,
 And tell thy soul she should have fled before:
 Or fled she with his life, and left this verse
 To hang on her departed patron's hearse?
 860 Now take thy steepy flight from heaven, and see
 If thou canst find on earth another *he*:
 Another *he* would be too hard to find;
 See then whom thou canst see not far behind.
 Zadoc the priest, whom, shunning power and place,
 865 His lowly mind advanced to David's grace:
 With him the Sagan⁸ of Jerusalem,
 Of hospitable soul, and noble stem;
 Him of the western dome, whose weighty sense
 Flows in fit words and heavenly eloquence.
 870 The prophets' sons,⁹ by such example led,
 To learning and to loyalty were bred:
 For colleges on bounteous kinds depend,

7. Ormond's son, Thomas, earl of Ossory (1634—1680), a famous soldier and, like his father, devoted to Charles II.

8. Henry Compton, bishop of London. "Zadoc":

William Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury.

9. The boys of Westminster School, which Dryden had attended. "Him of the western dome": John Dolben, dean of Westminster.

And never rebel was to arts a friend.
 To these succeed the pillars of the laws,
 875 Who best could plead, and best can judge a cause.
 Next them a train of loyal peers ascend;
 Sharp-judging Adriel,¹ the Muses' friend,
 Himself a Muse—in Sanhedrin's debate
 True to his prince, but not a slave of state;
 880 Whom David's love with honors did adorn,
 "That from his disobedient son were torn.
 Jotham² of piercing wit, and pregnant thought.
 Indued by nature, and by learning taught
 To move assemblies, who but only tried
 885 The worse a while, then chose the better side;
 Nor chose alone, but turned the balance too;
 So much the weight of one brave man can do.
 Hushai,³ the friend of David in distress,
 In public storms, of manly steadfastness:
 890 By foreign treaties he informed his youth,
 And joined experience to his native truth.
 His frugal care supplied the wanting throne,
 Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own:
 'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow,
 895 But hard the task to manage well the low;
 For sovereign power is too depressed or high,
 When kings are forced to sell, or crowds to buy.
 Indulge one labor more, my weary Muse,
 For Amiel:⁴ who can Amiel's praise refuse?
 900 Of ancient race by birth, but nobler yet
 In his own worth, and without title great:
 The Sanhedrin long time as chief he ruled,
 Their reason guided, and their passion cooled:
 So dexterous was he in the crown's defense,
 905 So formed to speak a loyal nation's sense,
 That, as their band was Israel's tribes in small,
 So fit was he to represent them all.
 Now rasher charioteers the seat ascend,
 Whose loose careers his steady skill commend": *set off to advantage*
 910 They like the unequal ruler of the day,
 Misguide the seasons, and mistake the way;
 While he withdrawn at their mad labor smiles,
 And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.
 These were the chief, a small but faithful band "1
 915 Of worthies, in the breach who dared to stand,
 And tempt the united fury of the land. J
 With grief they viewed such powerful engines bent,
 To batter down the lawful government:
 A numerous faction, with pretended frights,
 920 In Sanhedrins to plume" the regal rights; *pluck, plunder*
 The true successor from the court removed:⁵

1. John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave.

2. George Savile, marquis of Halifax.

3. Laurence Hyde, earl of Rochester.

4. Edward Seymour, speaker of the House of

Commons.

5. The duke of York had been banished from England.

The Plot, by hireling witnesses, improved.
 These ills they saw, and, as their duty bound,
 They showed the king the danger of the wound:
 925 That no concessions from the throne would please,
 But lenitives⁰ fomented the disease; *pain relievers*
 That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,
 Was made the lure to draw the people down;
 That false Achitophel's pernicious hate
 930 Had turned the Plot to ruin Church and State:
 The council violent, the rabble worse;
 That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.
 With all these loads of injuries oppressed,
 And long revolving, in his careful breast,
 935 The event of things, at last, his patience tired,
 Thus from his royal throne, by Heaven inspired,
 The godlike David spoke: with awful fear
 His train their Maker in their master hear.
 "Thus long have I, by native mercy swayed,
 940 My wrongs dissembled, my revenge delayed:
 So willing to forgive the offending age,
 So much the father did the king assuage.
 But now so far my clemency they slight,
 The offenders question my forgiving right.
 945 That one was made for many, they contend;
 But 'tis to rule; for that's a monarch's end.
 They call my tenderness of blood, my fear;
 Though manly tempers can the longest bear.
 Yet, since they will divert my native course,
 950 'Tis time to show I am not good by force.
 Those heaped affronts that haughty subjects bring,
 Are burdens for a camel, not a king:
 Kings are the public pillars of the State,
 Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight:
 955 If my young Samson will pretend a call
 To shake the column, let him share the fall:⁶
 But, oh, that yet he would repent and live!
 How easy 'tis for parents to forgive!
 With how few tears a pardon might be won
 960 From nature, pleading for a darling son!
 Poor pitied youth, by my paternal care
 Raised up to all the height his frame could bear:
 Had God ordained his fate for empire born,
 He would have given his soul another turn:
 965 Gulled⁰ with a patriot's name, whose modern sense *deceived*
 Is one that would by law supplant his prince:
 The people's brave,⁰ the politician's tool; *bully*
 Never was patriot yet, but was a fool.
 Whence comes it that religion and the laws
 970 Should more be Absalom's than David's cause?
 His old instructor,⁷ ere he lost his place,
 Was never thought indued with so much grace.

6. Judges 16.

7. The earl of Shaftesbury.

Good heavens, how faction can a patriot paint!
 My rebel ever proves my people's saint:
 975 Would *they* impose an heir upon the throne?
 Let Sanhedrins be taught to give their own.
 A king's at least a part of government,
 And mine as requisite as their consent;
 Without my leave a future king to choose,
 980 Infers a right the present to depose:
 True, they petition me to approve their choice;
 But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.⁸
 My pious subjects for my safety pray,
 Which to secure, they take my power away.
 985 From plots and treasons Heaven preserve my years,
 But save me most from my petitioners.
 Unsatiated as the barren womb or grave;
 God cannot grant so much as they can crave.
 What then is left but with a jealous eye
 990 To guard the small remains of royalty?
 The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,
 And the same law teach rebels to obey:
 Votes shall no more established power control—
 Such votes as make a part exceed the whole:
 995 No groundless clamors shall my friends remove,
 Nor crowds have power to punish ere they prove:
 For gods and godlike kings, their care express,
 Still to defend their servants in distress.
 O that my power to saving were confined:
 1000 Why am I forced, like Heaven, against my mind, ^F
 To make examples of another kind? ^J
 Must I at length the sword of justice draw?
 O curst effects of necessary law!
 How ill my fear they by my mercy scan!⁰ judge
 1005 Beware the fury of a patient man.
 Law they require, let Law then show her face;
 They could not be content to look on Grace,
 Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
 To tempt the terror of her front and die.⁹
 1010 By their own arts, 'tis righteously decreed,
 Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.
 Against themselves their witnesses will swear,
 Till viper-like their mother Plot they tear:
 And suck for nutriment that bloody gore,
 1015 Which was their principle of life before.
 Their Belial with their Belzebub¹ will fight;
 Thus on my foes, my foes shall do me right:
 Nor doubt the event; for factious crowds engage,
 In their first onset, all their brutal rage.
 1020 Then let 'em take an unresisted course,
 Retire and traverse,⁰ and delude their force: *thwart*

8. Genesis 27.22.

9. Moses was not allowed to see the countenance of Jehovah (Exodus 33.20-23).

1. A god of the Philistines. "Belial": the incarnation of all evil,

But when they stand all breathless, urge the fight,
 And rise upon 'em with redoubled might:
 For lawful power is still superior found,
 1025 When long driven back, at length it stands the ground."
 He said. The Almighty, nodding, gave consent;
 And peals of thunder shook the firmament.
 Henceforth a series of new time began,
 The mighty years in long procession ran:
 1030 "Once more the godlike David was restored,
 And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

1681

Mac Flecknoe The target of this superb satire, which is cast in the form of a mock-heroic episode, is Thomas Shadwell (1640-1692), the playwright, with whom Dryden had been on good terms for a number of years, certainly as late as March 1678. Shadwell considered himself the successor of Ben Jonson and the champion of the type of comedy that Jonson had written, the "comedy of humors," in which each character is presented under the domination of a single psychological trait or eccentricity, his humor. His plays are not without merit, but they are often clumsy and prolix and certainly much inferior to Jonson's. For many years he had conducted a public argument with Dryden on the merits of Jonson's comedies, which he thought Dryden undervalued. Exactly what moved Dryden to attack him is a matter of conjecture: he may simply have grown progressively bored and irritated by Shadwell and his tedious argument. The poem seems to have been written in late 1678 or 1679 and to have circulated only in manuscript until it was printed in 1682 in a pirated edition by an obscure publisher. By that time, the two playwrights were alienated by politics as well as by literary quarrels. Shadwell was a violent Whig and the reputed author of a sharp attack on Dryden as the Tory author of *Absalom and Achitophel* and "The Medal." It was probably for this reason that the printer added the subtitle referring to Shadwell's Whiggism in the phrase "true-blue-Protestant poet." Political passions were running high, and sales would be helped if the poem seemed to refer to the events of the day.

Whereas Butler had debased and degraded his victims by using burlesque, caricature, and the grotesque, Dryden exposed Shadwell to ridicule by using the devices of mock epic, which treats the low, mean, or absurd in the grand language, lofty style, and solemn tone of epic poetry. The obvious disparity between subject and style makes the satiric point. In 1678, a prolific, untalented writer, Richard Flecknoe, died. Dryden conceived the idea of presenting Shadwell (the self-proclaimed heir of Ben Jonson, the laureate) as the son and successor of Flecknoe (an irony also because Flecknoe was a Catholic priest)—hence *Mac* (i.e., son of) *Flecknoe*—from whom he inherits the throne of dullness. Flecknoe in the triple role of king, priest, and poet hails his successor, pronounces a panegyric on his perfect fitness for the throne, anoints and crowns him, foretells his glorious reign, and as he sinks (leaden dullness cannot soar), leaves his mantle to fall symbolically on Shadwell's shoulders. The poem abounds in literary allusions—to Soman legend and history and to the *Aeneid*, to Cowley's fragmentary epic *The Dai'ideis*, to *Paradise Lost*, and to Shadwell's own plays. Biblical allusions add an unexpected dimension of incongruous dignity to the low scene. The coronation takes place in the City, to the plaudits of the citizens, who are fit to admire only what is dull. In 217 lines, Dryden created an image of Shadwell that has fixed his reputation to this day.

Mac Flecknoe

Or a Satire u-pon the True-Blue-Protestant Poet, T. S.

- All human things are subject to decay,
 And when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
 This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus,¹ young
 Was called to empire, and had governed long;
 5 In prose and verse, was owned, without dispute,
 Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
 This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
 And blest with issue of a large increase,
 Worn out with business, did at length debate
 10 To settle the succession of the state;
 And, pondering which of all his sons was fit
 To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
 Cried: " 'Tis resolved; for nature pleads that he
 Should only rule, who most resembles me.
 15 Sh ² alone my perfect image bears,
~~Mature~~ in dullness from his tender years:
 Sh alone, of all my sons, is he
 Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
 The ~~rest~~ to some faint meaning make pretense,
 20 But Sh never deviates into sense.
 Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
 Strike ~~through~~, and make a lucid interval;
 But Sh 's genuine night admits no ray,
 His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
 25 Besides, his goodly fabric³ fills the eye,
 And seems designed for thoughtless majesty:
 Thoughtless as monarch oaks that shade the plain,
 And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
 Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,⁴
 30 Thou last great prophet of tautology.⁵
 Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
 Was sent before but to prepare thy way;
 And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget,⁶ *coarse woolen cloth*
 To teach the nations in thy greater name.⁶
 35 My warbling lute, the lute I whilom⁷ strung, *formerly*
 When to King John of Portugal⁷ I sung,
 Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
 When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,
 With well-timed oars before the royal barge,

1. In 31 B.C.E. Octavian became the first Roman emperor at the age of thirty-two. He assumed the title Augustus in 27 B.C.E.

2. Thomas Shadwell. The initial and second letter of the name followed by a dash give the appearance, but only the appearance, of protecting Dryden's victim by concealing his name. A common device in the satire of the period.

3. His body. Shadwell was a corpulent man.

4. Thomas Heywood (ca. 1570—1641) and James Shirley (1596—1666), playwrights popular before the closing of the theaters in 1642 but now out of fashion. They are introduced here as "types" (i.e.,

prefigurings) of Shadwell, in the sense that Solomon was regarded as an Old Testament prefiguring of Christ, the "last [final] great prophet."

5. Unnecessary repetition of meaning in different words.

6. The parallel between Flecknoe, as forerunner of Shadwell, and John the Baptist, as forerunner of Jesus, is made plain in lines 32—34 by the use of details and even words taken from Matthew 3.3—4 and John 1.23.

7. Flecknoe boasted of the patronage of the Portuguese king.

Swelled with the pride of thy celestial charge;
 And big with hymn, commander of a host,
 The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets tossed.⁸
 Methinks I see the new Arion⁹ sail,
 The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
 At thy well-sharpened thumb from shore to shore
 The treble squeaks for fear, ~~the~~ basses roar;
 Echoes ~~from~~ Pissing Alley Sh call,
 And Sh they resound from Aston Hall.
 About thy boat the little fishes throng,
 As at the morning toast⁰ that floats along.
 Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
 Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand,
 St. Andre's¹ feet ne'er kept more equal time,
 Not ev'n the feet of thy own *Psyche's* rhyme;
 Though they in number as in sense excel:
 So just, so like tautology, they fell,
 That, pale with envy, Singleton² forswore i
 The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore, >
 And vowed he ne'er would act Villerius³ more." J
 Here stopped the good old sire, and wept for joy
 In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.
 All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
 That for anointed dullness⁴ he was made.

Close to the walls which fair Augusta⁰ bind London
 (The fair Augusta much to fears inclined),⁵
 An ancient fabric,⁰ raised to inform the sight, building
 There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight:⁰ was called
 A watchtower once; but now, so fate ordains,
 Of all the pile an empty name remains.
 From its old ruins brothel houses rise,
 Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys,
 Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep,
 And, undisturbed by watch, in silence sleep.
 Near these a Nursery⁶ erects its head,
 Where queens are formed, and future heroes bred;
 Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry, l
 Where infant punks⁰ their tender voices try, f prostitutes
 And little Maximins⁷ the gods defy. J
 Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,
 Nor greater Jonson dares in socks⁸ appear;
 But gentle Simkin⁹ just reception finds
 Amidst this monument of vanished minds:

8. A reference to Shadwell's comedy *Epsom Wells* and to the farcical scene in his *Virtuoso*, in which Sir Samuel Hearty is tossed in a blanket.

9. A legendary Greek poet. Returning home by sea, he was robbed and thrown overboard by the sailors, but was saved by a dolphin that had been charmed by his music.

1. A French dancer who designed the choreography of Shadwell's opera *Psyche* (1675). Dryden's sneer at the mechanical metrics of the songs in *Psyche* is justified.

2. John Singleton (d. 1686), a musician at the Theatre Royal.

3. A character in Sir William Davenant's *Siege of*

Rhodes (1656), the first English opera.

4. The anticipated phrase is "anointed majesty." English kings are anointed with oil at their coronations.

5. This line alludes to the fears excited by the Popish Plot (cf. *Absalom and Achitophel*, p. 2087).

6. The name of a training school for young actors.

7. Maximin is the cruel emperor in Dryden's *Tyrannic Love* (1669), notorious for his bombast.

8. "Buskins" and "socks" were the symbols of tragedy and comedy, respectively. John Fletcher (1579–1625), the playwright and collaborator with Francis Beaumont (ca. 1584–1616).

9. A popular character in low farces.

Pure clinches⁰ the suburban Muse affords,
 And Panton¹ waging harmless war with words.
 85 Here Flecknoe, as a place ~~to fame~~ well known,
 Ambitiously design'd his Sh _____'s throne;
 For ancient Dekker² prophesied long since, 1
 That in this pile would reign a mighty prince, f
 Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense; J
 90 To whom true dullness should some *Psyches* owe,
 But worlds of *Misers* from his pen should flow;
Humorists and *Hypocrites*³ it should produce,
 Whole Raymond families, and tribes of Bruce.
 Now ~~Empress~~ Fame had published the renown
 95 Of Sh _____'s coronation through the town.
 Roused by report of Fame, the nations meet,
 From near Bunhill, and distant Watling Street.⁴
 No Persian carpets spread the imperial way,
 But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay;
 100 From dusty shops neglected authors come,
 Martyrs of pies, and relics of the bum.⁵
 Much Heywood, ~~Shirley~~, Ogilby⁶ there lay,
 But loads of Sh _____ almost choked the way.
 Bilked stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
 105 And Herringman was captain of the guard.⁷
 The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
 High on a throne of his own labors reared.
 At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
 Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
 110 His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,
 And lambent dullness played around his face.⁸
 As Hannibal did to the altars come,
 Sworn ~~by his~~ sire a mortal foe to Rome,⁹
 So Sh _____ swore, nor should his vow be vain,
 115 That he till death true dullness would maintain;
 And, in his father's right, and realm's defense,
 Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
 The king himself the sacred unction¹ made,
 As king by office, and as priest by trade.
 120 In his sinister⁰ hand, instead of ball, left
 He placed a mighty mug of potent ale;
Love's Kingdom to his right he did convey,

1. Said to have been a celebrated punster.

2. Thomas Dekker (ca. 1572-1632), the playwright, whom Jonson had satirized in *The Poetaster*.

3. Three of Shadwell's plays; *The Hypocrite*, a failure, was not published. "Raymond" and "Bruce" (line 93) are characters in *The Humorists* and *The Virtuoso*, respectively.

4. Because Bunhill is about a quarter mile and Watling Street little more than a half mile from the site of the Nursery, where the coronation is held, Shadwell's fame is narrowly circumscribed. Moreover, his subjects live in the heart of the City, regarded by men of wit and fashion as the abode of bad taste and middle-class vulgarity.

5. Unsold books were used to line pie plates and as toilet paper.

6. John Ogilby, a translator of Homer and Virgil, ridiculed by both Dryden and Pope as a bad poet.

7. "Bilked stationers"; cheated publishers, acting as "yeomen" of the guard, led by Henry Herringman, who until 1679 was the publisher of both Shadwell and Dryden.

8. Ascanius, or Iulus, was the son of Aeneas. Virgil referred to him as "*spes altera Romae*" ("Rome's other hope," *Aeneid* 12.168). As Troy fell, he was marked as favored by the gods when a flickering ("lambent") flame played round his head (*Aeneid* 2.680-84).

9. Hannibal, who almost conquered Rome in 216 B.C.E., during the second Punic War, took this oath at the age of nine (Livy 21.1).

1. The sacramental oil, used in the coronation.

At once his scepter, and his rule of sway;
 Whose righteous lore the prince had practiced young,
 125 And from whose loins recorded *Psyche* sprung.
 His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
 That nodding seemed to consecrate his head.²
 Just at that point of time, if fame not lie,
 On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly.³
 130 So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tiber's brook,
 Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
 The admiring throng loud acclamations make,
 And omens of his future empire take.
 The sire then shook the honors⁴ of his head,
 135 And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
 Full on the filial dullness: long he stood, 1
 Repelling from his breast the raging god; f
 At length burst out in this prophetic mood: J
 "Heavens bless my son, from Ireland let him reign
 MO To far Barbadoes on the western main;⁵
 Of his dominion may no end be known,
 And greater than his father's be his throne;
 Beyond *Love's Kingdom* let him stretch his pen!"
 He paused, and all the people cried, "Amen."
 145 Then thus continued he: "My son, advance
 Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
 Success let others teach, learn thou from me
 Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
 Let *Virtuosos* in five years be writ;
 150 Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
 Let gentle George⁶ in triumph tread the stage,
 Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage;
 Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,
 And in their folly show the writer's wit.
 155 Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defense,
 And justify their author's want of sense.
 Let 'em be all by thy own model made
 Of dullness, and desire no foreign aid;
 That they to future ages may be known,
 160 Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
 Nay, let thy men of wit too be the same,
 All full of thee, and differing but in name.
 But let no alien S—dl—y⁷ interpose,
 To lard with wit⁸ thy hungry *Epsom* prose.
 165 And when false flowers of rhetoric thou wouldst cull,
 Trust nature, do not labor to be dull;

2. During the coronation a British monarch holds two symbols of the throne: a globe ("ball") representing the world in the left hand and a scepter in the right. Shadwell's symbols of monarchy are a mug of ale; Flecknoe's drear' play *Love's Kingdom*; and a crown of poppies, which suggest heaviness, dullness, and drowsiness. The poppies also refer obliquely to Shadwell's addiction to opium.

