THE AGE OF PARODY

Literary Parody and some Nineteenth Century Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

This study is the result of work carried out on literary parody of poems and novels in the nineteenth century. The output of the period in this respect was so great as to justify it being dubbed the "age of parody" by its contemporaries, and a detailed account of the many aspects of the mode at this time has not been attempted since it would inevitably be protracted beyond the limits of the study. Instead, a pattern of parodic activity has been traced, and those aspects of parody which resolve themselves thematically and chronologically round the Romantic poets and novelists, the popular sub-Romantic genres of the mid-century, and the late Romantics, have formed the main topic of discussion. Parody is interpreted as a valuable source of contemporary opinion relating to the major literary movements of the period: a fundamentally critical act of assessment and acclimatization which is characterized in the nineteenth century by its Augustan and realist sympathies.

As a preliminary to assessing the nature of the nineteenth century's parodic achievement some broader theoretical questions relating to how we read parodies generally have also been considered; and the first part of the study represents an attempt to construct a theory of literary parody, beginning with some modern usages and including a history of the term and earlier critical discussion of the subject. It is argued that parody may be seen as an important means of analysing literary discourse and aesthetic experience which draws attention to the language of fictions by using language reflexively, and as such is particularly congenial to post-modernist consciousness and contemporary interest in fictionality and self-consciousness in literature.

A short account of parody in the eighteenth century has also been included as a prelude to nineteenth century usages; while nineteenth century parody itself is seen to furnish the modern reader with an unusual critical perspective on the period, as well as encouraging wider speculations about the status of literary texts.

"A côté de toute grande chose il y a une parodie"

- HUGO

PART I : THEORY AND USAGE OF LITERARY PARODY

Introduction: Parody and the Self-Conscious Novel

Parody has become an increasingly important term in the English critic's vocabulary during the past decade, and it is for this reason that a study of the nineteenth century is prefaced by an attempt to define 'parody' and a brief description of the context in which the modern reader will find parody most frequently discussed - that is, in relation to the post-modernist novel, with reference to the self-conscious novel generally.[1] Critics of this type of writing have stimulated an interest in parody that is comparatively new in England, and which will influence the way in which we interpret the term and evaluate the achievement of the past with respect to parody. But while valuable and exciting interpretations of the role of parody in the novel have been recently offered, at the same time it seems that a clear notion of what 'to parody some X' means is lacking, and the term is often used synonymously with 'self-consciousness', 'allusiveness', 'awareness', and even to indicate that all literature could, in some sense, be parody.[2] Critics of the self-conscious and post-modernist novels seem, in fact, to be working with an ill-defined concept that does not take into account the nature of parody as reflexive discourse, although the reflexivenessof some modern novels has become a critical commonplace. The first part of this study, then, represents an attempt to clarify the notion of parody as a necessary preliminary to an examination of parody in the nineteenth century, beginning with a short consideration of the role that modern critics have proposed for parody in the novel.

Analysis of parody in England has only recently passed from the hands of the amateur belles-lettrists with their elegant monographs (Parody, in "The Art and Craft of Letters" series)[3] and into those of critics interested in questions involving the status of fictions and the sort of belief we extend to them; the relationship between words and things in literary structures; and the relation of those structures to other sense-making activities. The concept of parody has interested continental scholars for

rather longer[4] - German philologists have been active since the 1920s, when Russian formalists were also writing on the subject; and the development of linguistics and related disciplines investigating signing and communications, as well as the extension of structuralism in the sixties into fields other than anthropology, have also contributed to an awareness of parody and its relation to aesthetics that has been lacking in England until comparatively recently. Today, however, parody is coming to be understood as an important concept in the whole idea of fictionality, whether it embraces the Nietzscheian precept: "What can be thought must certainly be a fiction",[5] or whether it refers to the literariness of the text and the way it is composed and received by writers and readers.

Where contemporary English criticism has been most stimulating is in its suggestion that parody is a paradigm of the whole fiction-making process, where the parodist is seen as one who draws attention to the way in which fictions are made by using literary language in order to comment on the function of literary language: mirroring art rather than an idea of any given reality. The parodist insists on the process of art - its artificiality - by emphasising that he is using other people's styles and familiar conventions in order to make the reader aware that what is written and read is part of a tradition that governs the creation of made-up worlds, peopled by fictional characters, and expressed in literary language. The parodist, in these terms, is a self-conscious author who invites the reader to collaborate with him in making meanings from a text that is no longer a straightforward representation of reality but which enjoys a complex existence that cannot be 'taken as read'. Parody makes the reader aware that the relationship between words and things is problematic and that the system governing the creation, interpretation, and status afforded to literary texts is infinitely complicated. The self-conscious modern novel, like its historical counterpart, alludes to its ancestry, parodying authors and conventions, setting-up literary mirrors-within-mirrors so that the reader can never forget that he is the reader of a book, which is a fiction.