3. Birds of night. Appropriate substitutes for the twelve vultures whose flight confirmed to Romulus the destined site of Rome, of which he was founder and king.

4. Ornaments, hence locks.

5. Shadwell's empire is vast but empty.

6. Sir George Etherege (ca. 1635—1691), a writer of brilliant comedies. In the next couplet Dryden names characters from his plays.

7. Sir Charles Sedley (1638-1701), wit, rake, poet, and playwright. Dryden hints that he contributed more than the prologue to Shadwell's *Epsom Wells*.

8. This phrase recalls a sentence in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*: "They lard their lean books with the fat of others' works."

But write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
 Sir Formal's⁹ oratory will be thine:
 Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy quill,
 And does thy northern dedications¹ fill.
 Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
 By arrogating Jonson's hostile name.
 Let father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
 And uncle Ogilby thy envy raise.
 Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no part:
 What share have we in nature, or in art?
 Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
 And rail at arts he did not understand?
 Where made he love in Prince Nicander's vein,²
 Or swept the dust in *Psyche's* humble strain?
 Where sold he bargains, 'whip-stitch,³ kiss my arse,'
 Promised a play and dwindled to a farce?⁴
 When did his Muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
 As thou whole Eth'rege dost transfuse to thine?
 But so transfused, as oil on water's flow,
 His always floats above, thine sinks below.
 This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
 New humors to invent for each new play:
 This is that boasted bias⁵ of thy mind,
 By which one way, to dullness, 'tis inclined;
 Which makes thy writings lean on one side still,
 And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
 Nor let thy mountain-belly make pretense
 Of likeness; thine's a tympany⁶ of sense.
 A tun^o of man in thy large bulk is writ, *large cask*
 But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin^o of wit. *small cask*
 Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;
 Thy tragic Muse gives smiles, thy comic sleep.
 With whate'er gall thou sett'st thyself to write,
 Thy inoffensive satires never bite.
 In thy felonious heart though venom lies,
 It does but touch thy Irish pen,⁷ and dies.
 Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
 In keen iambs,^o but mild anagram. *sharp satire*
 Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command
 Some peaceful province in acrostic land.
 There thou may'st wings display and altars raise,⁸
 And torture one poor word ten thousand ways.

9. Sir Formal] Trifle, the ridiculous and vapid orator in *The Virtuoso*.

1. Shadwell frequently dedicated his works to the duke of Newcastle and members of his family.

2. In *Psyche*.

3. A nonsense word frequently used by Sir Samuel Hearty in *The Virtuoso*. "Sell bargains": to answer an innocent question with a coarse or indecent phrase, as in this line.

4. Low comedy that depends largely on situation rather than wit, consistently condemned by Dryden and other serious playwrights.

5. In bowling, the spin given to the bowl that causes it to swerve. Dryden closely parodies a passage in Shadwell's epilogue to *The Humorists*.

6. A swelling in some part of the body caused by wind.

7. Dryden accuses Flecknoe and his "son" of being Irish. Ireland suggested only poverty, superstition, and barbarity to 17th-century Londoners.

8. "Wings" and "altars" refer to poems in the shape of these objects as in George Herbert's "Easter Wings" (p. 1609) and "The Altar" (p. 1607). "Anagram": the transposition of letters in a word so as to make a new one. "Acrostic": a poem in which the first letter of each line, read downward, makes up the name of the person or thing that is the subject of the poem. Dryden is citing instances of triviality and overingenuity in literature.

Or, if thou wouldst thy different talent suit,
 210 Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute."
 He said: but his last words were scarcely heard 1
 For Bruce and Longville had a trap prepared,
 And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.⁹ J
 Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
 215 Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
 The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,¹
 With double portion of his father's art.

ca. 1679

1682

To the Memory of Mr. Oldham¹

Farewell, too little, and too lately known,
 Whom I began to think and call my own:
 For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
 Cast in the same poetic mold with mine.
 5 One common note on either lyre did strike,
 And knaves and fools² we both abhorred alike.
 To the same goal did both our studies drive;
 The last set out the soonest did arrive.
 Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
 10 While his young friend³ performed and won the race.
 O early ripe! to thy abundant store
 What could advancing age have added more?
 It might (what nature never gives the young)
 Have taught the numbers⁰ of thy native tongue. *metrics, verse*
 15 But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
 Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.⁴
 A noble error, and but seldom made,
 When poets are by too much force betrayed.
 Thy generous fruits, though gathered ere their prime,
 20 \$till showed a quickness;⁵ and maturing time
 But mellows what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme,
 (bnce more, hail and farewell;⁵ farewell, thou young,
 Jut ah too short, Marcellus⁷ of our tongue;
 Hy brows with ivy, and with laurels bound;⁸
 25 But fate and gloomy night encompass thee around.

1684

9. In *The Virtuoso*, Bruce and Longville play this trick on Sir Formal Trifle while he makes a speech.

1. When the prophet Elijah was carried to heaven in a chariot of fire borne on a whirlwind, his mantle fell on his successor, the younger prophet Elisha (2 Kings 2.8—14). Flecknoe, prophet of dullness, naturally cannot ascend, but must sink.

1. John Oldham (1653-1683), the young poet whose *Satires upon the Jesuits* (1681), which Dryden admired, were written in 1679, before Dryden's major satires appeared (see line 8). This elegy was published in Oldham's *Remains in Verse and Prose* (1684).

2. Objects of satire.

3. Nisus, on the point of winning a footrace, slipped in a pool of blood. His "young friend" was

Euryalus (Virgil's *Aeneid* 5.315—39).

4. Dryden repeats the Renaissance idea that the satirist should avoid smoothness and affect rough meters ("harsh cadence").

5. Sharpness of flavor.

6. Dryden echoes the famous words that conclude Catullus's elegy to his brother: "*Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale*" (And forever, brother, hail and farewell!).

7. The nephew of Augustus, adopted by him as his successor. After winning military fame as a youth, he died at the age of twenty. Virgil celebrated him in the *Aeneid* 6.854—86. The last line of Dryden's poem is a reminiscence of *Aeneid* 6.866.

8. The poet's wreath (cf. Milton's *Lycidas*, lines 1—2, p. 1806).

A Song for St. Cecilia's Day¹

i

From harmony, from heavenly harmony
 This universal frame began:
 When Nature underneath a heap
 Of jarring atoms lay,
 s And could not heave her head,
 The tuneful voice was heard from high:
 "Arise, ye more than dead." ·
 Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,²
 In order to their stations leap,
 10 And Music's power obey.
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony
 This universal frame began:
 From harmony to harmony
 Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
 15 The diapason³ closing full in man.

2

What passion cannot Music raise and quell!⁴
 When Jubal struck the corded shell,⁵
 His listening brethren stood around,
 And, wondering, on their faces fell
 20 To worship that celestial sound.
 Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
 Within the hollow of that shell
 That spoke so sweetly and so well.
 What passion cannot Music raise and quell!

3

25 The trumpet's loud clangor
 Excites us to arms,
 With shrill notes of anger,
 And mortal alarms.
 The double double double beat

1. St. Cecilia, a Roman lady, was an early Christian martyr. She has long been regarded as the patroness of music and the supposed inventor of the organ. Celebrations of her festival day (November 22) in England were usually devoted to music and the praise of music, and from about 1683 to 1703 the Musical Society in London annually commemorated it with a religious service and a public concert. This concert always included an ode written and set to music for the occasion, of which the two by Dryden ("A Song for St. Cecilia's Day," 1687, and "Alexander's Feast," 1697) are the most distinguished. G. B. Draghi, an Italian brought to England by Charles II, set this ode to music; but Handel's fine score, composed in 1739, has completely obscured the original setting. This is an irregular ode in the manner of Cowley. In stanzas 3–6, Dryden boldly attempted to suggest in the sounds of his words the characteristic tones of the instruments mentioned.

2. "Nature": created nature, ordered by the Divine Wisdom out of chaos, which Dryden, adopting the

physics of the Greek philosopher Epicurus, describes as composed of the warring and discordant ("jarring") atoms of the four elements: earth, fire, water, and air ("cold," "hot," "moist," and "dry").

3. The entire compass of tones in the scale. Dryden is thinking of the Chain of Being, the ordered creation from inanimate nature up to humans, God's latest and final work. The just gradations of notes in a scale are analogous to the equally just gradations in the ascending scale of created beings. Both are the result of harmony.

4. The power of music to describe, evoke, or subdue emotion ("passion") is a frequent theme in 17th-century literature. In stanzas 2–6, the poet considers music as awakening religious awe, warlike courage, sorrow for unrequited love, jealousy and fury, and the impulse to worship God.

5. According to Genesis 4.21, Jubal was the inventor of the lyre and the pipe. Dryden imagines Jubal's lyre to have been made of a tortoiseshell ("corded shell").

30 Of the thundering drum
 Cries: "Hark! the foes come;
 Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat."

4

The soft complaining flute
 In dying notes discovers
 35 The woes of hopeless lovers,
 Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

5

Sharp violins⁶ proclaim
 Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
 Fury', frantic indignation,
 40 Depth of pains, and height of passion,
 For the fair, disdainful dame.

6

But O! what art can teach,
 What human voice can reach,
 The sacred organ's praise?
 45 Notes inspiring holy love,
 Notes that wing their heavenly ways
 To mend the choirs above.

7

Orpheus' could lead the savage race;
 And trees unrooted left their place,
 50 Sequacious of³ the lyre; *following*
 But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
 When to her organ vocal breath was given,
 An angel heard, and straight appeared,⁸
 Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

55 *As from the -power of sacred lays
 The spheres began to move,
 And sung the great Creator's praise⁹
 To all the hlest above;
 So, when the last and dreadful hour*
 60 *This crumbling pageant¹ shall devour,
 The trumpet shall be heard on high, l
 The dead shall live, the living die, f
 And Music shall untune the sky.² J*

1687

6. A reference to the bright tone of the modern violin, introduced into England at the Restoration. The tone of the old-fashioned viol is much duller.

7. Legendary poet, son of one of the Muses, who played so wonderfully on the lyre that wild beasts ("the savage race") grew tame and followed him, as did even rocks and trees.

8. According to the legend, it was Cecilia's piety, not her music, that brought an angel to visit her.

9. As it was harmony that ordered the universe, so

it was angelic song ("sacred lays") that put the celestial bodies ("spheres") in motion. The harmonious chord that results from the traditional "music of the spheres" is a hymn of "praise" sung by created nature to its "Creator."

1. The universe, the stage on which the drama of human salvation has been acted out.

2. The "last trump" of 1 Corinthians 15.52, which will announce the Resurrection and the Last Judgment.

Epigram on Milton¹

Three poets,² in three distant ages born,
 Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
 The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
 The next in majesty, in both the last:
 5 The force of Nature could no farther go;
 To make a third, she joined the former two.

1688

Alexander's Feast¹

Or the Power of Music; An Ode in Honor of St. Cecilia's Day

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won
 By Philip's² warlike son:
 Aloft in awful state
 The godlike hero sate
 5 On his imperial throne;
 His valiant peers were placed around;
 Their brows with roses and with myrtles³ bound:
 (So should desert in arms be crowned).
 The lovely Thai's, by his side,
 10 Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
 In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
 Happy, happy, happy pair!
 None but the brave,
 None but the brave,
 15 None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS

Happy, happy, happ)' pair!
None hut the hrave,
None hut the hrave,
None hut the hrave deserves the fair.

1. Engraved beneath the portrait of Milton in Jacob Tonson's edition of *Paradise Lost* (1688).

2. I.e., Homer, Virgil, and Milton.

1. After his defeat of the Persian emperor Darius III and the fall of the Persian capital Persepolis (331 B.C.E.), Alexander the Great, held a feast for his officers. Thai's, his Athenian mistress, persuaded him to set fire to the palace in revenge for the burning of Athens by the Persians under Xerxes in 480 B.C.E. According to Plutarch, Alexander was moved by love and wine, not by music, but Dryden,

perhaps altering an old tradition that Alexander's musician Timotheus once by his flute-playing caused the hero to start up and arm himself, attributes the burning of Persepolis to the power of music. The original music was by Jeremiah Clarke, but Handel's score of 1736 is better known.

2. King Philip II of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great.

3. Emblems of love. The Greeks and Romans wore wreaths of flowers at banquets.

Timotheus, placed on high
 Amid the tuneful choir,
 With flying fingers touched the lyre:
 The trembling notes ascend the sky,
 And heavenly joys inspire.
 The song began from Jove,
 Who left his blissful seats above
 (Such is the power of mighty love).
 A dragon's fiery form belied the god:⁴
 Sublime on radiant spires⁵ he rode,
 When he to fair Olympia pressed;
 And while he sought her snowy breast:
 Then, round her slender waist he curled,
 And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
 The listening crowd admire⁰ the lofty sound: *wonder at*
 "A present deity," they shout around;
 "A present deity," the vaulted roofs rebound.
 With ravished ears
 The monarch hears,
 Assumes the god,
 Affects to nod,
 And seems to shake the spheres.⁶

CHORUS

*With ravished ears
 The monarch hears,
 Assumes the god,
 Affects to nod,
 And seems to shake the spheres.*

3

The praise of Bacchus⁰ then the sweet musician sung, *god of wine*
 Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young:
 The jolly god in triumph comes;
 Sound the trumpets; beat the drums;
 Flushed with a purple grace
 He shows his honest face:
 Now give the hautboys⁰ breath; he comes, he comes! *oboes*
 Bacchus, ever fair and young
 Drinking joys did first ordain;
 Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is a soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain.

4. An oracle had declared that Alexander was the son of Zeus ("Jove") by Philip's wife Olympias (not, as Dryden calls her in line 30, "Olympia"), thus conferring on him that semidivinity often claimed by heroes. Zeus habitually conducted his amours with mortals in the guise of an animal, in this case a dragon.

5. High on shining coils ("radiant spires"). "Spires" for the coils of a serpent is derived from the Latin word *spira*, which Virgil uses in this sense, *Aeneid* 2.217 (cf. *Paradise Lost* 9.502).

6. According to Virgil (*Aeneid* 10.115) the nod of Jove causes earthquakes.

CHORUS

*Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 65 Sweet is pleasure after pain.*

4

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain;
 Fought all his battles o'er again,
 And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.
 The master saw the madness rise,
 70 His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
 And, while he^o heaven and earth defied, *Alexander*
 Changed his^o hand, and checked his^o pride. *Timotheus's/Alexander's*
 He chose a mournful Muse,
 Soft pity to infuse:
 75 He sung Darius great and good,
 By too severe a fate
 Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
 Fallen from his high estate,
 And weltering in his blood;
 80 Deserted at his utmost need
 By those his former bounty fed;
 On the bare earth exposed he lies,
 With not a friend to close his eyes.⁷
 With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
 85 Revolving^o in his altered soul *pondering*
 The various turns of chance below;
 And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
 And tears began to flow.

CHORUS

Revolving in his altered soul
 90 *The various turns of chance helcnv;*
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears hegan to flow.

5

The mighty master smiled to see
 That love was in the next degree;
 95 'Twas but⁸ a kindred sound to move,
 For pity melts the mind to love.
 Softly sweet, in Lydian⁹ measures,
 Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
 "War," he sung, "is toil and trouble;
 100 Honor, but an empty bubble.
 Never ending, still beginning,

7. After his final defeat by Alexander, Darius was assassinated by his own followers.

8. I.e., it was necessary only.

9. In Greek music the Lydian mode expressed the plaintive and the sad.

Fighting still, and still destroying:
 If the world be worth thy winning,
 Think, O think it worth enjoying.
 105 Lovely Thai's sits beside thee,
 Take the good the gods provide thee."
 The many⁰ rend the skies with loud applause; *crowd, retinue*
 So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
 The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
 no Gazed on the fair
 Who caused his care,
 And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
 Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
 15 At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
 The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
 20 *And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,*
 Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
 At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
 The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

6

Now strike the golden lyre again:
 A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
 U5 Break his bands of sleep asunder,
 And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
 Hark, hark, the horrid⁰ sound *rough*
 Has raised up his head:
 As waked from the dead,
 B0 And amazed, he stares around,
 "Revenge, revenge!" Timotheus cries,
 "See the Furies' arise!
 See the snakes that they rear,
 How they hiss in their hair,
 15 And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
 Behold a ghastly band,
 Each a torch in his hand!
 Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
 And unburied remain²
 H0 Inglorious on the plain:
 Give the vengeance due
 To the valiant crew.
 Behold how they toss their torches on high,
 How they point to the Persian abodes,
 15 And glittering temples of their hostile gods!"
 The princes applaud, with a furious joy;

I. The Erinyes of the Greeks, avengers of crimes against the natural and the social orders. They are described as women with snakes in their hair and

wrapped around their waists and arms.
 2. According to Greek beliefs, the shades of the dead could not rest until their bodies were buried.

And the king seized a flambeau⁰ with zeal to destroy; *torch*
 Thais led the way,
 To light him to his prey,
 150 And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.³

CHORUS

*And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
 Thais led the way,
 To light him to his prey',
 And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.*

7

Thus long ago,
 Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
 While organs yet were mute;
 Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
 And sounding lyre,
 160 Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
 At last, divine Cecilia came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame;⁰ *organ*
 The sweet enthusiast,⁴ from her sacred store,
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 165 And added length to solemn sounds,
 With nature's mother wit, and arts unknown before.
 Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown:
 He raised a mortal to the skies;
 She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS

*At last, divine Cecilia came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame;
 The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 175 And added length to solemn sounds,
 With nature's mother wit, and arts unknown before.
 Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown:
 He raised a mortal to the skies;
 180 She drew an angel down.*

1697

3. Helen's elopement to Troy with Paris brought on the Trojan War and the ultimate destruction of the city by the Greeks.

4. Usually at this time a disparaging word, frequently, though not always, applied to a religious

zealot or fanatic. Here it is used approvingly and in its literal sense, "possessed by a god," an allusion to Cecilia's angelic companion referred to in line 170 (but see "Song for St. Cecilia's Day," line 53 and n. 8, p. 2119).

CRITICISM

Dryden's impulse to write criticism came from his practical urge to explain and justify his own writings; his attraction to clear, ordered theoretical principles; and his growing sense of himself as a leader of English literary taste and judgment. The Elizabethans, largely impelled by the example of Italian humanists, had produced an interesting but unsystematic body of critical writings. Dryden could look back to such pioneer works as George Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* (1589), Sir Philip Sidney's *Defense of Poesy* (1595), Samuel Daniel's *Defense of Rhyme* (ca. 1603), and Ben Jonson's *Timber, or Discoveries* (1641). These and later writings Dryden knew, as he knew the ancients and the important contemporary French critics, notably Pierre Corneille, Rene Rapin, and Nicolas Boileau. Taken as a whole, his critical prefaces and dedications, which appeared between 1664 and 1700, are the work of a man of independent mind who has made his own synthesis of critical canons from wide reading, a great deal of thinking, and the constant practice of the art of writing. As a critic he is no one's disciple, and he has the saving grace of being always willing to change his mind.

All but a very few of Dryden's critical works (most notably *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*) grew out of the works to which they served as prefaces: comedies, heroic plays, tragedies, translations, and poems of various sorts. Each work posed problems that Dryden was eager to discuss with his readers, and the topics that he treated proved to be important in the development of the new literature of which he was the principal apologist. He dealt with the processes of literary creation, the poet's relation to tradition, the forms of modern drama, the craft of poetry, and above all the genius of earlier poets: Shakespeare, Jonson, Chaucer, Juvenal, Horace, Homer, and Virgil. For nearly forty years this voice was heard in the land; and when it was finally silenced, a set of critical standards had come into existence and a new age had been given its direction.

From An Essay of Dramatic Poesy¹

[TWO SORTS OF BAD POETRY]

* * * have a mortal apprehension of two poets,² whom this victory, with the help of both her wings, will never be able to escape." "'Tis easy to guess whom you intend," said Lisideius; "and without naming them, I ask you if one

1. With the reopening of the theaters in 1660, older plays were revived, but despite their power and charm, they seemed old-fashioned. Although new playwrights, ambitious to create a modern English drama, soon appeared, they were uncertain of their direction. What, if anything, useful could they learn from the dramatic practice of the ancients? Should they ignore the English dramatists of the late 16th and early 17th centuries? Should they make their example the vigorous contemporary drama of France? Dryden addresses himself to these and other problems in this essay, his first extended piece of criticism. Its purpose, he tells us, was "chiefly to vindicate the honor of our English writers from the censure of those who unjustly prefer the French before them." Its method is skeptical: Dryden presents several points of view, but imposes none. The form is a dialogue among friends, like the *Tusculan Disputations* or the *Brutus* of Cicero. Crites praises the drama of

the ancients; Eugenius protests against their authority and argues for the idea of progress in the arts; Lisideius urges the excellence of French plays; and Neander, speaking in the climactic position, defends the native tradition and the greatness of Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson. The dialogue takes place on June 3, 1665, in a boat on the Thames. The four friends are rowed downstream to listen to the cannonading of the English and Dutch fleets, engaged in battle off the Suffolk coast. As the gunfire recedes they are assured of victory and order their boatman to return to London, and naturally enough they fall to discussing the number of bad poems that the victory will evoke.

2. Crites here is probably referring to Robert Wilde and possibly to Richard Flecknoe, whom Dryden later ridiculed in "Mac Flecknoe." Their actual identity is unimportant, for they merely represent two extremes in poetry, both deplorable: the

of them does not perpetually pay us with clenches³ upon words, and a certain clownish kind of raillery?⁴ if now and then he does not offer at a catachresis or Clevelandism, wresting and torturing a word into another meaning: in fine, if he be not one of those whom the French would call *un mauvais buffon*:⁵ one who is so much a well-wilier to the satire, that he spares no man; and though he cannot strike a blow to hurt any, yet ought to be punished for the malice of the action, as our witches are justly hanged, because they think themselves so, and suffer deservedly for believing they did mischief, because they meant it." "You have described him," said Crites, "so exactly that I am afraid to come after you with my other extremity of poetry. He is one of those who, having had some advantage of education and converse, knows better than the other what a poet should be, but puts it into practice more unluckily than any man; his style and matter are everywhere alike: he is the most calm, peaceable writer you ever read: he never disquiets your passions with the least concernment, but still leaves you in as even a temper as he found you; he is a very Leveller⁶ in poetry: he creeps along with ten little words in every line, and helps out his numbers with *for to*, and *unto*, and all the pretty expletives⁷ he can find, till he drags them to the end of another line; while the sense is left tired halfway behind it: he doubly starves all his verses, first for want of thought, and then of expression; his poetry neither has wit in it, nor seems to have it; like him in Martial:

*Pauper videri Cinna vidt, et est pauper.*⁸

"He affects plainness, to cover his want of imagination: when he writes the serious way, the highest flight of his fancy is some miserable antithesis, or seeming contradiction; and in the comic he is still reaching at some thin conceit, the ghost of a jest, and that too flies before him, never to be caught; these swallows which we see before us on the Thames are the just resemblance of his wit: you may observe how near the water they stoop, how many proffers they make to dip, and yet how seldom they touch it; and when they do, it is but the surface: they skim over it but to catch a gnat, and then mount into the air and leave it."

[THE WIT OF THE ANCIENTS: THE UNIVERSAL]⁹

* * * "A thing well said will be wit in all languages; and though it may lose something in the translation, yet to him who reads it in the original, 'tis still the same: he has an idea of its excellency, though it cannot pass from his mind into any other expression or words than those in which he finds it. When Phaedria, in the *Eunuch* had a command from his mistress to be absent two days, and, encouraging himself to go through with it, said, *Tan-dem ego non*

fantastic and extravagant manner of decadent metaphysical wit and its opposite, the flat and the dull. The new poetry was to seek a mean between these extremes (cf. Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* 2.239² and 289-300, pp. 2502 and 2503).

3. Puns.

4. Boorish banter.

5. A malicious jester (French). "Catachresis": the use of a word in a sense remote from its normal meaning. A legitimate figure of speech used by all poets, it had been abused by John Cleveland (1613-1658), who was at first admired for his ingenuity, but whose reputation declined rapidly after the Restoration. A Clevelandism: "The mari-

gold, whose courtier's face / Echoes the sun."

6. The Levellers were radical egalitarians and republicans, a powerful political force in the Puritan army about 1648. They were suppressed by Cromwell. "Passions": emotions. "Still": always.

7. Words used merely to fill out a line of verse (cf. Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* 2346-17, p. 2504).

8. Cinna wishes to seem poor, and he is poor (Latin; *Epigrams* 8.19).

9. Eugenius is in the midst of remarks about the limitations of the ancients.

I. A comedy by the Roman poet Terence (ca. 185-159 B.C.E.).

*ilia caream, si sit opus, vel totum triduum?*²—Parmeno, to mock the softness of his master, lifting up his hands and eyes, cries out, as it were in admiration, *'Hui! universum triduum!*³ the elegancy of which *universum*, though it cannot be rendered in our language, yet leaves an impression on our souls: but this happens seldom in him; in Plautus⁴ oftener, who is infinitely too bold in his metaphors and coining words, out of which many times his wit is nothing; which questionless was one reason why Horace falls upon him so severely in those verses:

*Sed proavi nostri Plautinos et numeros et
Laudavere sales, nimium patientex utrumque,
Ne dicam stolidè*

For Horace himself was cautious to obtrude a new word on his readers, and makes custom and common use the best measure of receiving it into our writings:

*Multa renascentur quae nunc cecidere, cadentque
Quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.*⁶

"The not observing this rule is that which the world has blamed in our satirist, Cleveland: to express a thing hard and unnaturally is his new way of elocution. 'Tis true no poet but may sometimes use a catachresis: Virgil does it—

*Mistake ridenti colocasia fundet acantho—*⁷

in his eclogue of Pollio; and in his seventh *Aeneid*:

*mirantur et undae,
Miratur netnus insuetum fidgentia longe
Scuta virum fluvio pictasque innare carinas. **

And Ovid once so modestly that he asks leave to do it:

*quem, si verbo audacia detur,
Haud metuam summi dixisse Palatia caeli.*⁹

calling the court of Jupiter by the name of Augustus his palace; though in another place he is more bold, where he says, *'et longas visent Capitolia pompas.'* But to do this always, and never be able to write a line without it, though it may be admired by some few pedants, will not pass upon those who know

2. Shall I not then do without her, if need be, for three whole days? (Latin).

3. The wit of Parmeno's exclamation. "Oh, three entire days," depends on *universum*, which suggests that a lover may regard three days as an eternity. "Admiration": wonder.

4. Titus Maccus Plautus, (ca. 254-184 B.C.E.), Roman comic poet.

5. But our ancestors too tolerantly (I do not say foolishly) praised both the verse and the wit of Plautus (Latin; *Art of Poetry*, lines 270-72). Dryden misquotes slightly.

6. Many words that have perished will be born again, and those shall perish that are now esteemed, if usage wills it, in whose power are the judgment, the law, and the pattern of speech

(Latin; *Art of Poetry*, lines 70-72).

7. [The earth] shall give forth the Egyptian bean, mingled with the smiling acanthus (Latin; *Eclogues* 4.20). "Smiling acanthus" is a catachresis.

8. Actually *Aeneid* 8.91-93. Dryden's paraphrase makes the point clearly: "The woods and waters wonder at the gleam / Of shields and painted ships that stem the stream" (Latin; *Aeneid* 8.125-26). "Wonder" is a catachresis.

9. [This is the place] which, if boldness of expression be permitted. I shall not hesitate to call the Palace of high heaven (Latin; *Metamorphoses* 1.175-76).

1. And the Capitol shall see the long processions (Latin; *Metamorphoses* 1.561).

that wit is best conveyed to us in the most easy language; and is most to be admired when a great thought comes dressed in words so commonly received that it is understood by the meanest apprehensions, as the best meat is the most easily digested: but we cannot read a verse of Cleveland's without making a face at it, as if every word were a pill to swallow: he gives us many times a hard nut to break our teeth, without a kernel for our pains. So that there is this difference betwixt his satires and Doctor Donne's; that the one gives us deep, thoughts in common language, though rough cadence; the other gives us common thoughts in abstruse words: 'tis true in some places his wit is independent of his words, as in that of the *Rebel Scot*:

Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his doom;
Not forced him wander, but confined him home.²

"St *sic omnia dixisset!*³ This is wit in all languages: it is like mercury, never to be lost or killed: and so that other—

For beauty, like white powder, makes no noise,
And yet the silent hypocrite destroys.⁴

You see that the last line is highly metaphorical, but it is so soft and gentle that it does not shock us as we read it."

[SHAKESPEARE AND REN JONSON COMPARED]⁵

"To begin, then, with Shakespeare. He was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of Nature were still present to him, and he drew them, not laboriously, but luckily; when he describes anything, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read Nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his comic wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great when some great occasion is presented to him; no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets,

*Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi*⁶

The consideration of this made Mr. Hales⁷ of Eton say that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better treated of in Shakespeare; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him Fletcher and Jonson, never equaled them to him in their esteem: and in the last king's court, when Ben's reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling,⁸ and with him the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakespeare far above him. . . .

"As for Jonson, to whose character I am now arrived, if we look upon him

2. Lines 63—64.

3. Had he said everything thus! (Latin; Juvenal's *Satires* 10.123-24).

4. From *Rupertismus*, lines 39—40. Mercury is said to be "killed" if its fluidity is destroyed.

5. Neander's contrast of Shakespeare and Jonson introduces an extended commentary on the latter's play *Epicœne; or the Silent Woman*.

6. As do cypresses among the bending shrubs (Latin; Virgil's *Ecloques* 1.25).

7. The learned John Hales (1584-1656), provost of Eton. He is reputed to have said this to Jonson himself.

8. Courtier, poet, playwright, much admired in Dryden's time for his wit and the easy naturalness of his style. "King's court"; that of Charles I.

while he was himself (for his last plays were but his dotages), I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theater ever had. He was a most severe judge of himself, as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his works you find little to retrench⁹ or alter. Wit, and language, and humor also in some measure, we had before him; but something of art¹ was wanting to the drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who preceded him. You seldom find him malting love in any of his scenes or endeavoring to move the passions; his genius was too sullen and saturnine² to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such an height. Humor was his proper sphere: and in that he delighted most to represent mechanic people.³ He was deeply conversant in the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them: there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors of those times whom he has not translated in *Sejanus* and *Catiline*.⁴ But he has done his robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch; and what would be theft in other poets is only victory in him. With the spoils of these writers he so represents old Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that if one of their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his language, 'twas that he weaved it too closely and laboriously, in his serious plays:⁵ perhaps, too, he did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latin as he found them: wherein, though he learnedly followed the idiom of their language, he did not enough comply with the idiom of ours. If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shakespeare the greater wit.⁶ Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets; Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing; I admire him, but I love Shakespeare. To conclude of him; as he has given us the most correct plays, so in the precepts which he has laid down in his *Discoveries*, we have as many and profitable rules for perfecting the stage, as any wherewith the French can furnish us."

1668

*From The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Heroic License*¹

["BOLDNESS" OF FIGURES AND TROPES DEFENDED:
THE APPEAL TO "NATURE"]

* 4 * They, who would combat general authority with particular opinion, must first establish themselves a reputation of understanding better than other men.

9. Delete.

1. Craftsmanship.

2. Heavy.

3. I.e., artisans. In Jonson's comedies the characters are seen under the domination of some psychological trait, ruling passion, or affectation—i.e., some "humor"—that makes them unique and ridiculous.

4. Jonson's two Roman plays, dated 1605 and

1611, respectively.

5. This is the reading of the first edition. Curiously enough, in the second edition Dryden altered the phrase to "in his comedies especially."

6. Genius.

1. This essay was prefixed to Dryden's *State of Innocence*, the libretto for an opera (never produced), based on *Paradise Lost*. Dryden had been ridiculed for the extravagant and bold imagery and

Are all the flights of heroic poetry to be concluded bombast, unnatural, and mere madness, because they are not affected with their excellencies? It is just as reasonable as to conclude there is no day, because a blind man cannot distinguish of light and colors. Ought they not rather, in modesty, to doubt of their own judgments, when they think this or that expression in Homer, Virgil, Tasso, or Milton's *Paradise* to be too far strained, than positively to conclude that 'tis all fustian and mere nonsense? 'Tis true there are limits to be set betwixt the boldness and rashness of a poet; but he must understand those limits who pretends to judge as well as he who undertakes to write: and he who has no liking to the whole ought, in reason, to be excluded from censuring of the parts. He must be a lawyer before he mounts the tribunal; and the judicature of one court, too, does not qualify a man to preside in another. He may be an excellent pleader in the Chancery, who is not fit to rule the Common Pleas.² But I will presume for once to tell them that the boldest strokes of poetry, when they are managed artfully, are those which most delight the reader.

Virgil and Horace, the severest writers of the severest age, have made frequent use of the hardest metaphors and of the strongest hyperboles; and in this case the best authority is the best argument, for generally to have pleased, and through all ages, must bear the force of universal tradition. And if you would appeal from thence to right reason, you will gain no more by it in effect than, first, to set up your reason against those authors, and, secondly, against all those who have admired them. You must prove why that ought not to have pleased which has pleased the most learned and the most judicious; and, to be thought knowing, you must first put the fool upon all mankind. If you can enter more deeply than they have done into the causes and resorts³ of that which moves pleasure in a reader, the field is open, you may be heard: but those springs of human nature are not so easily discovered by every superficial judge: it requires philosophy, as well as poetry, to sound the depth of all the passions, what they are in themselves, and how they are to be provoked; and in this science the best poets have excelled. * * * From hence have sprung the tropes and figures,⁴ for which they wanted a name who first practiced them and succeeded in them. Thus I grant you that the knowledge of Nature was the original rule, and that all poets ought to study her, as well as Aristotle and Horace, her interpreters.' But then this also undeniably follows, that those things which delight all ages must have been an imitation of Nature—which is all I contend. Therefore is rhetoric made an art; therefore the names of so many tropes and figures were invented, because it was observed they had such and such effect upon the audience. Therefore catachreses and hyperboles⁶ have found their place amongst them; not that they were to be avoided, but to be used judiciously and placed in poetry as heightenings and shadows are in painting, to make the figure bolder, and cause it to stand off to sight. 4 * *

rhetorical figures that are typical of the style of his rhymed heroic plays. This preface is a defense not only of his own predilection for what Samuel Johnson described as "wild and daring sallies of sentiment, in the irregular and eccentric violence of wit" but also of the theory that heroic and idealized materials should be treated in lofty and boldly metaphorical style; hence his definition of wit as propriety.

2. Court in which civil actions could be brought by one subject against another. "Chancery": a high court presided over by the lord chancellor.

3. Mechanical springs that set something in

motion.

4. I.e., such figures of speech as metaphors and similes. "Tropes": the uses of words in a figurative sense.

5. In the words of the French critic Rene Rapin, the rules (largely derived from Aristotle's *Poetics* and Horace's *Art of Poetry*) were made to "reduce Nature to method" (cf. Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* 1.88-89, p. 2499).

6. Deliberate overstatement or exaggeration. "Catachresis": the use of a word in a sense remote from its normal meaning.

[WIT AS "PROPRIETY"]

* * * [Wit] is a propriety of thoughts and words; or, in other terms, thought and words elegantly adapted to the subject. If our critics will join issue on this definition, that we may *convenire in aliquo tertio*;⁷ if they will take it as a granted principle, it will be easy to put an end to this dispute. No man will disagree from another's judgment concerning the dignity of style in heroic poetry; but all reasonable men will conclude it necessary that sublime subjects ought to be adorned with the sublimest, and, consequently, often with the most figurative expressions. * * *

1677

*From A Discourse Concerning the Original and
Progress of Satire*¹

[THE ART OF SATIRE]

* * * How easy is it to call rogue and villain, and that wittily! But how hard to make a man appear a fool, a blockhead, or a knave without using any of those opprobrious terms! To spare the grossness of the names, and to do the thing yet more severely, is to draw a full face, and to make the nose and cheeks stand out, and yet not to employ any depth of shadowing.² This is the mystery of that noble trade, which yet no master can teach to his apprentice; he may give the rules, but the scholar is never the nearer in his practice. Neither is it true that this fineness of raillery³ is offensive. A witty man is tickled while he is hurt in this manner, and a fool feels it not. The occasion of an offense may possibly be given, but he cannot take it. If it be granted that in effect this way does more mischief; that a man is secretly wounded, and though he be not sensible himself, yet the malicious world will find it out for him; yet there is still a vast difference betwixt the slovenly butchering of a man, and the fineness of a stroke that separates the head from the body, and leaves it standing in its place. A man may be capable, as Jack Ketch's⁴ wife said of his servant, of a plain piece of work, a bare hanging; but to make a malefactor die sweetly was only belonging to her husband. I wish I could apply it to myself, if the reader would be kind enough to think it belongs to me. The character of Zimri in my *Absalom*⁵ is, in my opinion, worth the whole poem: it is not bloody, but it is ridiculous enough; and he, for whom it was intended, was too witty to resent it as an injury. If I had railed,⁶ I might have suffered for it justly; but I managed my own work more happily, perhaps more dexterously. I avoided the mention

7. To find some means of agreement, in a third term, between the two opposites [Latin].

1. This passage is an excerpt from the long and rambling preface that served as the dedication of a translation of the satires of the Roman satirists Juvenal and Persius to Charles Sackville, sixth earl of Dorset. The translations were made by Dryden and other writers, among them William Congreve. Dryden traces the origin and development of verse satire in Rome and in a very fine passage contrasts Horace and Juvenal as satiric poets. It is plain that he prefers the "tragic" satire of Juvenal to the urbane and laughing satire of Horace. But in the passage printed here, he praises his own satiric character of Zimri (the duke of Buckingham) in

Absalom and Achitophel for the very reason that it is modeled on Horatian "raillery," not Juvenalian invective.

2. Early English miniaturists prided themselves on the art of giving roundness to the full face without painting in shadows.

3. Satirical mirth, good-natured satire.

4. A notorious public executioner of Dryden's time (d. 1686). His name later became a generic term for all members of his profession.

5. *Absalom and Achitophel*, lines 544—68 (pp. 2100-01).

6. Reviled, abused. Observe that the verb differed in meaning from its noun, defined above.

He must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his *Canterbury Tales* the various manners and humors (as we now call them) of the whole English nation in his age. Not a single character has escaped him. All his pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations but in their very physiognomies and persons. Baptista Porta⁸ could not have described their natures better than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humors, and callings that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity: their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding; such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some virtuous; some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different: the Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook are several⁹ men, and distinguished from each other as much as the mincing Lady Prioress and the broad-speaking, gap-toothed Wife of Bath. But enough of this; there is such a variety of game springing up before me that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty. * * *

1700

8. Giambattista della Porta (ca. 1535-1615), author of a Latin treatise on physiognomy. 9. Different,

SAMUEL PEPYS 1633-1703

Samuel Pepys (pronounced "Peeps") was the son of a London tailor. With the help of a scholarship he took a degree at Cambridge; with the help of a cousin he found a place in the Navy Office. Eventually, through hard work and an eye for detail, he rose to secretary of the Admiralty. His defense of the Navy Office and himself before Parliament in 1668 won him a reputation as a good administrator, and his career continued to prosper until it was broken, first by false accusations of treason in 1679 and finally by the fall of James II in 1688. But Pepys was more than a bureaucrat. A Londoner to his core, he was interested in all the activities of the city: the theater, music, the social whirl, business, religion, literary life, and the scientific experiments of the Royal Society (which he served as president from 1684 to 1686). He also found plenty of chances to indulge his two obsessions: chasing after women and making money.

Pepys kept his diary from 1660 to 1669 (when his eyesight began to fail). Writing in shorthand and sometimes in code, he was utterly frank in recording the events of his day, both public and private, the major affairs of state or his quarrels with his wife. Altogether he wrote about 1.3 million words. When the diary was first deciphered and published in the nineteenth century, it made him newly famous. As a document of social history it is unsurpassed for its rich detail, honesty, and immediacy. But more than that, it gives us a sense of somebody else's world: what it was like to live in the Restoration, and what it was like to see through the eyes of Pepys.

From The Diary

[THE GREAT FIRE]

September 2, 1666

Lords day. Some of our maids sitting up late last night to get things ready against our feast today, Jane called us up, about 3 in the morning, to tell us of a great fire they saw in the City.¹ So I rose, and slipped on my nightgown and went to her window, and thought it to be on the back side of Mark Lane² at the furthest; but being unused to such fires as followed, I thought it far enough off, and so went to bed again and to sleep. About 7 rose again to dress myself, and there looked out at the window and saw the fire not so much as it was, and further off. So to my closet³ to set things to rights after yesterday's cleaning. By and by Jane comes and tells me that she hears that above 300 houses have been burned down tonight by the fire we saw, and that it was now burning down all Fish Street by London Bridge. So I made myself ready presently, and walked to the Tower and there got up upon one of the high places, Sir J. Robinson's little son going up with me; and there I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire on this and the other side the end of the bridge—which, among other people, did trouble me for poor little Michell and our Sarah⁵ on the Bridge. So down, with my heart full of trouble, to the Lieutenant of the Tower, who tells me that it begun this morning in the King's baker's house in Pudding Lane, and that it hath burned down St. Magnus' Church and most part of Fish Street already. So I down to the waterside and there got a boat and through bridge, and there saw a lamentable fire. Poor Michell's house, as far as the Old Swan,⁶ already burned that way and the fire running further, that in a very little time it got as far as the Steelyard while I was there. Everybody endeavoring to remove their goods, and flinging into the river or bringing them into lighters⁷ that lay off. Poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats or clambering from one pair of stair by the waterside to another. And among other things, the poor pigeons I perceive were loath to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconies till they were some of them burned, their wings, and fell down.

Having stayed, and in an hour's time seen the fire rage every way, and nobody to my sight endeavoring to quench it, but to remove their goods and leave all to the fire; and having seen it get as far as the Steelyard, and the wind mighty high and driving it into the city, and everything, after so long a drought, proving combustible, even the very stones of churches, and among other things, the poor steeple by which pretty Mrs. ⁸ lives, and whereof my old school-fellow Elborough is parson, taken fire in the very top and there burned till it fell down—I to Whitehall⁹ with a gentleman with me who desired to get off from the Tower to see the fire in my boat—to Whitehall, and there

1. The fire of London, which was to destroy four-fifths of the central city, had begun an hour earlier. For another description see Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (p. 2085).

2. Near Pepys's own house in Seething Lane.

3. A small private room or study.

4. Immediately.

5. William Michell and his wife, Betty, one of

Pepys's old flames, lived near London Bridge. Sarah had been a maid of the Pepyses'.

6. A tavern in Thames Street, near the source of the fire.

7. Barges.

8. Mrs. Horsely, a beauty admired and pursued by Pepys.

9. Palace in central London.

up to the King's closet in the chapel, where people came about me and I did give them an account dismayed them all; and word was carried in to the King, so I was called for and did tell the King and Duke of York what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down, nothing could stop the fire. They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor from him and command him to spare no houses but to pull down before the fire every way. The Duke of York bid me tell him that if he would have any more soldiers, he shall; and so did my Lord Arlington afterward, as a great secret. Here meeting with Captain Cocke, I in his coach, which he lent me, and Creed with me, to Paul's;¹ and there walked along Watling Street as well as I could, every creature coming away loaden with goods to save—and here and there sick people carried away in beds. Extraordinary good goods carried in carts and on backs. At last met my Lord Mayor in Canning Street, like a man spent, with a hankercher² about his neck. To the King's message, he cried like a fainting woman, "Lord, what can I do? I am spent. People will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses. But the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." That he needed no more soldiers; and that for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me, and I him, and walked home—seeing people all almost distracted and no manner of means used to quench the fire. The houses too, so very thick thereabouts, and full of matter for burning, as pitch and tar, in Thames Street—and warehouses of oil and wines and brandy and other things. Here I saw Mr. Isaak Houblon, that handsome man—prettily dressed and dirty at his door at Dowgate, receiving some of his brothers' things whose houses were on fire; and as he says, have been removed twice already, and he doubts³ (as it soon proved) that they must be in a little time removed from his house also—which was a sad consideration. And to see the churches all filling with goods, by people who themselves should have been quietly there at this time.

By this time it was about 12 o'clock, and so home and there find my guests, which was Mr. Wood and his wife, Barbary Shelden, and also Mr. Moone—she mighty fine, and her husband, for aught I see, a likely⁴ man. But Mr. Moone's design and mine, which was to look over my closet and please him with the sight thereof, which he hath long desired, was wholly disappointed, for we were in great trouble and disturbance at this fire, not knowing what to think of it. However, we had an extraordinary good dinner, and as merry as at this time we could be.

While at dinner, Mrs. Batelier came to enquire after Mr. Woolfe and Stanes (who it seems are related to them), whose houses in Fish Street are all burned, and they in a sad condition. She would not stay in the fright.

As soon as dined, I and Moone away and walked through the City, the streets full of nothing but people and horses and carts loaden with goods, ready to run over one another, and removing goods from one burned house to another—they now removing out of Canning Street (which received goods in the morning) into Lombard Street and further; and among others, I now saw my little goldsmith Stokes receiving some friend's goods, whose house itself was burned the day after. We parted at Paul's, he home and I to Paul's Wharf, where I had appointed a boat to attend me; and took in Mr. Carcasse and his brother, whom I met in the street, and carried them below and above bridge,

1. St. Paul's Cathedral, later ravaged by the fire.
2. Handkerchief.

3. Fears.
4. Promising.

to and again, to see the fire, which was now got further, both below and above, and no likelihood of stopping it. Met with the King and Duke of York in their barge, and with them to Queenhithe and there called Sir Rd. Browne⁵ to them. Their order was only to pull down houses apace, and so below bridge at the waterside; but little was or could be done, the fire coming upon them so fast. Good hopes there was of stopping it at the Three Cranes above, and at Buttolph's Wharf below bridge, if care be used; but the wind carries it into the City, so as we know not by the waterside what it doth there. River full of lighters and boats taking in goods, and good goods swimming in the water; and only, I observed that hardly one lighter or boat in three that had the goods of a house in, but there was a pair of virginals⁶ in it. Having seen as much as I could now, I away to Whitehall by appointment, and there walked to St. James's Park, and there met my wife and Creed and Wood and his wife and walked to my boat, and there upon the water again, and to the fire up and down, it still increasing and the wind great. So near the fire as we could for smoke; and all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind you were almost burned with a shower of firedrops—this is very true—so as houses were burned by these drops and flakes of fire, three or four, nay five or six houses, one from another. When we could endure no more upon the water, we to a little alehouse on the Bankside over against the Three Cranes, and there stayed till it was dark almost and saw the fire grow; and as it grew darker, appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. Barbary⁷ and her husband away before us. We stayed till, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire from this to the other side the bridge, and in a bow up the hill, for an arch of above a mile long. It made me weep to see it. The churches, houses, and all on fire and flaming at once, and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruin. So home with a sad heart, and there find everybody discoursing and lamenting the fire; and poor Tom Hater came with some few of his goods saved out of his house, which is burned upon Fish Street hill. I invited him to lie at my house, and did receive his goods: but was deceived in his lying there,⁸ the noise coming every moment of the growth of the fire, so as we were forced to begin to pack up our own goods and prepare for their removal. And did by moonshine (it being brave,⁹ dry, and moonshine and warm weather) carry much of my goods into the garden, and Mr. Hater and I did remove my money and iron chests into my cellar—as thinking that the safest place. And got my bags of gold into my office ready to carry away, and my chief papers of accounts also there, and my tallies¹ into a box by themselves. So great was our fear, as Sir W. Batten had carts come out of the country to fetch away his goods this night. We did put Mr. Hater, poor man, to bed a little; but he got but very little rest, so much noise being in my house, taking down of goods.

5. Sir Richard Browne was a former lord mayor. "Queenhithe": harbor in Thames Street.

6. Table-size harpsichord, popular at the time.

7. The actress Elizabeth Knapp, another of Pepys's mistresses. He calls her "Barbary" because

she had enchanted him by singing *Barbary Allen*.

8. I.e., mistaken in asking him to stay.

9. Fine.

1. Receipts notched on sticks.

September 5, 1666

I lay down in the office again upon W. Hewer's² quilt, being mighty weary and sore in my feet with going till I was hardly able to stand. About 2 in the morning my wife calls me up and tells of new cries of "Fire!"—it being come to Barking Church, which is the bottom of our lane. I up; and finding it so, resolved presently to take her away; and did, and took my gold (which was about £2350), W. Hewer, and Jane down by Poundy's boat to Woolwich.³ But Lord, what a sad sight it was by moonlight to see the whole City almost on fire—that you might see it plain at Woolwich, as if you were by it. There when I came, I find the gates shut, but no guard kept at all; which troubled me, because of discourses now begun that there is plot in it and that the French had done it.⁴ I got the gates open, and to Mr. Shelden's,⁵ where I locked up my gold and charged my wife and W. Hewer never to leave the room without one of them in it night nor day. So back again, by the way seeing my goods well in the lighters at Deptford and watched well by people. Home, and whereas I expected to have seen our house on fire, it being now about 7 o'clock, it was not. But to the fire, and there find greater hopes than I expected; for my confidence of finding our office on fire was such, that I durst not ask anybody how it was with us, till I came and saw it not burned. But going to the fire, I find, by the blowing up of houses and the great help given by the workmen out of the King's yards, sent up by Sir W. Penn, there is a good stop given to it, as well at Mark Lane end as ours—it having only burned the dial⁶ of Barking Church, and part of the porch, and was there quenched. I up to the top of Barking steeple, and there saw the saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw. Everywhere great fires. Oil cellars and brimstone and other things burning. I became afeared to stay there long; and therefore down again as fast as I could, the fire being spread as far as I could see it, and to Sir W. Penn's and there eat a piece of cold meat, having eaten nothing since Sunday but the remains of Sunday's dinner.

Here I met with Mr. Young and Whistler; and having removed all my things, and received good hopes that the fire at our end is stopped, they and I walked into the town and find Fanchurch Street, Gracious Street, and Lumbard Street all in dust. The Exchange a sad sight, nothing standing there of all the statues or pillars but Sir Tho. Gresham's picture in the corner.⁷ Walked into Moorefields (our feet ready to burn, walking through the town among the hot coals) and find that full of people, and poor wretches carrying their goods there, and everybody keeping his goods together by themselves (and a great blessing it is to them that it is fair weather for them to keep abroad⁸ night and day); drank there, and paid twopence for a plain penny loaf.

Thence homeward, having passed through Cheapside and Newgate Market, all burned—and seen Anthony Joyce's house in fire. And took up (which I keep by me) a piece of glass of Mercer's Chapel in the street, where much more was, so melted and buckled with the heat of the fire, like parchment. I also did see a poor cat taken out of a hole in the chimney joining to the wall of the Exchange, with the hair all burned off the body and yet alive. So home

2. William Hewer, Pepys's chief clerk. Pepys had packed or sent away all his own goods.

3. Suburb on the east side of London.

4. There were rumors that the French had set the fire and were invading the city. "Gates": at the dockyard.

5. William Shelden, a Woolwich official at whose

home Mrs. Pepys had stayed the year before, during the plague.

6. Clock. "Yards": i.e., dockyards.

7. Sir Thomas Gresham had founded the Royal Exchange, a center for shopping and trading, in 1568. It was rebuilt in 1669.

8. Out of doors.

at night, and find there good hopes of saving our office—but great endeavors of watching all night and having men ready; and so we lodged them in the office and had drink and bread and cheese for them. And I lay down and slept a good night about midnight—though when I rose, I hear that there had been a great alarm of French and Dutch being risen—which proved nothing. But it is a strange thing to see how long this time did look since Sunday, having been always full of variety of actions, and little sleep, that it looked like a week or more. And I had forgot almost the day of the week.⁹

[THE DEB WILLET AFFAIR]

October 25, 1668

Lords day. Up, and discoursing with my wife about our house and many new things we are doing of; and so to church I, and there find Jack Fen come, and his wife, a pretty black¹ woman; I never saw her before, nor took notice of her now. So home and to dinner; and after dinner, all the afternoon got my wife and boy² to read to me. And at night W. Batelier comes and sups with us; and after supper, to have my head combed by Deb,³ which occasioned the greatest sorrow to me that ever I knew in this world; for my wife, coming up suddenly, did find me embracing the girl con my hand sub su coats; and indeed, I was with my main in her cunny.⁴ I was at a wonderful loss upon it, and the girl also; and I endeavored to put it off, but my wife was struck mute and grew angry, and as her voice came to her, grew quite out of order; and I do say little, but to bed; and my wife said little also, but could not sleep all night; but about 2 in the morning waked me and cried, and fell to tell me as a great secret that she was a Roman Catholic and had received the Holy Sacrament;⁵ which troubled me but I took no notice of it, but she went on from one thing to another, till at last it appeared plainly her trouble was at what she saw; but yet I did not know how much she saw and therefore said nothing to her. But after her much crying and reproaching me with inconstancy and preferring a sony girl before her, I did give her no provocations but did promise all fair usage to her, and love, and foreswore any hurt that I did with her—till at last she seemed to be at ease again; and so toward morning, a little sleep; [Oct. 26] and so I, with some little repose and rest, rose, and up and by water to Whitehall, but with my mind mightily troubled for the poor girl, whom I fear I have undone by this, my wife telling me that she would turn her out of door. However, I was obliged to attend the Duke of York, thinking to have had a meeting of Tanger⁶ today, but had not; but he did take me and Mr. Wren into his closet, and there did press me to prepare what I had to say upon the answers of my fellow-officers to his great letter; which I promised to do against⁷ his coming to town again the next week; and so to other discourse, finding plainly that he is in trouble and apprehensions of the reformers, and would be found to do what he can towards reforming himself. And so thence to my Lord Sandwich; where after long stay, he being in talk with others privately, I to him; and there he taking physic and keeping his chamber, I had an hour's

9. A day later the fire was under control. Pepys's own house was spared.

1. Dark-haired.

2. Servant. Pepys had no children.

3. Deborah Willett. Mrs. Pepys's maid.

4. With his hand under her skirts and in her vulva.

5. When unhappy with her husband, Elizabeth Pepys sometimes threatened to convert to the

Church of Rome. She never did.

6. Committee supervising the British naval base at Tangier, later evacuated under Pepys's supervision.

7. Before. Pepys had drafted a letter for the duke of York (later James II), high admiral of the navy, defending him from charges of mismanagement.

talk with him about the ill posture of things at this time, while the King gives countenance to Sir Ch. Sidly and Lord Buckhurst,⁸ telling him their late story of running up and down the streets a little while since all night, and their being beaten and clapped up all night by the constable, who is since chid and imprisoned for his pains.

He tells me that he thinks his matters do stand well with the King—and hopes to have dispatch to his mind;⁹ but I doubt it, and do see that he doth fear it too. He told me my Lady Carteret's trouble about my writing of that letter of the Duke of York's lately to the office; which I did not own, but declared to be of no injury to G. Carteret,¹ and that I would write a letter to him to satisfy him therein. But this I am in pain how to do without doing myself wrong, and the end I had, of preparing a justification to myself hereafter, when the faults of the Navy come to be found out. However, I will do it in the best manner I can.

Thence by coach home and to dinner, finding my wife mightily discontented and the girl sad, and no words from my wife to her. So after dinner, they out² with me about two or three things; and so home again, I all the evening busy and my wife full of trouble in her looks; and anon to bed—where about midnight, she wakes me and there falls foul on me again, affirming that she saw me hug and kiss the girl; the latter I denied, and truly; the other I confessed and no more. And upon her pressing me, did offer to give her under my hand that I would never see Mrs. Pierce more, nor Knepp, but did promise her particular demonstrations of my true love to her, owning some indiscretion in what I did, but that there was no harm in it. She at last on these promises was quiet, and very kind we were, and so to sleep; [Oct. 27] and in the morning up, but with my mind troubled for the poor girl, with whom I could not get opportunity to speak; but to the office, my mind mighty full of sorrow for her, where all the morning, and to dinner with my people and to the office all the afternoon; and so at night home and there busy to get some things ready against tomorrow's meeting of Tanger; and that being done and my clerks gone, my wife did towards bedtime begin to be in a mighty rage from some new matter that she had got in her head, and did most part of the night in bed rant at me in most high terms, of threats of publishing³ my shame; and when I offered to rise, would have rose too, and caused a candle to be lit, to burn by her all night in the chimney while she ranted; while I, that knew myself to have given some grounds for it, did make it my business to appease her all I could possibly, and by good words and fair promises did make her very quiet; and so rested all night and rose with perfect good peace, being heartily afflicted for this folly of mine that did occasion it; but was forced to be silent about the girl, which I have no mind to part with, but much less that the poor girl should be undone by my folly. [Oct. 28] So up, with mighty kindness from my wife and a thorough peace; and being up, did by a note advise the girl what I had done and owned, which note I was in pain for till she told me that she had burned it. This evening, Mr. Spong came and sat late with me, and first told me of the instrument called Parrallogram,⁴ which I must have one of, showing me his practice thereon by a map of England.

8. Sir Charles Sedley and Lord Buckhurst were riotous rakes and well-known writers; they are often identified with Lisideius and Eugenius in Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*.

9. A message to his liking.

1. Sir George Carteret, former treasurer of the

naw (which Pepys had plans to reform), was later censured for having kept poor accounts.

2. Went out.

3. Making public.

4. The pantograph, a mechanism for copying maps or plans.

November 14, 1668

Up, and had a mighty mind to have seen or given a note to Deb or to have given her a little money; to which purpose I wrapped up 40s in a paper, thinking to give her; but my wife rose presently, and would not let me be out of her sight; and went down before me into the kitchen, and came up and told me that she was in the kitchen, and therefore would have me go round the other way; which she repeating, and I vexed at it, answered her a little angrily; upon which she instantly flew out into a rage, calling me dog and rogue, and that I had a rotten heart; all which, knowing that I deserved it, I bore with; and word being brought presently up that she was gone away by coach with her things, my wife was friends; and so all quiet, and I to the office with my heart sad, and find that I cannot forget the girl, and vexed I know not where to look for her—and more troubled to see how my wife is by this means likely for ever to have her hand over me, that I shall for ever be a slave to her; that is to say, only in matters of pleasure, but in other things she will make her business, I know, to please me and to keep me right to her—which I will labor to be indeed, for she deserves it of me, though it will be I fear a little time before I shall be able to wear Deb out of my mind. At the office all the morning, and merry at noon at dinner; and after dinner to the office, where all the afternoon and doing much business late; my mind being free of all troubles, I thank God, but⁵ only for my thoughts of this girl, which hang after her. And so at night home to supper, and there did sleep with great content with my wife. I must here remember that I have lain with my moher⁶ as a husband more times since this falling-out then in I believe twelve months before—and with more pleasure to her then I think in all the time of our marriage before.

November 18, 1668

Lay long in bed, talking with my wife, she being unwilling to have me go abroad, being and declaring herself jealous of my going out, for fear of my going to Deb; which I do deny—for which God forgive me, for I was no sooner out about noon but I did go by coach directly to Somerset House and there inquired among the porters there for Dr. Allbun;⁷ and the first I spoke with told me he knew him, and that he was newly gone into Lincoln's Inn fields, but whither he could not tell me, but that one of his fellows, not then in the way, did carry a chest of drawers thither with him, and that when he comes he would ask him. This put me in some hopes; and I to Whitehall and thence to Mr. Povy's, but he at dinner; and therefore I away and walked up and down the Strand between the two turnstiles,⁸ hoping to see her out of a window; and then employed a porter, one Osbeston, to find out this doctor's lodgings thereabouts; who by appointment comes to me to Hercules' Pillars, where I dined alone, but tells me that he cannot find out any such but will inquire further. Thence back to Whitehall to the treasury a while, and thence to the Strand; and towards night did meet with the porter that carried the chest of drawers with this doctor, but he would not tell me where he lived, being his good master he told me; but if I would have a message to him, he would deliver it. At last, I told him my business was not with him, but a little gentlewoman,

5. Except.

6. Woman or wife (*mujer* in Spanish).

7. Pepys's wife had told him that Deb was staying

with a man named Allbon.

8. To keep traffic, except for pedestrians, out of the street.

one Mrs. Willet, that is with him; and sent him to see how she did, from her friend in London, and no other token. He goes while I walk in Somerset House walk there in the court; at last he comes back and tells me she is well, and that I may see her if I will—but no more. So I could not be commanded by my reason, but I must go this very night; and so by coach, it being now dark, I to her, close by my tailor's; and there she came into the coach to me, and yo did besar her and tocar her thing, but ella was against it and labored with much earnestness, such as I believed to be real; and yet at last yo did make her tener mi cosa in her mano, while mi mano was sopra her pectus, and so did hazer⁹ with grand delight. I did nevertheless give her the best counsel I could, to have a care of her honor and to fear God and suffer no man para haver to do con her—as yo have done—which she promised. Yo did give her 20s and directions para laisser sealed in paper at any time the name of the place of her being, at Herringman's my bookseller in the Change¹—by which I might go para her. And so bid her good-night, with much content to my mind and resolution to look after her no more till I heard from her. And so home, and there told my wife a fair tale, God knows, how I spent the whole day; with which the poor wretch was satisfied, or at least seemed so; and so to supper and to bed, she having been mighty busy all day in getting of her house in order against tomorrow, to hang up our new hangings and furnishing our best chamber.

November 19, 1668

Up, and at the office all the morning, with my heart full of joy to think in what a safe condition all my matters now stand between my wife and Deb and me; and at noon, running upstairs to see the upholsters, who are at work upon hanging my best room and setting up my new bed, I find my wife sitting sad in the dining-room; which inquiring into the reason of, she begun to call me all the false, rotten-hearted rogues in the world, letting me understand that I was with Deb yesterday; which, thinking impossible for her ever to understand, I did a while deny; but at last did, for the ease of my mind and hers, and for ever to discharge my heart of this wicked business, I did confess all; and above-stairs in our bed-chamber there, I did endure the sorrow of her threats and vows and curses all the afternoon. And which was worst, she swore by all that was good that she would slit the nose of this girl, and be gone herself this very night from me; and did there demand 3 or 400/ of me to buy my peace, that she might be gone without making any noise, or else protested that she would make all the world know of it. So, with most perfect confusion of face and heart, and sorrow and shame, in the greatest agony in the world, I did pass this afternoon, fearing that it will never have an end; but at last I did call for W. Hewer, who I was forced to make privy now to all; and the poor fellow did cry like a child and obtained what I could not, that she would be pacified, upon condition that I would give it under my hand never to see or speak with Deb while I live, as I did before of Pierce and Knepp; and which I did also, God knows, promise for Deb too, but I have the confidence to deny it, to the perjuring of myself. So before it was late, there was, beyond my hopes as well as desert, a tolerable peace; and so to supper, and pretty kind words, and to

9. Carry on. "Besar": kiss. "Tocar": touch. "Ella": she. "Tener mi cosa in her mano": take my thing in her hand. "Mi mano was sopra her pectus": my

hand was on her breast.

1. I.e., the Royal Exchange, a center for shopping, business, and trade. "Para laisser": to leave.

bed, and there yo did hazer con ella to her content; and so with some rest spent the night in bed, being most absolutely resolved, if ever I can master this bout, never to give her occasion while I live of more trouble of this or any other kind, there being no curse in the world so great as this of the difference between myself and her; and therefore I do by the grace of God promise never to offend her more, and did this night begin to pray to God upon my knees alone in my chamber; which God knows I cannot yet do heartily, but I hope God will give me the grace more and more every day to fear Him, and to be true to my poor wife. This night the upholsters did finish the hanging of my best chamber, but my sorrow and trouble is so great about this business, that put me out of all joy in looking upon it or minding how it was.²

2. Despite his promises, Pepys continued to hanker for Deb, and they had a few brief encounters. Mrs. Pepys accused him of talking to Deb in his

dreams and she once threatened him with red-hot tongs. But so far as is known the affair was never consummated.

JOHN BUNYAN 1628-1688

John Bunyan is one of the most remarkable figures in seventeenth-century literature. The son of a poor Bedfordshire tinker (a maker and mender of metal pots), he received only meager schooling and then learned his father's craft. Nothing in the circumstances of his early life could have suggested that he would become a writer known the world over.

Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners (1666), his spiritual autobiography, records his transformation from a self-doubting sinner into an eloquent and fearless Baptist preacher (for a selection from *Grace Abounding*, go to Norton Literature Online). Preachers, both male and female, often even less educated than Bunyan, were common phenomena among the sects during the Commonwealth. They wished no ordination but the "call," and they could dispense with learning because they abounded in inspiration, inner light, and the gifts conferred by the Holy Spirit. In November 1660, the Anglican Church began to persecute and silence the dissenting sects. Jails filled with unlicensed Nonconformist preachers, and Bunyan was one of the prisoners. Refusing to keep silent, he chose imprisonment and so for twelve years remained in Bedford jail, preaching to his fellow prisoners and writing religious books. Upon his release, he was called to the pastorate of a Nonconformist group in Bedford. It was during a second imprisonment, in 1675, when the Test Act was once again rigorously enforced against Nonconformists, that he wrote his greatest work, *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come* (1678), revised and augmented in the third edition (1679). Bunyan was a prolific writer: part 2 of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, dealing with the journey of Christian's wife and children, appeared in 1684; *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, in 1680; *The Holy War*, in 1682. And these major works form only a small part of all his writings.

The Pilgrim's Progress is the most popular allegory in English. Its basic metaphor—life is a journey—is simple and familiar; the objects that the pilgrim Christian meets are homely and commonplace: a quagmire, the highway, the bypaths and shortcuts through pleasant meadows, the inn, the steep hill, the town fair on market day, and the river that must be forded. As in the equally homely parables of Jesus, however, these simple things are charged with spiritual significance. Moreover, this is a tale of adventure. If the road that Christian travels is the King's Highway, it is also a perilous path along which we encounter giants, wild beasts, hobgoblins, and the terrible Apol-

lyon, "the angel of the bottomless pit," whom Christian must fight. Bunyan keeps the tale firmly based on human experience, and his style, modeled on the prose of the English Bible, together with his concrete language and carefully observed details, enables even the simplest reader to share the experiences of the characters. What could be better than the following sentence? "Some cry out against sin even as the mother cries out against her child in her lap, when she calleth it slut and naughty girl, and then falls to hugging and kissing it." *The Pilgrim's Progress* is no longer a household book, but it survives in the phrases it gave to our language: "the slough of despond," "the house beautiful," "Mr. Worldly-Wiseman," and "Vanity Fair." And it lives again for anyone who reads beyond the first page.

From The Pilgrim's Progress

*From This World to That Which Is to Come:
Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream*

[CHRISTIAN SETS OUT FOR THE CELESTIAL CITY]

As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back (Isaiah lxiv.6; Luke xiv.33; Psalms xxxviii.4; Habakkuk ii.2; Acts xvi.31). I looked and saw him open the book and read therein; and, as he read, he wept, and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, "What shall I do?" (Acts ii.37).

In this plight, therefore, he went home and refrained himself as long as he could, that his wife and children should not perceive his distress; but he could not be silent long, because that his trouble increased. Wherefore at length he brake his mind to his wife and children; and thus he began to talk to them. O my dear wife, said he, and you the children of my bowels, I your dear friend am in myself undone by reason of a burden that lieth hard upon me; moreover, I am for certain informed that this our city will be burned with fire from heaven, in which fearful overthrow both myself, with thee, my wife, and you, my sweet babes, shall miserably come to ruin, except (the which yet I see not) some way of escape can be found, whereby we may be delivered. At this his relations were sore amazed; not for that they believed that what he had said to them was true, but because they thought that some frenzy distemper¹ had got into his head; therefore, it drawing towards night, and they hoping that sleep might settle his brains, with all haste they got him to bed; but the night was as troublesome to him as the day; wherefore, instead of sleeping, he spent it in sighs and tears. So when the morning was come, they would know how he did. He told them, Worse and worse; he also set to talking to them again, but they began to be hardened. They also thought to drive away his distemper by harsh and surly carriages² to him: sometimes they would deride, sometimes they would chide, and sometimes they would quite neglect

1. A malady causing madness. The use of *frenzy* as an adjective was not uncommon in the 17th

century,
2. Behavior.

him. Wherefore he began to retire himself to his chamber, to pray for and pity them, and also to condole his own misery; he would also walk solitarily in the fields, sometimes reading, and sometimes praying; and thus for some days he spent his time.

Now I saw, upon a time, when he was walking in the fields, that he was (as he was wont) reading in this book, and greatly distressed in his mind; and as he read, he burst out, as he had done before, crying, "What shall I do to be saved?"

I saw also that he looked this way and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still, because (as I perceived) he could not tell which way to go. I looked then, and saw a man named Evangelist³ coming to him, who asked, Wherefore dost thou cry? (Job xxxiii.23). He answered, Sir, I perceive by the book in my hand that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment (Hebrews ix.27), and I find that I am not willing to do the first (Job xvi.21), nor able to do the second (Ezekiel xxii. 14). . . .

Then said Evangelist, Why not willing to die, since this life is attended with so many evils? The man answered, Because I fear that this burden that is upon my back will sink me lower than the grave, and I shall fall into Tophet⁴ (Isaiah xxx.33). And, sir, if I be not fit to go to prison, I am not fit to go to judgment, and from thence to execution; and the thoughts of these things make me cry.'

Then said Evangelist, If this be thy condition, why standest thou still? He answered, Because I know not whither to go. Then he gave him a parchment roll, and there was written within, "Fly from the wrath to come" (Matthew iii.7).

The man therefore read it, and looking upon Evangelist very carefully,⁶ said, Whither must I fly? Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, Do you see yonder wicketgate?⁷ (Matthew vii. 13, 14.) The man said, No. Then said the other, Do you see yonder shining light? (Psalms cxix.105; II Peter i.19.) He said, I think I do. Then said Evangelist, Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto; so shalt thou see the gate; at which when thou knockest it shall be told thee what thou shalt do.

So I saw in my dream that the man began to run. Now, he had not run far from his own door, but his wife and children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return; but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying, Life! life! eternal life! (Luke xiv.26.) So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the plain (Genesis xix. 17).

The neighbors also came out to see him run (Jeremiah xx. 10); and as he ran some mocked, others threatened, and some cried after him to return; and, among those that did so, there were two that resolved to fetch him back by force. The name of the one was Obstinate, and the name of the other Pliable. Now by this time the man was got a good distance from them; but, however, they were resolved to pursue him, which they did, and in a little time they overtook him. Then said the man, Neighbors, wherefore are ye come? They said, To persuade you to go back with us. But he said. That can by no means be; you dwell, said he, in the City of Destruction (the place also where I was born) I see it to be so; and, dying there, sooner or later, you will sink lower than the grave, into a place that burns with fire and brimstone; be content, good neighbors, and go along with me.

3. A preacher of the Gospel; literally, a bearer of good news.

4. The place near Jerusalem where bodies and filth were burned; hence, by association, a name

for hell,

5. Cry out.

6. Sorrowfully.

7. A small gate in or beside a larger gate.

OBST. What! said Obstinate, and leave our friends and our comforts behind us?

CHR. Yes, said Christian (for that was his name), because that ALL which you shall forsake is not worthy to be compared with a little of that which I am seeking to enjoy (II Corinthians v. 17); and, if you will go along with me, and hold it, you shall fare as I myself; for there, where I go, is enough and to spare (Luke xv. 17). Come away, and prove my words.

OBST. What are the things you seek, since you leave all the world to find them?

CHR. I seek an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away (I Peter i.4), and it is laid up in heaven, and safe there (Hebrews xi.16), to be bestowed, at the time appointed, on them that diligently seek it. Read it so, if you will, in my book.

OBST. Tush! said Obstinate, away with your book; will you go back with us or no?

CHR. No, not I, said the other, because I have laid my hand to the plow (Luke ix.62).

OBST. Come, then, neighbor Pliable, let us turn again, and go home without him; there is a company of these crazed-headed coxcombs, that, when they take a fancy⁸ by the end, are wiser in their own eyes than seven men that can render a reason (Proverbs xxvi.16).

PLI. Then said Pliable, Don't revile; if what the good Christian says is true, the things he looks after are better than ours; my heart inclines to go with my neighbor.

OBST. What! more fools still? Be ruled by me, go back; who knows whither such a brain-sick fellow will lead you? Go back, go back, and be wise.

CHR. Nay, but do thou come with thy neighbor, Pliable; there are such things to be had which I spoke of, and many more glories besides. If you believe not me, read here in this book; and for the truth of what is expressed therein, behold, all is confirmed by the blood of Him that made it (Hebrews ix. 17—22; xiii.20).

PLI. Well, neighbor Obstinate, said Pliable, I begin to come to a point,⁹ I intend to go along with this good man, and to cast in my lot with him: but, my good companion, do you know the way to this desired place?

CHR. I am directed by a man, whose name is Evangelist, to speed me to a little gate that is before us, where we shall receive instructions about the way.

PLI. Come, then, good neighbor, let us be going. Then they went both together. ⁴ * ⁴

[THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND]

Now I saw in my dream, that just as they had ended this talk they drew near to a very miry slough,¹ that was in the midst of the plain; and they, being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was Despond. Here, therefore, they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with dirt; and Christian, because of the burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire.

PLI. Then said Pliable, Ah, neighbor Christian, where are you now?

CHR. Truly, said Christian, I do not know.

PLI. At that Pliable began to be offended, and angrily said to his fellow, Is

8. Delusion. "Coxcombs": fools.

9. Decision.

1. Swamp (pronounced to rhyme with *now*).

this the happiness you have told me all this while of? If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect 'twixt this and our journey's end? Mav I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave² country alone for me. And, with that, he gave a desperate struggle or two, and got out of the mire on that side of the slough which was next³ to his own house: so away he went, and Christian saw him no more.

Wherefore Christian was left to tumble in the Slough of Despond alone: but still he endeavored to struggle to that side of the slough that was further from his own house, and next to the wicket-gate; the which he did, but could not get out, because of the burden that was upon his back: but I beheld in my dream, that a man came to him, whose name was Help, and asked him what he did there?

CHR. Sir, said Christian, I was bid go this way by a man called Evangelist, who directed me also to yonder gate, that I might escape the wrath to come; and as I was going thither I fell in here.

HELP. But why did not you look for the steps?

CHR. Fear followed me so hard that I fled the next way, and fell in.

HELP. Then said he, Give me thy hand; so he gave him his hand, and he drew him out, and set him upon sound ground, and bid him go on his way.

Then I stepped to him that plucked him out, and said, Sir, wherefore, since over this place is the way from the City of Destruction to yonder gate, is it that this plat⁴ is not mended, that poor travelers might go thither with more security? And he said unto me, This miry slough is such a place as cannot be mended; it is the descent whither the scum and filth that attends conviction for sin doth continually run, and therefore it was called the Slough of Despond; for still, as the sinner is awakened about his lost condition, there ariseth in his soul many fears, and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions, which all of them get together, and settle in his place. And this is the reason of the badness of this ground. ⁴ * *

[VANITY FAIR]⁵

Then I saw in my dream, that when they were got out of the wilderness, they presently saw a town before them, and the name of that town is Vanity; and at the town there is a fair kept, called Vanity Fair; it is kept all the year long; it beareth the name of Vanity Fair because the town where it is kept is lighter than vanity; and also because all that is there sold, or that cometh thither, is vanity. As is the saying of the wise, "All that cometh is vanity" (Ecclesiastes i.2, 14; ii. 11, 17; xi.8; Isaiah xl. 17).

This fair is no new-erected business, but a thing of ancient standing; I will show you the original of it.

Almost five thousand years ago, there were pilgrims walking to the Celestial City, as these two honest persons are; and Beelzebub, Apollyon, and

2. Fine.

3. Nearest.

4. A plot of ground.

5. In this, perhaps the best-known episode in the book, Bunyan characteristically turns one of the most familiar institutions in contemporary England—annual fairs—into an allegory of universal spiritual significance. Christian and his companion Faithful pass through the town of Vanity at the season of the local fair. *Vanity* means "emptiness" or "worthlessness," and hence the fair

is an allegory of worldliness and the corruption of the religious life through the attractions of the world. From earliest times numerous fairs were held for stated periods throughout Britain; to them the most important merchants from all over Europe brought their wares. The serious business of buying and selling was accompanied by all sorts of diversions—eating, drinking, and other fleshly pleasures, as well as spectacles of strange animals, acrobats, and other wonders.

Legion,⁶ with their companions, perceiving by the path that the pilgrims made, that their way to the city lay through this town of Vanity, they contrived here to set up a fair; a fair wherein should be sold all sorts of vanity, and that it should last all the year long. Therefore at this fair are all such merchandise sold, as houses, lands, trades, places, honors, preferments,⁷ titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures, and delights of all sorts, as whores, bawds, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls,-precious stones, and what not.

And, moreover, at this fair there is at all times to be seen jugglings, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind.

Here are to be seen, too, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, false swearers, and that of a blood-red color.

And as in other fairs of less moment, there are the several rows and streets, under their proper names, where such and such wares are vended; so here likewise you have the proper places, rows, streets (*viz.*, countries and kingdoms), where the wares of this fair are soonest to be found. Here is the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, where several sorts of vanities are to be sold. But, as in other fairs, some one commodity is as the chief of all the fair, so the ware of Rome and her merchandise⁸ is greatly promoted in this fair; only our English nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereat.

Now, as I said, the way to the Celestial City lies just through this town where this lusty⁹ fair is kept; and he that will go to the City, and yet not go through this town, must needs "go out of the world" (I Corinthians v. 10). The Prince of princes himself, when here, went through this town to his own country, and that upon a fair-day too,¹ yea, and as I think, it was Beelzebub, the chief lord of this fair, that invited him to buy of his vanities; yea, would have made him lord of the fair, would he but have done him reverence as he went through the town. (Matthew iv.8; Luke iv.5—7.) Yea, because he was such a person of honor, Beelzebub had him from street to street, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a little time, that he might, if possible, allure the Blessed One to cheapen- and buy some of his vanities; but he had no mind to the merchandise, and therefore left the town, without laying out so much as one farthing upon these vanities. This fair, therefore, is an ancient thing, of long standing, and a very great fair.

Now these pilgrims, as I said, must needs go through this fair. Well, so they did; but, behold, even as they entered into the fair, all the people in the fair were moved, and the town itself as it were in a hubbub about them; and that for several reasons: for

First, The pilgrims were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people, therefore, of the fair, made a great gazing upon them: some said they were fools, some they were bedlams, and some they are outlandish' men. (I Corinthians ii.7, 8.)

Secondly, And as they wondered at their apparel, so they did likewise at their speech; for few could understand what they said; they naturally spoke

6. The "unclean spirit" sent by Jesus into the Gadarene swine (Mark 5.9). Beelzebub, prince of the devils (Matthew 12.24). Apollyon, the destroyer, "the Angel of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 9.1 1).

7. Appointments and promotions to political or ecclesiastical positions.

8. The practices and the temporal power of the

Roman Catholic Church.

9. Cheerful, lustful.

1. The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness (Matthew 4.1-11).

2. Ask the price of.

3. Foreign. "Bedlams": lunatics from Bethlehem Hospital, the insane asylum in London.

the language of Canaan, but they that kept the fair were the men of this world; so that, from one end of the fair to the other, they seemed barbarians⁴ each to the other.

Thirdly, But that which did not a little amuse the merchandisers was that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares; they cared not so much as to look upon them; and if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," and look upwards, signifying that their trade and traffic was in heaven. (Psalms cxix.37; Philippians iii.19, 20.)

One chanced mockingly, beholding the carriages of the men, to say unto them, What will ye buy? But they, looking gravely upon him, said, "We buy the truth" (Proverbs xxiii.23). At that there was an occasion taken to despise the men the more; some mocking, some taunting, some speaking reproachfully, and some calling upon others to smite them. At last things came to an hubbub and great stir in the fair, insomuch that all order was confounded. Now was word presently brought to the great one of the fair, who quickly came down, and deputed some of his most trusty friends to take these men into examination, about whom the fair was almost overturned. So the men were brought to examination; and they that sat upon them' asked them whence they came, whither they went, and what they did there, in such an unusual garb? The men told them that they were pilgrims and strangers in the world, and that they were going to their own country, which was the Heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews xi. 13—16); and that they had given no occasion to the men of the town, nor yet to the merchandisers, thus to abuse them, and to let⁶ them in their journey, except it was for that, when one asked them what they would buy, they said they would buy the truth. But they that were appointed to examine them did not believe them to be any other than bedlams and mad, or else such as came to put all things into a confusion in the fair. Therefore they took them and beat them, and besmeared them with dirt, and then put them into the cage, that they might be made a spectacle to all the men of the fair.

[THE RIVER OF DEATH AND THE CELESTIAL CITY]

So I saw that when they⁷ awoke, they addressed themselves to go up to the City; but, as I said, the reflection of the sun upon the City (for the City was pure gold, Revelation xxi.18) was so extremely glorious, that they could not, as yet, with open face behold it, but through an instrument made for that purpose. (II Corinthians iii. 18.) So I saw that as I went on, there met them two men, in raiment that shone like gold; also their faces shone as the light.

These men asked the pilgrims whence they came; and they told them. They also asked them where they had lodged, what difficulties and dangers, what comforts and pleasures they had met in the way; and they told them. Then said the men that met them, You have but two difficulties more to meet with, and then you are in the City.

Christian then and his companion asked the men to go along with them; so

4. The Greeks and Romans so designated all those who spoke a foreign tongue. "Canaan": the Promised Land, ultimately conquered by the Children of Israel (Joshua 4) and settled by them; hence the pilgrims speak the language of the Bible and of the true religion. Dissenters were notorious for their habitual use of biblical language.

5. Interrogated and tried them.

6. Hinder.

7. Christian and his companion. Hopeful. Ignorance, who appears tragically in the final paragraph, had tried to accompany the two pilgrims but had dropped behind because of his hobbling gait.

they told them they would. But, said they, you must obtain it by your own faith. So I saw in my dream that they went on together till they came in sight of the gate.

Now I further saw that betwixt them and the gate was a river, but there was no bridge to go over; the river was very deep. At the sight, therefore, of this river, the pilgrims were much stunned;⁸ but the men that went with them said, You must go through, or you cannot come at the gate.

The-pilgrims then began to inquire if there was no other way to the gate; to which they answered, Yes; but there hath not any, save two, to wit, Enoch and Elijah,⁹ been permitted to tread that path, since the foundation of the world, nor shall, until the last trumpet shall sound. (I Corinthians xv.51, 52.) The pilgrims then, especially Christian, began to despond in his mind, and looked this way and that, but no way could be found by them by which they might escape the river. Then they asked the men if the waters were all of a depth. They said no; yet they could not help them in that case; for, said they, you shall find it deeper or shallower, as you believe in the King of the place.

They then addressed themselves to the water; and entering, Christian began to sink, and crying out to his good friend Hopeful, he said, I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head, all his waves go over me! Selah.¹

Then said the other, Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom, and it is good. Then said Christian, Ah, my friend, the sorrows of death have compassed me about; I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey. And with that a great darkness and horror fell upon Christian, so that he could not see before him. Also here he in great measure lost his senses, so that he could neither remember nor orderly talk of any of those sweet refreshments that he had met with in the way of his pilgrimage. But all the words that he spake still tended to discover² that he had horror of mind, and heart-fears that he should die in that river, and never obtain entrance in at the gate. Here also, as they that stood by perceived, he was much in the troublesome thoughts of the sins that he had committed, both since and before he began to be a pilgrim. 'Twas also observed that he was troubled with apparitions of hobgoblins and evil spirits; for ever and anon he would intimate so much by words. Hopeful, therefore, here had much ado to keep his brother's head above water; yea, sometimes he would be quite gone down, and then, ere a while, he would rise up again half dead. Hopeful also would endeavor to comfort him, saying, Brother, I see the gate and men standing by to receive us; but Christian would answer, 'Tis you, 'tis you they wait for; you have been Hopeful ever since I knew you. And so have you, said he to Christian. Ah, brother, said he, surely if I was right he would now arise to help me; but for my sins he hath brought me into the snare, and hath left me. Then said Hopeful, My brother, you have quite forgot the text, where it is said of the wicked, "There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men" (Psalms lxxiii.4, 5). These troubles and distresses that you go through in these waters are no sign that God hath forsaken you, but are sent to try you, whether you will call to mind that which heretofore you have received of his goodness, and live upon him in your distresses.

Then I saw in my dream that Christian was as in a muse³ a while, to whom

8. Amazed.

9. Both were "translated" alive to heaven (Genesis 5,24, Hebrews 11.5, 2 Kings 2.11-12).

1. A word of uncertain meaning that occurs fre-

quently at the end of a verse in the Psalms. Bunyan may have supposed it to signify the end.

2. Reveal.

3. A deep meditation.

also Hopeful added this word. Be of good cheer. Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. And with that Christian brake out with a loud voice, Oh, I see him again! and he tells me, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee" (Isaiah xliii.2). Then they both took courage, and the Enemy was after that as still as a stone, until they were gone over. Christian therefore presently found ground to stand upon, and so it followed that the rest of the river was but shallow. Thus they got over. Now, upon the bank of the river on the other side, they saw the two Shining Men again, who there waited for them. Wherefore, being come out of the river, they saluted⁴ them saying. We are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those that shall be heirs of salvation. Thus they went along towards the gate. * * *

Now when they were come up to the gate, there was written over it in letters of gold, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation xxii.14).

Then I saw in my dream, that the Shining Men bid them call at the gate; the which, when they did, some from above looked over the gate, to wit, Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, etc., to whom it was said, These pilgrims are come from the City of Destruction, for the love that they bear to the King of this place; and then the pilgrims gave in unto them each man his certificate, which they had received in the beginning; those, therefore, were carried in to the King, who, when he had read them, said, Where are the men? To whom it was answered, They are standing without the gate. The King then commanded to open the gate, "That the righteous nation," said he, "which keepeth the truth, may enter in" (Isaiah xxvi.2).

Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate; and lo, as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There was also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave them to them: the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honor. Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, "ENTER YE INTO THE JOY OF OUR LORD" (Matthew xxv.21). I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, "BLESSING AND HONOR, GLORY AND POWER, BE TO HIM THAT SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND TO THE LAMB FOREVER AND EVER" (Revelation v. 13).

Now just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and, behold, the City shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men, with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal.

There were also of them that had wings, and they answered one another without intermission, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord" (Revelation iv.8). And after that they shut up the gates, which when I had seen I wished myself among them.

Now while I was gazing upon all these things, I turned my head to look back, and saw Ignorance come up to the riverside; but he soon got over, and that without half that difficulty which the other two men met with. For it happened that there was then in that place one Vain-hope, a ferryman, that with his boat helped him over; so he, as the other, I saw, did ascend the hill to come up to the gate, only he came alone; neither did any man meet him with the least encouragement. When he was come up to the gate, he looked

4. Greeted.

up to the writing that was above, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him; but he was asked by the men that looked over the top of the gate, Whence came you? and what would you have? He answered, I have eat and drank in the presence of the King, and he has taught in our streets. Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the King; so he fumbled in his bosom for one, and found none. Then said they, Have you none? But the man answered never a word. So they told the King, but he would not come down to see him, but commanded the two Shining Ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the City, to go out and take Ignorance, and bind him hand and foot, and have him away. Then they took him up, and carried him through the air, to the door that I saw in the side of the hill, and put him in there. Then I saw that there was a way to hell, even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction. So I awoke, and behold it was a dream.

1 6 7 8

JOHN LOCKE

1632-1704

John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) is "a history-book," according to Laurence Sterne, "of what passes in a man's own mind." Like Montaigne's essays, it aims to explore the human mind in general by closely watching one particular mind. When Locke analyzed his ideas, the ways they were acquired and put together, he found they were clear when they were based on direct experience and adequate when they were clear. Usually, it appeared, problems occurred when basic ideas were blurred or confused or did not refer to anything determinate. Thus a critical analysis of the ideas in an individual mind could lead straight to a rule about adequate ideas in general and the sort of subject where adequate ideas were possible. On the basis of such a limitation, individuals might reach rational agreement with one another and so set up an area of natural law, within which a common rule of understanding was available.

Locke's new "way of ideas" strikes a humble, antidogmatic note, but readers quickly perceived its far-reaching implications. By basing knowledge on the ideas immediately "before the mind," Locke comports with and helps codify the movement of his times away from the authority of traditions of medieval, scholastic philosophy. His approach also alarmed some divines who argued that the foundation of human life—the mysteries of faith—could never be reduced to clear, distinct ideas. Locke indirectly accepts the Christian scriptures in the *Essay* in the midst of his famous critique of "enthusiasm," the belief in private revelation, but his main impulse is to restrain rather than to encourage religious speculations. (His fullest theological work, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1695, argues that scriptural revelation is necessary for right-thinking people but not incompatible with ordinary reasonable beliefs gathered from personal experience and history.) The *Essay* also contains an unsettling discussion of personal identity (in the chapter "Of Identity and Diversity" added to the second edition in 1694). Locke argues that a person's sense of selfhood derives not from the "identity of soul" but rather from "consciousness of present and past actions": I am myself now because I remember my past, not because a unique substance ("me") underlies everything I experience. This account drew critical responses from numerous distinguished thinkers throughout the eighteenth century, notably Bishop Joseph Butler (1692-1752).

Locke spent his life in thought. His background and connections were all with the Puritan movement, but he was disillusioned early with the enthusiastic moods and persecutions to which he found the Puritans prone. Having a small but steady private income, he became a student, chiefly at Oxford, learning enough medicine to act as a physician, holding an occasional appointive office, but never allowing any of these activities to limit his controlling passion: the urge to think. After 1667, he was personal physician and tutor in the household of a violent, crafty politician, the first earl of Shaftesbury (Dryden's "Achitophel"). But Locke himself was always a grave, dispassionate man. On one occasion, Shaftesbury's political enemies at Oxford had Locke watched for several years on end, during which he was not heard to say one word either critical of the government or favorable to it. When times are turbulent, so much discretion is suspicious in itself, and Locke found it convenient to go abroad for several years during the 1680s. He lived quietly in Holland and pursued his thoughts. The Glorious Revolution of 1688—89 and the accession of William III brought him back to England and made possible the publication of the *Essay*, on which he had been working for many years. Its publication foreshadowed the coming age, not only in the positive ideas that the book advanced but in the quiet way it set aside as insoluble a range of problems about absolute authority and absolute assurance that had torn society apart earlier in the seventeenth century.

From An Essay Concerning Human Understanding

From The Epistle to the Reader

Reader,

I here put into thy hands what has been the diversion of some of my idle and heavy hours; if it has the good luck to prove so of any of thine, and thou hast but half so much pleasure in reading as I had in writing it, thou wilt as little think thy money, as I do my pains, ill-bestowed. Mistake not this for a commendation of my work; nor conclude, because I was pleased with the doing of it, that therefore I am fondly taken with it now it is done. He that hawks at larks and sparrows, has no less sport, though a much less considerable quarry, than he that flies at nobler game: and he is little acquainted with the subject of this treatise, the Understanding, who does not know, that as it is the most elevated faculty of the soul, so it is employed with a greater and more constant delight than any of the other. Its searches after truth are a sort of hawking and hunting, wherein the very pursuit makes a great part of the pleasure. Every step the mind takes in its progress towards knowledge makes some discovery, which is not only new, but the best, too, for the time at least.

For the understanding, like the eye, judging of objects only by its own sight, cannot but be pleased with what it discovers, having less regret for what has escaped it, because it is unknown. Thus he who has raised himself above the alms-basket, and, not content to live lazily on scraps of begged opinions, sets his own thoughts on work to find and follow truth, will (whatever he lights on) not miss the hunter's satisfaction; every moment of his pursuit will reward his pains with some delight, and he will have reason to think his time not ill-spent, even when he cannot much boast of any great acquisition.

This, reader, is the entertainment of those who let loose their own thoughts, and follow them in writing; which thou oughtest not to envy them, since they afford thee an opportunity of the like diversion, if thou wilt make use of thy own thoughts in reading. It is to them, if they are thy own, that I refer myself; but if they are taken upon trust from others, it is no great matter what they

are, they not following truth, but some meaner consideration; and it is not worthwhile to be concerned what he says or thinks, who says or thinks only as he is directed by another. If thou judgest for thyself, I know thou wilt judge candidly; and then I shall not be harmed or offended, whatever be thy censure. For, though it be certain that there is nothing in this treatise of the truth whereof I am not fully persuaded, yet I consider myself as liable to mistakes as I can think thee; and know that this book must stand or fall with thee, not by any opinion I have of it, but thy own. If thou findest little in it new or instructive to thee, thou art not to blame me for it. It was not meant for those that had already mastered this subject, and made a thorough acquaintance with their own understandings, but for my own information, and the satisfaction of a few friends, who acknowledged themselves not to have sufficiently considered it. Were it fit to trouble thee with the history of this Essay, I should tell thee, that five or six friends, meeting at my chamber, and discoursing on a subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand by the difficulties that rose on every side. After we had awhile puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts, that we took a wrong course; and that, before we set ourselves upon inquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with. This I proposed to the company, who all readily assented; and thereupon it was agreed, that this should be our first inquiry. Some hasty and undigested thoughts, on a subject I had never before considered, which I set down against¹ our next meeting, gave the first entrance into this discourse, which, having been thus begun by chance, was continued by entreaty; written by incoherent parcels; and, after long intervals of neglect, resumed again, as my humor or occasions permitted; and at last, in a retirement, where an attendance on my health gave me leisure, it was brought into that order thou now seest it.

This discontinued way of writing may have occasioned, besides others, two contrary faults; viz., that too little and too much may be said in it. If thou findest anything wanting, I shall be glad that what I have writ gives thee any desire that I should have gone farther: if it seems too much to thee, thou must blame the subject; for when I first put pen to paper, I thought all I should have to say on this matter would have been contained in one sheet of paper; but the farther I went, the larger prospect I had: new discoveries led me still on, and so it grew insensibly to the bulk it now appears in. I will not deny but possibly it might be reduced to a narrower compass than it is; and that some parts of it might be contracted; the way it has been writ in, by catches,² and many long intervals of interruption, being apt to cause some repetitions. But, to confess the truth, I am now too lazy or too busy to make it shorter.

^{4 * 4} I pretend not to publish this Essay for the information of men of large thoughts and quick apprehensions; to such masters of knowledge, I profess myself a scholar, and therefore warn them beforehand not to expect anything here but what, being spun out of my own coarse thoughts, is fitted to men of my own size, to whom, perhaps, it will not be unacceptable that I have taken some pains to make plain and familiar to their thoughts some truths, which established prejudice or the abstractness of the ideas themselves might render difficult. ^{4 4 4}

^{4 4 4} The commonwealth of learning is not at this time without master-

1. Before.

2. Fragments.

builders, whose mighty designs in advancing the sciences will leave lasting monuments to the admiration of posterity: but everyone must not hope to be a Boyle or a Sydenham; and in an age that produces such masters as the great Huygenius, and the incomparable Mr. Newton,³ with some other of that strain, it is ambition enough to be employed as an under-laborer in clearing the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way to knowledge; which certainly had been very much more advanced in the world, if the endeavors of ingenious and industrious men had not been much cumbered with the learned but frivolous use of uncouth, affected, or unintelligible terms introduced into the sciences, and there made an art of to that degree that philosophy, which is nothing but the true knowledge of things, was thought unfit or incapable to be brought into well-bred company and polite conversation.⁴ Vague and insignificant forms of speech, and abuse of language, have so long passed for mysteries of science; and hard or misapplied words, with little or no meaning, have, by prescription, such a right to be mistaken for deep learning and height of speculation; that it will not be easy to persuade either those who speak or those who hear them, that they are but the covers of ignorance, and hindrance of true knowledge. * * *

The booksellers, preparing for the fourth edition of my Essay, gave me notice of it, that I might, if I had leisure, make any additions or alterations I should think fit. Whereupon I thought it convenient to advertise the reader, that besides several corrections I had made here and there, there was one alteration which it was necessary to mention, because it ran through the whole book, and is of consequence to be rightly understood. What I thereupon said, was this:—

"Clear and distinct ideas" are terms which, though familiar and frequent in men's mouths, I have reason to think everyone who uses does not perfectly understand. And possibly it is but here and there one who gives himself the trouble to consider them so far as to know what he himself or others precisely mean by them. I have therefore, in most places, chose to put "determinate" or "determined,"⁵ instead of "clear" and "distinct," as more likely to direct men's thoughts to my meaning in this matter. By those denominations, I mean some object in the mind, and consequently determined, i.e., such as it is there seen and perceived to be. This, I think, may fitly be called a "determinate" or "determined" idea, when such as it is at any time objectively in the mind, and so determined there, it is annexed, and without variation determined, to a name or articulate sound which is to be steadily the sign of that very same object of the mind, or determinate idea.

To explain this a little more particularly: By "determinate," when applied to a simple idea, I mean that simple appearance which the mind has in its view, or perceives in itself, when that idea is said to be in it. By "determined," when applied to a complex idea, I mean such an one as consists of a determinate number of certain simple or less complex ideas, joined in such a proportion and situation as the mind has before its view, and sees in itself, when that

3. Sir Isaac Newton. Robert Boyle, the great Anglo-Irish chemist and physicist. Thomas Sydenham, a physician and authority on the treatment of fevers. Christiaan Huygens, Dutch mathematician and astronomer.

4. Locke was tutor to Anthony Ashley Cooper, third earl of Shaftesbury, whose philosophical writ-

ings make of genteel social conversation and civilized good humor something like guides to ultimate truth. See Shaftesbury's *Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor*, p. 2838.

5. Definite, limited, fixed in value.

idea is present in it, or should be present in it, when a man gives a name to it. I say "should be"; because it is not everyone, nor perhaps anyone, who is so careful of his language as to use no word till he views in his mind the precise determined idea which he resolves to make it the sign of. The want of this is the cause of no small obscurity and confusion in men's thoughts and discourses.

I know there are not words enough in any language to answer all the variety of ideas that enter into men's discourses and reasonings. But this hinders not but that when anyone uses any term, he may have in his mind a determined idea which he makes it the sign of, and to which he should keep it steadily annexed during that present discourse. Where he does not or cannot do this, he in vain pretends to clear or distinct ideas: it is plain his are not so; and therefore there can be expected nothing but obscurity and confusion, where such terms are made use of which have not such a precise determination.

Upon this ground I have thought "determined ideas" a way of speaking less liable to mistake than "clear and distinct"; and where men have got such determined ideas of all that they reason, inquire, or argue about, they will find a great part of their doubts and disputes at an end; the greatest part of the questions and controversies that perplex mankind depending on the doubtful and uncertain use of words, or (which is the same) indetermined ideas, which they are made to stand for. I have made choice of these terms to signify, 1. Some immediate object of the mind, which it perceives and has before it, distinct from the sound it uses as a sign of it. 2. That this idea, thus determined, i.e., which the mind has in itself, and knows and sees there, be determined without any change to that name, and that name determined to that precise idea. If men had such determined ideas in their inquiries and discourses, they would both discern how far their own inquiries and discourses went, and avoid the greatest part of the disputes and wranglings they have with others.

s & s

1690, 1700

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

1642-1727

Isaac Newton was the posthumous son of a Lincolnshire farmer. As a boy, he invented machines; as an undergraduate, he made major discoveries in optics and mathematics; and in 1667—at twenty-five—he was elected a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Two years later his teacher, Isaac Barrow, resigned the Lucasian Chair of Mathematics in his favor. By then, in secret, Newton had already begun to rethink the universe. His mind worked incessantly, at the highest level of insight, both theoretical and experimental. He designed the first reflecting telescope and explained why the sky looks blue; contemporaneously with Leibniz, he invented calculus; he revolutionized the study of mechanics and physics with three basic laws of motion; and as everyone knows, he discovered the universal law of gravity. Although Newton's *Principia* (*Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, 1687) made possible the

modern understanding of the cosmos, his *Opticks* (1704) had a still greater impact on his contemporaries, not only for its discoveries about light and color but also for its formulation of a proper scientific method.

Newton reported most of his scientific findings in Latin, the language of international scholarship; but when he chose, he could express himself in crisp and vigorous English. His early experiments on light and color were described in a letter to Henry Oldenburg, secretary of the Royal Society, and quickly published in the society's journal. By analyzing the spectrum, Newton had discovered something amazing, the "oddest if not the most considerable detection, which hath hitherto been made in the operations of nature": light is not homogeneous, as everyone thought, but a compound of heterogeneous rays, and white is not the absence of color but a composite of all sorts of colors. Newton assumes that a clear account of his experiments and reasoning will compel assent; when, at the end of his summary, he drops a very heavy word, he clinches the point like a carpenter nailing a box shut. But other scientists resisted the theory. In years to come, Newton would be more wary; eventually he would leave the university to become master of the mint in London and to devote himself to religious studies. Yet all the while his fame would continue to grow. "There could be only one Newton," Napoleon was told a century later: "there was only one world to discover."

**From A Letter of Mr. Isaac Newton, Professor of the
Mathematics in the University of Cambridge, Containing His
New Theory about Light and Colors**

*Sent by the Author to the Publisher from Cambridge, Febr. 6, 1672, in
order to Be Communicated to the Royal Society*

Sir,

To perform my late promise to you, I shall without further ceremony acquaint you that in the beginning of the year 1666 (at which time I applied myself to the grinding of optic glasses of other figures than spherical) I procured me a triangular glass prism to try therewith the celebrated phenomena of colors. And in order thereto having darkened my chamber and made a small hole in my window-shuts to let in a convenient quantity of the sun's light, I placed my prism at his entrance that it might be thereby refracted¹ to the opposite wall. It was at first a very pleasing divertissement to view the vivid and intense colors produced thereby; but after a while, applying myself to consider them more circumspectly, I became surprised to see them in an *oblong* form, which according to the received laws of refraction I expected should have been *circular*.

They were terminated at the sides with straight lines, but at the ends the decay of light was so gradual that it was difficult to determine justly what was their figure; yet they seemed *semicircular*.

Comparing the length of this colored spectrum with its breadth, I found it about five times greater, a disproportion so extravagant that it excited me to a more than ordinary curiosity of examining from whence it might proceed. I could scarce think that the various thickness of the glass or the termination with shadow or darkness could have any influence on light to produce such an effect; yet I thought it not amiss first to examine those circumstances, and

1. I.e., that the light's direction might be diverted from a straight path.

so tried what would happen by transmitting light through parts of the glass of divers thicknesses, or through holes in the window of divers bignesses, or by setting the prism without, so that the light might pass through it and be refracted before it was terminated by the hole. But I found none of those circumstances material. The fashion of the colors was in all these cases the same.

Then I suspected whether by any unevenness in the glass or other contingent irregularity these colors might be thus dilated. And to try this, I took another prism like the former and so placed it that the light, passing through them both, might be refracted contrary ways, and so by the latter returned into that course from which the former had diverted it. For by this means I thought the regular effects of the first prism would be destroyed by the second prism, but the irregular ones more augmented by the multiplicity of refractions. The event was that the light, which by the first prism was diffused into an oblong form, was by the second reduced into an orbicular one with as much regularity as when it did not at all pass through them. So that, whatever was the cause of that length, 'twas not any contingent irregularity.²

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The gradual removal of these suspicions at length led me to the *exferimentum crucis*,³ which was this: I took two boards, and placed one of them close behind the prism at the window, so that the light might pass through a small hole made in it for the purpose and fall on the other board, which I placed at about 12 foot distance, having first made a small hole in it also, for some of that incident⁴ light to pass through. Then I placed another prism behind this second board so that the light, trajected through both the boards, might pass through that also, and be again refracted before it arrived at the wall. This done, I took the first prism in my hand, and turned it to and fro slowly about its axis, so much as to make the several parts of the image, cast on the second board, successively pass through the hole in it, that I might observe to what places on the wall the second prism would refract them. And I saw by the variation of those places that the light, tending to that end of the image towards which the refraction of the first prism was made, did in the second prism suffer a refraction considerably greater than the light tending to the other end. And so the true cause of the length of that image was detected to be no other than that light consists of *rays differently refrangible*, which, without any respect to a difference in their incidence, were, according to their degrees of refrangibility, transmitted towards divers parts of the wall.⁵

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I shall now proceed to acquaint you with another more notable difformity⁶ in its rays, wherein the *origin of colors* is infolded. A naturalist⁷ would scarce expect to see the science of those become mathematical, and yet I dare affirm

2. Newton goes on to describe several experiments and calculations by which he disposed of alternative theories—that rays coming from different parts of the sun caused the diffusion of light into an oblong, or that the rays of light traveled in curved paths after leaving the prism.

3. Crucial experiment (Latin); turning point.

4. From the Latin *incidere*, to fall into or onto. Newton uses it of light striking an obstacle.

5. This insight enables Newton to design a greatly

improved telescope, which uses reflections to correct the distortions caused by the scattering of refracted rays. He adds in passing that his experiments were interrupted for two years by the plague: but at last he returns to some further and even more important characteristics of light. "Refrangible": susceptible to being refracted.

6. Diversity of forms.

7. A student of physics or "natural philosophy."

that there is as much certainty in it as in any other part of optics. For what I shall tell concerning them is not an hypothesis but most rigid consequence, not conjectured by barely inferring 'tis thus because not otherwise or because it satisfied all phenomena (the philosophers' universal topic) but evinced by the mediation of experiments concluding directly and without any suspicion of doubt.

The doctrine you will find comprehended and illustrated in the following propositions.

1. As the rays of light differ in degrees of refrangibility, so they also differ in their disposition to exhibit this or that particular color. Colors are not *qualifications of light*, derived from refractions or reflections of natural bodies (as 'tis generally believed), but *original and connate properties* which in divers rays are divers. Some rays are disposed to exhibit a red color and no other; some a yellow and no other, some a green and no other, and so of the rest. Nor are there only rays proper and particular to the more eminent colors, but even to all their intermediate gradations.

2. To the same degree of refrangibility ever belongs the same color, and to the same color ever belongs the same degree of refrangibility. The least refrangible rays are all disposed to exhibit a red color, and contrarily those rays which are disposed to exhibit a red color are all the least refrangible. So the most refrangible rays are all disposed to exhibit a deep violet color, and contrarily those which are apt to exhibit such a violet color are all the most refrangible. And so to all the intermediate colors in a continued series belong intermediate degrees of refrangibility. And this analogy 'twixt colors and refrangibility is very precise and strict; the rays always either exactly agreeing in both or proportionally disagreeing in both.

3. The species of color and degree of refrangibility proper to any particular sort of rays is not mutable by refraction, nor by reflection from natural bodies, nor by any other cause that I could yet observe. When any one sort of rays hath been well parted from those of other kinds, it hath afterwards obstinately retained its color, notwithstanding my utmost endeavors to change it. I have refracted it with prisms and reflected it with bodies which in daylight were of other colors; I have intercepted it with the colored film of air interceding two compressed plates of glass; transmitted it through colored mediums and through mediums irradiated with other sorts of rays, and diversely terminated it; and yet could never produce any new color out of it. It would by contracting or dilating become more brisk or faint and by the loss of many rays in some cases very obscure and dark; but I could never see it changed *in specie*.⁸

4. Yet seeming transmutations of colors may be made, where there is any mixture of divers sorts of rays. For in such mixtures, the component colors appear not, but by their mutual allaying each other constitute a middling color. And therefore, if by refraction or any other of the aforesaid causes the difform rays latent in such a mixture be separated, there shall emerge colors different from the color of the composition. Which colors are not new generated, but only made apparent by being parted; for if they be again entirely mixed and blended together, they will again compose that color which they did before separation. And for the same reason, transmutations made by the convening of divers colors are not real; for when the difform rays are again severed, they will exhibit the very same colors which they did before they entered the com-

8. In kind.

position—as you see blue and yellow powders when finely mixed appear to the naked eye green, and yet the colors of the component corpuscles are not thereby transmuted, but only blended. For, when viewed with a good microscope, they still appear blue and yellow interspersedly.

5. There are therefore two sorts of colors: the one original and simple, the other compounded of these. The original or primary colors are red, yellow, green, blue, and a violet-purple, together with orange, indigo, and an indefinite variety of intermediate graduations.

6. The same colors *in specie* with these primary ones may be also produced by composition. For a mixture of yellow and blue makes green; of red and yellow makes orange; of orange and yellowish green makes yellow. And in general, if any two colors be mixed which, in the series of those generated by the prism, are not too far distant one from another, they by their mutual alloy compound that color which in the said series appeareth in the mid-way between them. But those which are situated at too great a distance, do not so. Orange and indigo produce not the intermediate green, nor scarlet and green the intermediate yellow.

7. But the most surprising and wonderful composition was that *of whiteness*. There is no one sort of rays which alone can exhibit this. 'Tis ever compounded, and to its composition are requisite all the aforesaid primary colors, mixed in a due proportion. I have often with admiration beheld that all the colors of the prism, being made to converge, and thereby to be again mixed as they were in the light before it was incident upon the prism, reproduced light entirely and perfectly white, and not at all sensibly differing from a direct light of the sun, unless when the glasses I used were not sufficiently clear; for then they would a little incline it to *their* color.

8. Hence therefore it comes to pass that *whiteness* is the usual color of light, for light is a confused aggregate of rays endued with all sorts of colors, as they are promiscuously darted from the various parts of luminous bodies. And of such a confused aggregate, as I said, is generated whiteness, if there be a due proportion of the ingredients; but if any one predominate, the light must incline to that color, as it happens in the blue flame of brimstone, the yellow flame of a candle, and the various colors of the fixed stars.

9. These things considered, the manner how colors are produced by the prism is evident. For of the rays constituting the incident light, since those which differ in color proportionally differ in refrangibility, they by their unequal refractions must be severed and dispersed into an oblong form in an orderly succession from the least refracted scarlet to the most refracted violet. And for the same reason it is that objects, when looked upon through a prism, appear colored. For the difform rays, by their unequal refractions, are made to diverge towards several parts of the retina, and there express the images of things colored, as in the former case they did the sun's image upon a wall. And by this inequality of refractions they become not only colored, but also very confused and indistinct.

10. Why the colors of the rainbow appear in falling drops of rain is also from hence evident. For those drops which refract the rays disposed to appear purple in greatest quantity to the spectator's eye, refract the rays of other sorts so much less as to make them pass beside it;⁹ and such are the drops on the inside of the primary bow and on the outside of the secondary or exterior one.

9. I.e., disappear alongside it.

So those drops which refract in greatest plenty the rays apt to appear red toward the spectator's eye, refract those of other sorts so much more as to make them pass beside it; and such are the drops on the exterior part of the primary and interior part of the secondary bow.

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13. I might add more instances of this nature, but I shall conclude with this general one, that the colors of all natural bodies have no other origin than this, that they are variously qualified to reflect one sort of light in greater plenty than another. And this I have experimented in a dark room by illuminating those bodies with uncompounded light of divers colors. For by that means any body may be made to appear of any color. They have there no appropriate color, but ever appear of the color of the light cast upon them, but yet with this difference, that they are most brisk and vivid in the light of their own daylight color. *Minium* appeareth there of any color indifferently with which 'tis illustrated, but yet most luminous in red, and so *Bise*' appeareth indifferently of any color with which 'tis illustrated, but yet most luminous in blue. And therefore *minium* reflecteth rays of any color, but most copiously those endued with red; and consequently when illustrated with daylight, that is, with all sorts of rays promiscuously blended, those qualified with red shall abound most in the reflected light, and by their prevalence cause it to appear of that color. And for the same reason *bise*, reflecting blue most copiously, shall appear blue by the excess of those rays in its reflected light; and the like of other bodies. And that this is the entire and adequate cause of their colors is manifest, because they have no power to change or alter the colors of any sort of rays incident apart, but put on all colors indifferently with which they are enlightened.

These things being so, it can no longer be disputed whether there be colors in the dark, nor whether they be the qualities of the objects we see, no, nor perhaps whether light be a body. For since colors are the qualities of light, having its rays for their entire and immediate subject,² how can we think those rays qualities also, unless one quality may be the subject of and sustain another—which in effect is to call it substance. We should not know bodies for substances were it not for their sensible qualities, and the principal of those being now found due to something else, we have as good reason to believe that to be a substance also.³

Besides, who ever thought any quality to be a heterogeneous aggregate, such as light is discovered to be? But to determine more absolutely what light is, after what manner refracted, and by what modes or actions it produceth in our minds the phantasms of colors, is not so easy. And I shall not mingle conjectures with certainties.

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1. Azurite blue. "Minium": red lead. "Illustrated": illuminated.

2. That of which a thing consists.

3. I.e., the only way we know bodies are substances is that our senses perceive their qualities.

The chief of these qualities, color, is now known to be a quality of light, not body; our conclusion can perfectly well be that light is a form of substance, as well as body, and that we know it to be so through its quality, color.

SAMUEL BUTLER

1612-1680

Samuel Butler passed his middle years during the fury of the civil wars and under the Commonwealth, sardonically observing the behavior and lovingly memorizing the faults of the Puritan rulers. He despised them and found relief for his feelings by satirizing them, though, naturally enough, he could not publish while they were in power. He served as clerk to several Puritan justices of the peace in the west of England, one of whom, according to tradition, was the original of Sir Hudibras (the *s* is pronounced). *Hudibras*, part 1, was published in 1662 (the edition bears the date 1663) and pleased the triumphant Royalists. King Charles II admired and often quoted the poem and rewarded its author with a gift of £300; it was, after all, a relief to laugh at what he had earlier hated and feared. The first part, attacking Presbyterians and Independents, proved more vigorous and effective than parts 2 and 3, which followed in 1664 and 1678, respectively. After his initial success, Butler was neglected by the people he had pleased. He died in poverty, and not until 1721 was a monument to his memory erected in Westminster Abbey.

Hudibras is a travesty, or burlesque: it takes a serious subject and debases it by using a low style or distorts it by grotesque exaggeration. Butler carried this mode even into his verse, for he reduced the iambic tetrameter line (used subtly and seriously by such seventeenth-century poets as John Donne, John Milton, and Andrew Marvell) to something approaching doggerel, and his boldly comic rhymes add to the effect of broad comedy that he sought to create. Burlesque was a popular form of satire during the seventeenth century, especially after the French poet Paul Scarron published his *Virgile Travesti* (1648), which retells the *Aeneid* in slang. Butler's use of burlesque expresses his contempt for the Puritans and their commonwealth; the history of England from 1642 to 1660 is made to appear mere sound and fury.

Butler took his hero's name from Spenser's *Faerie Queene* 2.2, where Sir Huddibras appears briefly as a rash adventurer and lover. The questing knight of chivalric romance is degraded into the meddling, hypocritical busybody Hudibras, who goes out, like an officer in Cromwell's army, "a-coloneling" against the popular sport of bear baiting. The knight and his squire, Balph, suggest Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, but the temper of Butler's mind is as remote from Cervantes's warm humanity as it is from Spenser's ardent idealism. Butler had no illusions; he was skeptical in philosophy and conservative in politics, distrusting theoretical reasoning and the new science, disdainful of claims of inspiration and illumination, contemptuous of Catholicism and dubious of bishops, Anglican no less than Roman. It is difficult to think of anything that he approved unless it was peace, common sense, and the wisdom that emerges from the experience of humankind through the ages.

From *Hudibras*

From *Part 1, Canto 1*

THE ARGUMENT

*Sir Hudibras, his passing worth,
The manner how he sallied forth,
His arms and equipage are shown,
His horse's virtues and his own:
The adventure of the Bear and Fiddle
Is sung, hut breaks off in the middle.*

When civil fury¹ first grew high,
 And men fell out, they knew not why;
 When hard words, jealousies, and fears
 Set folks together by the ears
 5 And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
 For Dame Religion as for punk,^o *prostitute*
 Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
 Though not a man of them knew wherefore;
 When gospel-trumpeter, surrounded
 10 With long-eared rout,² to battle sounded,
 And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,³
 Was beat with fist instead of a stick;
 Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
 And out he rode a-coloneling.⁴
 15 A wightⁿ he was whose very sight would *creature*
 Entitle him Mirror of Knighthood;
 That never bent his stubborn knee
 To anything but chivalry,
 Nor put up blow but that which laid
 20 Right worshipful on shoulder blade;⁵
 Chief of domestic knights and errant,
 Either for chartel or for warrant;
 Great on the bench, great in the saddle,⁶
 That could as well bind o'er as swaddle.⁷
 25 Mighty he was at both of these,
 And styled of war as well as peace.
 (So some rats of amphibious nature
 Are either for the land or water.)
 But here our authors make a doubt
 30 Whether he were more wise or stout.
 Some hold the one and some the other;
 But howsoe'er they make a pother,
 The difference was so small his brain
 Outweighed his rage but half a grain;
 35 Which made some take him for a tool
 That knaves do work with, called a fool,
 And offer to lay wagers that,
 As Montaigne, playing with his cat,
 Complains she thought him but an ass,⁸
 40 Much more she would Sir Hudibras
 (For that's the name our valiant knight

1. The civil wars between Royalists and Parliamentarians (1642-49).

2. A mob of Puritans or Roundheads, so called because they wore their hair short instead of in flowing curls and thus exposed their ears, which to many satirists suggested the long ears of the ass. "Gospel-trumpeter": a Presbyterian minister vehemently preaching rebellion.

3. The Presbyterian clergy were said to have preached the country into the civil wars. Hence, in pounding their pulpits with their fists, they are said to beat their ecclesiastical drums.

4. Here pronounced *co-lo-nel-ing*.

5. When a man is knighted he kneels and is tapped on the shoulder by his overlord's sword.

6. "Chartel": a written challenge to combat, such as a knight-errant sends. But Hudibras, as justice of the peace ("domestic knight"), could also issue a "warrant" (a writ authorizing an arrest, a seizure, or a search). Hence he is satirically called "great on the [justice's] bench" as well as in the saddle. "Errant" was spelled and pronounced *arrant*.

7. Both justice of the peace and soldier, he is equally able to "bind over" a malefactor to be tried at the next sessions or, in his role of colonel, to beat ("swaddle") him.

8. In his "Apology for Raymond Sebond," Michel de Montaigne (1533—1592), French skeptic and essayist, wondered whether he played with his cat or his cat played with him.

To all his challenges did write).
 But they're mistaken very much,
 'Tis plain enough he was no such.
 45 We grant, although he had much wit,
 He was very shy of using it;
 As being loath to wear it out,
 And therefore bore it not about,
 Unless on holidays, or so,
 50 As men their best apparel do.
 Beside, 'tis known he could speak Greek
 As naturally as pigs squeak;
 That Latin was no more difficile
 Than to a blackbird 'tis to whistle.
 55 Being rich in both, he never scanted
 His bounty unto such as wanted,
 But much of either would afford
 To many that had not one word.
 For Hebrew roots, although they're found
 60 To flourish most in barren ground,⁹
 He had such plenty as sufficed
 To make some think him circumcised;
 And truly so perhaps he was,
 'Tis many a pious Christian's case.
 65 He was in logic a great critic,
 Profoundly skilled in analytic.
 He could distinguish and divide
 A hair 'twixt south and southwest side;
 On either which he would dispute,
 70 Confute, change hands, and still confute.
 He'd undertake to prove, by force
 Of argument, a man's no horse;
 He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,
 And that a lord may be an owl,
 75 A calf an alderman, a goose a justice,
 And rooks committee-men and trustees.¹
 He'd run in debt by disputation,
 And pay with ratiocination.
 All this by syllogism true,
 so In mood and figure,² he would do.
 For rhetoric, he could not ope
 His mouth but out there flew a trope⁰ *figure of speech*
 And when he happened to break off
 In the middle of his speech, or cough,³
 85 He had hard words ready to show why,
 And tell what rules he did it by.
 Else, when with greatest art he spoke,
 You'd think he talked like other folk;

9. Hebrew, the language of Adam, was thought of as the primitive language, the one that people in a state of nature would naturally speak.

1. Committees were set up in the counties by Parliament and given authority to imprison Royalists and to sequester their estates. "Rooks": a kind of

blackbird; here, cheats (slang).

2. The "figure" of a syllogism is "the proper disposition of the middle term with the parts of the question." "Mood": the form of an argument.

3. Some pulpit orators regarded hemming and coughing as ornaments of speech.

For all a rhetorician's rules
 90 Teach nothing but to name his tools.
 His ordinary rate of speech
 In loftiness of sound was rich,
 A Babylonish dialect,⁴
 Which learned pedants much affect.
 95 It was a parti-colored dress
 Of patched and piebald languages;
 'Twas English cut on Greek and Latin,
 Like fustian heretofore on satin.⁵
 It had an odd promiscuous tone,
 100 As if he had talked three parts in one;
 Which made some think, when he did gabble,
 They had heard three laborers of Babel,
 Or Cerberus himself pronounce
 A leash of languages at once.⁶
 105 This he as volubly would vent
 As if his stock would ne'er be spent;
 And truly, to support that charge,
 He had supplies as vast and large.
 For he could coin or counterfeit
 no New words with little or no wit;⁷
 Words so debased and hard no stone
 Was hard enough to touch them on.⁸
 And when with hasty noise he spoke 'em,
 The ignorant for current took 'em;
 115 That had the orator, who once
 Did fill his mouth with pebble-stones
 When he harangued,⁹ but known his phrase,
 He would have used no other ways.
 In mathematics he was greater
 120 Than Tycho Brahe, or Erra Pater:¹
 For he, by geometric scale,
 Could take the size of pots of ale;
 Resolve by sines and tangents straight,
 If bread or butter wanted weight;
 125 And wisely tell what hour o' the day
 The clock does strike, by algebra.
 Beside, he was a shrewd philosopher,
 And had read every text and gloss over;
 Whate'er the crabbed'st author hath,
 BO He understood by implicit faith;
 Whatever skeptic could inquire for,
 For every *why* he had a *wherefore*;

4. Pedants affected the use of foreign words. "Babylonish" alludes to the confusion of languages with which God afflicts the builders of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11.4-9).

5. Clothes made of coarse cloth ("fustian") were slashed to display the richer satin lining. "Fustian" also means pompous, banal speech.

6. The sporting term "leash" denotes a group of three dogs, hawks, deer, etc., hence, three in general. Cerberus was the three-headed dog that guarded the entrance to Hades.

7. The Presbyterians and other sects invented a special religious vocabulary, much ridiculed by Anglicans: *out-goings*, *workings-out*, *gospel-walking-times*, etc.

8. Touchstones were used to test gold and silver for purity.

9. Demosthenes cured a stutter by speaking with pebbles in his mouth.

1. Butlers contemptuous name for the popular astrologer William Lilly (1602-1681). Brahe (1546-1601), a Danish astronomer.

Knew more than forty of them do,
 As far as words and terms could go.
 135 All which he understood by rote
 And, as occasion served, would quote,
 No matter whether right or wrong;
 They might be either said or sung.
 His notions fitted things so well
 140 That which was which he could not tell,
 But oftentimes mistook the one
 For the other, as great clerks" have done.² *scholars*
 He could reduce all things to acts,
 And knew their natures by abstracts;
 145 Where entity and quiddity,
 The ghosts of defunct bodies,³ fly;
 Where truth in person does appear,
 Like words congealed in northern air.⁴
 He knew what's what, and that's as high
 150 As metaphysic wit can fly.
scholastic theology
 In school-divinity⁰ as able
 As he that hight Irrefragable;
 Profound in all the nominal
 And real ways beyond them all;⁵
 155 And with as delicate a hand
 Could twist as tough a rope of sand;
 And weave fine cobwebs, fit for skull
 That's empty when the moon is full,⁶
 Such as take lodgings in a head
 160 That's to be let unfurnished
 He could raise scruples dark and nice,⁷
 And after solve 'em in a trice;
 As if divinity had caughted
 The itch on purpose to be scratched,
 165 Or, like a mountebank,⁸ did wound
 And stab herself with doubts profound,
 Only to show with how small pain
 The sores of faith are cured again;
 Although by woeful proof we find
 170 They always leave a scar behind.
 He knew the seat of paradise,⁹
 Could tell in what degree it lies;
 And, as he was disposed, could prove it

2. Elsewhere Butler wrote, "Notions are but pictures of things in the imagination of man, and if they agree with their originals in nature, they are true, and if not, false."

3. In the hairsplitting logic of medieval Scholastic philosophy, a distinction was drawn between the "entity," or *being*, and the "quiddity," or *essence*, of bodies. Butler calls entity and quiddity "ghosts" because they were held to be independent realities and so to survive the bodies in which they lodge.

4. The notion, as old as the Greek wit Lucian, that in arctic regions words freeze as they are uttered and become audible only when they thaw.

5. These lines refer to the debate, continuous throughout the Middle Ages, about whether the

objects of our concepts exist in nature or are mere intellectual abstractions. The "nominalists" denied their objective reality, the "realists" affirmed it. Alexander of Hales (d. 1245) was called "Irrefragable," i.e., unanswerable, because his system seemed incontrovertible.

6. The frenzies of the insane were supposed to wax and wane with the moon (hence "lunatic").

7. Obscure ("dark") and subtle ("nice") intellectual perplexities ("scruples").

8. A seller of quack medicines.

9. The problem of the precise location of the Garden of Eden and the similar problems listed in the ensuing dozen lines had all been the subject of controversy among theologians.

Below the moon, or else above it;
 175 What Adam dreamt of when his bride
 Came from her closet in his side;
 Whether the devil tempted her
 By a High Dutch interpreter;
 If either of them had a navel;
 180 Who first made music malleable;¹
 Whether the serpent at the fall
 Had cloven feet or none at all:
 All this without a gloss or comment
 He could unriddle in a moment,
 185 In proper terms, such as men smatter
 When they throw out and miss the matter.
 For his religion, it was fit
 To match his learning and his wit:
 'Twas Presbyterian true blue,²
 190 For he was of that stubborn crew
 Of errant saints³ whom all men grant
 To be the true church militant,
 Such as do build their faith upon
 The holy text of pike and gun;
 195 Decide all controversies by
 Infallible artillery,
 And prove their doctrine orthodox
 By apostolic blows and knocks;
 Call fire, and sword, and desolation
 200 A godly, thorough reformation,
 Which always must be carried on
 And still be doing, never done;
 As if religion were intended
 For nothing else but to be mended.
 205 A sect whose chief devotion lies
 In odd, perverse antipathies;⁴
 In falling out with that or this,
 And finding somewhat still amiss;
 More peevish, cross, and splenetic
 210 Than dog distract or monkey sick;
 That with more care keep holiday
 The wrong, than others the right way;
 Compound for^o sins they are inclined to *excuse*
 By damning those they have no mind to;
 215 Still so perverse and opposite
 As if they worshiped God for spite.
 The selfsame thing they will abhor
 One way and long another for.

1. Capable of being fashioned into form. Pythagoras is said to have organized sounds into the musical scale.

2. Supporters of Scotland's (Presbyterian) National Covenant adopted blue as their color, in contrast to the Royalist red. Blue is the color of constancy; hence, "true blue," staunch, unwavering.

3. A pun: *arrant*, meaning "unmitigated," and

errant, meaning "wandering," were both pronounced *arrant*. The Puritans frequently called themselves "saints."

4. The hostility of the sects to everything Anglican or Roman Catholic laid them open to the charge of opposing innocent practices out of mere perverse antipathy. Some extreme Presbyterians fasted at Christmas, instead of following the old custom of feasting and rejoicing (cf. lines 211—12).

Free-will they one way disavow,⁵
 20 Another, nothing else allow:
 All piety consists therein
 In them, in other men all sin.
 Rather than fail, they will defy
 That which they love most tenderly;
 25 Quarrel with minced pies and disparage
 Their best and dearest friend, plum-porridge;
 Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
 And blaspheme custard through the nose.⁶

1663

5. By the doctrine of predestination.

6. A reference to the nasal whine of the pious sectarians.

JOHN WILMOT, SECOND EARL OF ROCHESTER 1647-1680

John Wilmot, second earl of Rochester, was the precocious son of one of Charles II's most loyal followers in exile. He won the king's favor at the Restoration and, in 1664, after education at Oxford and on the Continent, took a place at court, at the age of seventeen. There he soon distinguished himself as "the man who has the most wit and the least honor in England." For one escapade, the abduction of Elizabeth Malet, an heiress, he was imprisoned in the Tower of London. But he regained his position by courageous service in the naval war against the Dutch, and in 1667 he married Malet. The rest of his career was no less stormy. His satiric wit, directed not only at ordinary mortals but at Dryden and Charles II himself, embroiled him in constant quarrels and exiles; his practical jokes, his affairs, and his dissipation were legendary. He circulated his works, always intellectually daring and often obscene, to a limited court readership in manuscripts executed by professional scribes—a common way of handling writing deemed too ideologically or morally scandalous for print. An early printed collection of his poems did appear in 1680, though the title page read "Antwerp," probably to hide its London origin. The air of scandal and disguise surrounding his writing only intensified his notoriety as the exemplar of the dissolute, libertine ways of court culture. He told his biographer, Gilbert Burnet, that "for five years together he was continually drunk." Just before his death, however, he was converted to Christian repentance, and for posterity, Rochester became a favorite moral topic: the libertine who had seen the error of his ways.

Wit, in the Restoration, meant not only a clever turn of phrase but mental capacity and intellectual power. Rochester was famous for both kinds of wit. His fierce intelligence, impatient of sham and convention, helped design a way of life based on style, cleverness, and self-interest—a way of life observable in Restoration plays (Dorimant, in Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, strongly resembles Rochester). Stylistically, Rochester infuses forms such as the heroic couplet with a volatility that contrasts with the pointed and balanced manner of its other masters. From the very first line of "A Satire against Reason and Mankind"—"Were I (who to my cost already am)—he plunges the reader into a couplet mode energized by speculation, self-interruption, and enjambment; and he frequently employs extravagant effects (such as the alliterations "love's lesser lightning" and "balmy brinks of bliss" in "The Imperfect Enjoyment") to flaunt his delight in dramatizing situations, sensations, and himself. "The Disabled

The Gender Wars

What are women good for? By the English Renaissance, men had been debating this question for centuries. Misogynists argued the case for woman's supposed natural inferiority and proper subordination to man on several grounds: the imperfections of the female body, mind, and spirit; women's disposition to frivolity, vanity, shrewishness, extravagance, and sexual voracity; and especially the claim that in the Garden of Eden, Eve caused Adam (and all humankind) to fall from innocence. The Wife of Bath's Prologue offers an amusing compendium of arguments pro and con that were already hoary by Chaucer's time. Some defenses of women, among them "Eve's Apology" in Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (p. 1317), earnestly challenge these stereotypes. More often, men composed prose tracts on both sides of the "woman question" in a spirit of witty rhetorical gamesmanship.

Joseph Swetnam (ca. 1570?—1621) prompted such an exchange of tracts by publishing his *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women* in 1615, under the pseudonym Tom Tel-troth. His other book, *The School of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence* (1617), indicates that he was a fencing master, and both books testify to his admitted lack of formal education. Swetnam's rambling but lively attack on women cobbles together proverbs, lore, rowdy jokes, invective, and anecdotes, as well as often inexact or misattributed paraphrases of what various authorities had to say about women, evidently derived from anthologies and commonplace books. The latter were printed versions of the personal notebooks into which many readers were accustomed to copy, under various headings depending on interest and use, quotations and citations from their reading. The *Arraignment* touched off a pamphlet war between the years 1615 and 1620, including four reissues of Swetnam's book and at least eight rejoinders or related works. Two of the answers bear women's allegorical names, Esther Sowernam (a satiric play on Swe[e]tnam) and Constantia Munda ("a steadfast world"); they may or may not have been actually written by women. Other works include a stage play, *Swetnam the Woman-Hater Arraigned by Women* (1620), and two satires on cross-dressing (which are included on Norton Literature Online). But the first response (1617), and the only one of these tracts published under the author's own name, was *A Muzzle for Melastomus* (Black Mouth) by the nineteen-year-old Rachel Speght (ca. 1597—?). Speght was the first Englishwoman to claim the role of polemicist and critic of gender ideology. Her tract defending women was published by, and perhaps solicited by, Swetnam's bookseller, Thomas Archer.

A Muzzle employs the railing attacks and witty ripostes expected in such a controversy. But most of Speght's treatise undertakes a serious argument, reinterpreting controversial biblical texts to yield a more equitable concept of gender. Speght's father, a Calvinist clergyman and an author himself, evidently provided her with some classical education—very rare for seventeenth-century women of any class. In her writings she both claims and displays a knowledge of Latin, some training in logic and rhetoric, and some familiarity with a range of learned authorities. In 1621 she published a long meditative poem, *Mortality's Memorandum*, occasioned by her mother's death. She prefaced it with an address to the reader reaffirming her authorship of *A Muzzle* and with a three-hundred-line autobiographical poem, "A Dream," which reworks medieval dream visions such as *The Romance of the Rose* to portray allegorically the obstacles she encountered and the rapturous delight she experienced

to be understood. The abrupt style, which hath many breaches, and doth not seem to end but fall. The congruent and harmonious fitting of parts in a sentence hath almost the fastening and force of knitting and connection, as in stones well squared, which will rise strong a great way without mortar. Periods⁷ are beautiful when they are not too long, for so they have their strength too, as in a pike or javelin. As we must take the care that our words and sense be clear, so if the obscurity happen through the hearer's or reader's want of understanding, I am not to answer for them, no more than for their not listening or marking;⁸ I must neither find them ears nor mind. But a man cannot put a word so in sense but something about it will illustrate it, if the writer understand himself. For order helps much to perspicuity, as confusion hurts. *Rectitudo lucem adfert; obliquitas et circumductio offuscet.*⁹ We should therefore speak what we can the nearest way, so as we keep our gait, not leap; for too short may as well not be let into the memory as too long not kept in. Whatsoever loseth the grace and clearness converts into a riddle; the obscurity is marked, but not the value. That perisheth, and is passed by, like the pearl in the fable.¹ Our style should be like a skein of silk, to be carried and found by the right thread, not raveled and perplexed; then all is a knot, a heap.

1640-41

7. Periodic sentences, characterized by balanced phrases and clauses with the main clause at the end.

8. Paying attention.

9. "Directness gives light; indirect and devious

diction confuses things." The sentence is from Vives.

1. The fable is that of Phaedrus (3.12); a cock found a pearl on a dunghill, but as he was not interested in it, that is where the pearl remained.

MARY WROTH

1587—1651?

Lady Mary Wroth was the most prolific, self-conscious, and impressive female author of the Jacobean era. Her published work (1621) include two firsts for an Englishwoman: a 558-page romance, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, which includes more than fifty poems, and appended to it a Petrarchan lyric sequence that had circulated some years in manuscript, 103 sonnets and elegant songs titled *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*. Wroth left unpublished a very long but unfinished continuation of the *Urania* and a pastoral drama, *Love's Victory*, also a first for an Englishwoman. Her achievement was fostered by her strong sense of identity as a Sidney, heir to the literary talent and cultural role of her famous uncle Sir Philip Sidney, her famous aunt Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, who may have served as mentor to her; and her father Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle, author of a recently discovered sonnet sequence. But she used that heritage transgressively to replace heroes with heroines in genres employed by the male Sidney authors—notably Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* and *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*—transforming their gender politics and exploring the poetics and situation of women writers.

As Robert Sidney's eldest daughter, she lived and was educated at Penshurst, the Sidney country house celebrated by Ben Jonson, and was often at her aunt's "little college" at Wilton. She danced at court in *The Masque of Blackness* and perhaps in other masques; she was married (incompatibly) at age seventeen to Sir Robert Wroth

APHRA BEHN

1640?—1689

"A woman wit has often graced the stage," Dryden wrote in 1681. Soon after actresses first appeared in English public theaters, there was an even more striking debut by a woman writer who boldly signed her plays and talked back to her critics. In a dozen years, Aphra Behn turned out at least that many plays, discovering fresh dramatic possibilities in casts that included women with warm bodies and clever heads. She also drew attention as a warm and witty poet of love. When writing for the stage became less profitable, she turned to the emerging field of prose fiction, composing a pioneering epistolary novel, *Love Letters between a Nobleman and His Sister*, and diverse short tales—not to mention a raft of translations from the French, pindarics to her beloved Stuart rulers, compilations, prologues, complimentary verses, all the piecework and puffery that were the stock in trade of the Restoration town wit. She worked in haste and with flair for nearly two decades and more than held her own as a professional writer. In the end, no author of her time—except Dryden himself—proved more versatile, more alive to new currents of thought, or more inventive in recasting fashionable forms.

Much of Behn's life remains a mystery. Although her books have been accompanied—and often all but buried—by volumes of rumor, hard facts are elusive. She was almost certainly from East Kent; she may well have been named Johnson. But she herself seems to have left no record of her date and place of birth, her family name and upbringing, or the identity of the shadowy Mr. Behn whom she reportedly married. Her many references to nuns and convents, as well as praise for prominent Catholic lords (*Oroonoko* is dedicated to one), have prompted speculation that she may have been raised as a Catholic and educated in a convent abroad. Without doubt, she drew on a range of worldly experience that would be closed to women in the more genteel ages to come. The circumstantial detail of *Oroonoko* supports her claim that she was in the new sugar colony of Surinam early in 1664. Perhaps she exaggerated her social position to enhance her tale, but many particulars—from dialect words and the location of plantations to methods of selling and torturing slaves—can be authenticated. During the trade war that broke out in 1665—which left her "vast and charming world" a Dutch prize—Behn traveled to the Low Countries on a spying mission for King Charles II. The king could be lax about payment, however, and Behn had to petition desperately to escape debtor's prison. In 1670 she brought out her first plays, "forced to write for bread," she confessed, "and not ashamed to own it."

In London, Behn flourished in the cosmopolitan world of the playhouse and the court. Dryden and other wits encouraged her; she mixed with actresses and managers and playwrights and exchanged verses with a lively literary set that she called her "cabal." Surviving letters record a passionate, troubled attachment to a lawyer named John Hoyle, a bisexual with libertine views. She kept up with the most advanced thinking and joined public debates with pointed satire against the Whigs. But the festivity of the Restoration world was fading out in bitter party acrimony. In 1682 Behn was placed under arrest for "abusive reflections" on the king's illegitimate son, the Whig duke of Monmouth (Dryden's Absalom). Her Boyalist opinions and the immodesty of her public role made her a target; gleeful lampoons declared that she was aging and ill and once again poor. She responded by bringing out her works at a still faster rate, composing *Oroonoko*, her dedication claims, "in a few hours . . . for I never rested my pen a moment for thought." In some last works she recorded her hope that her writings would live: "I value fame as much as if I had been born a hero." When she died she was buried in Westminster Abbey.

"All women together ought to let flowers fall upon the grave of Aphra Behn," Virginia Woolf wrote, "for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds." Behn herself spoke her mind. She scorned hypocrisy and calculation in her society

ELIZABETH CARY

1585?—1639

Elizabeth (Tanfield) Cary was the first Englishwoman to write and publish a drama, *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613); it was probably composed between 1602 and 1609 and invites comparison with Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, performed in 1613. Both plays have as protagonists forceful queens who insist on preserving the integrity of their own emotional lives in regard to marriage and who otherwise flout gender expectations; both queens are murdered by violently jealous men who then go mad. Cary's play, however, was not intended for the stage: it is a Senecan closet drama, a genre that dramatizes the clash of ideological positions. *Mariam* explores issues important in Cary's own life and controverted in the Jacobean state: the claims of conscience, the analogy of domestic and state tyranny, the power of kings and husbands, the rights and duties of wives and subjects, the justifications for resistance to tyrants, and the possibility and power of passive resistance.

The major source for Cary's life is a memoir by one of her daughters written about 1655. Though conceived as an exemplary biography or saint's life, it shows Cary continually caught between pressures to conform and submit and an inner imperative to resist and challenge authority. Daughter of a successful lawyer and judge, Sir Lawrence Tanfield, and of a mother descended from the country gentry, she grew up in Oxfordshire as a precocious only child, reading omnivorously, learning languages, translating Seneca's epistles and Ortelius's geography, and writing verses. The memoir claims that she learned, chiefly on her own, French, Spanish, Italian, Latin, and Hebrew (though her tutor John Davies of Hereford probably helped); that she often read all night, bribing the servants for candles her mother refused; and that at age twelve she regaled her father with arguments against Calvin's *Institutes*. In 1602, at age seventeen, she married Sir Henry Cary, a successful courtier who was at length appointed privy councillor (1618), Viscount Falkland in the Scottish peerage (1620), and lord deputy of Ireland (1622).

The memoir portrays Elizabeth struggling to conform her own inclinations and "strong will" to the will of her "very absolute" husband. She bore eleven children between 1609 and 1624 and nursed all but one; she read continually in history, poetry, moral philosophy, and the Church Fathers; and in 1626, now back in England, she converted openly to Catholicism—a move that left her isolated, attacked, cast off by husband and family, and in acute financial distress. (A covert profession would have caused no trouble in the court of the Catholic queen, Henrietta Maria, but an open avowal was especially threatening to her husband as governor of Ireland.) Ultimately, she brought six of her children to Catholicism, spiriting two sons abroad in the dead of night to receive a Jesuit education and leading four daughters to join a Benedictine convent at Cambray. Her eldest son, Lucius, celebrated in Ben Jonson's Cary-Morison ode (p. 1439), became the center of a noted intellectual circle at his estate, Great Tew.

Most of Cary's other writing did not survive, apparently: the memoir attributes to her a verse "Life of Tamurlane," several saints' lives in verse, an answer to a controversial Protestant tract by her son Lucius, and translations of the works of Cardinal Perron and other French divines; she and her tutor Davies also refer to an earlier tragedy set in Sicily. We do have her epitaph on Buckingham (ca. 1628), several trenchant letters to Charles I and others seeking redress after her husband cast her off, and a translation (1630) of Cardinal Perron's answer to a treatise by King James. Also, she is probably (but not certainly) the author of a remarkable *History of the Life, Reign, and Death of Edward II* (ca. 1627—28); if so, she was the first Englishwoman to write a full-scale history.

What wonders dwell
 On earth above. Yet bold he briskly runs,
 And soon the danger overcomes,
 Who, as he leapt, with joy related soon
 40 How happy he o'erleaped the moon.

What wondrous things upon the earth are done
 Beneath and yet above the sun!
 Deeds all appear again
 In higher spheres; remain
 45 In clouds as yet:
 But there they get
 Another light, and in another way
 Themselves to us above display.
 The skies themselves this earthly globe surround;
 so We're even here within them found.

On heavenly ground within the skies we walk,
 And in this middle center talk:
 Did we but wisely move
 On earth in heaven above,
 55 We then should be
 Exalted high
 Above the sky: from whence whoever falls,
 Through a long dismal precipice,^o *headlong fall*
 Sinks to the deep abyss where Satan crawls,
 60 Where horrid death and despair lies.

As much as others thought themselves to lie
 Beneath the moon, so much more high
 Himself he thought to fly
 Above the starry sky,
 65 As that he spied
 Below the tide.
 Thus did he yield me in the shady night
 A wondrous and instructive light,
 Which taught me that under our feet there is,
 70 As o'er our heads, a place of bliss.

MARGARET CAVENDISH
 1623-1673

Margaret (Lucas) Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, wrote and published numerous works during the Interregnum and Restoration era, in a great variety of genres: poetry (*Poems and Fancies*, 1653); essays (*Philosophical Fancies*, 1653; *The World's Olio*, 1655), short fiction (*Nature's Pictures*, 1656), autobiography (*A True Relation of My Birth, Breeding, and Life*, 1656), Utopian romance (*The Blazing World*, 1666), sci-