Parody can be understood as emphasising the techniques that conventional novels use to create an illusion of reality because it draws attention to the fact that it has incorporated the alien material of other people's styles into the fabric of 'the book' (which traditionally we might think of as being written by one man with his own techniques that convey his particular point of view). The hero of The British Museum is Falling Down (1965), for instance, reflects on his predicament in the style of Woolf or Kafka, reminding the reader that he, too, is a man in a book and that his status as a 'character' with a 'predicament' depends on a convention of reading that interprets the text as life-like. But parody insists that the hero is made up of words, of a literary language that does not, after all, present the 'real thing'. The character has been created, as it was in the work of Woolf and Kafka; and through these references to other writers the author indicates that Adam's consciousness is not to be taken as real in the same way that George Eliot, for example, might expect us to interpret Gwendolen Harleth's.[6] It is artful; and to the extent that writers like Cervantes, Sterne, and Joyce repeatedly draw the reader's attention to other fictions by parodying them, they force us to relinquish a naive acceptance of the text as verisimilar (we don't, as sophisticated readers, ring church-bells to celebrate Pamela's wedding) and autonomous; as something in which we can easily believe; and whose language is objectively rather than subjectively given. When the comic porter in the Frogs remarks: "Comic porter scene. There's one in every comedy";[7] or a character in Lord Edgware Dies suggests that that would be a very good title for a book;[8] or when Hamlet watches Hamlet and the audience watches both, we are forced to abandon any uncritical acceptance of the literary text as an articulate, straightforward mediator of reality.

It has been pointed out by several critics recently that the self-conscious novel with its playful allusiveness and use of parody resists the dominant school of criticism whose concept of serious literature is of "an intent verisimilar representation of moral situations in their social contexts".[9] It is not surprising, therefore, to find Leavis denouncing

parody in the following terms:

> There is only one thing that could be learned by attempting to parody a writer whose distinction makes him worth close study; that is, how inaccessible to any but the most superficial and falsifying imitation the truly characteristic effects of such writers are... The cult of parody, in fact, belongs to that literary culture... which in its obtuse and smug complacency is always the worst enemy of creative genius and vital originality. It goes with the absurd and insignificant cult of Max Beerbohm... People who are really interested in creative originality regard the parodist's game with distaste and contempt.[10]

But the self-conscious novelist would argue that parody constitutes an exploration of what we mean by "creative originality" and that his attitude is the reverse of "smug and complacent". Such a writer might contend that it is the realist position which is false and that characters in books cannot be taken as 'real' or regarded in any sense as free moral agents. The self-conscious novel deliberately prevents the reader from extending this kind of belief to fiction; and we cannot read a book without being aware that this is precisely what we are doing and what sort of skills are involved in this activity.

Certain reservations about this type of writing might be made at this point, not the least of which is that too much of it is ultimately wearying, and that some writers, at least, could be said to be preoccupied in a superficial way with fictionality rather than with the nature of aesthetic discourse, and that this lends an air of sterility to some of their work which seems to yearn after the very realist status it repudiates.[11] But, on the whole, the "other great tradition",[12] with its qualities of witty playfulness and the teasing questions it prøvokes about fiction as a sense-making construct and the type of belief we extend to it, has proved a vitalizing force in contemporary literature and critical thought. But what has been lacking, as already suggested, is a precise sense of how it is that parody 'emphasises techniques', and what it is that parody actually does. This may be attributed to the use of the word 'parody' to cover a variety of different activities that go on in a self-conscious novel, and the extension of the term to include any case of conscious allusiveness in literature. At the moment 'parody' is used to refer to comically

distorted imitations of particular passages, styles, schools and genres; and equally to describe those occasions when the Aristophanic comic porter refers to his comic-porterness, or when Sterne declares that he can never catch up with himself when writing his autobiography and leaves blank pages or illustrates his meaning graphically. Don Quixote's descent into the Cave of Montesinos has been called a "parody"[13] because it refers to the Classical tradition of a journey to the Underworld; cases of novelists writing novels about novelists writing novels might be said, by this definition, to exhibit parodic awareness; and frequently the words 'parody', 'pastiche', and 'imitation' are used as interchangeable terms.[14] As Wayne Booth feared for 'irony' in another context, the term 'parody' is being used "to cover just about everything there is" in post-modernist consciousness.[15]

This sort of imprecision has militated against establishing a concept of parody where the critic would be in a position to ask questions of the fundamental order - How do we recognize a parody? How do parodies work? What value does the activity have? In other words, a general notion of literary parody as an activity in its own right that does not only occur in the context of self-conscious novels is lacking - although due acknowledgement must be given to the modern novelist and his critics for rescuing parody from the province of the amateur Literary Society and Y M C A Lecture. The first part of this study represents an attempt to clarify an idea of parody: in the first place by considering the history of the term and early debate on the subject; and secondly, by proposing a theory of parody that is rather more rigorous than contemporary, novelistic usages perhaps suggest.

b. Early Use and Later Debate

Classical uses and the etymology of 'parody' suggest that the activity involves two texts that are intimately related by virtue of the first having given rise to the second, which resembles it closely but which is not precisely similar. Traditionally the word has been associated with a set of cognate terms involving the idea of incongruous imitation - words like

'burlesque', 'travesty', 'mock-epic', and (more loosely) 'mockery', 'caricature', and 'lampoon'. It also recurs in the context of 'satire' and 'irony'. Of all these terms (excluding satire and irony) 'parody' is the oldest, having its roots in the poetics of the ancient Greeks; yet it is also the term which has provoked most controversy over its meaning and was longest in becoming established in the English vocabulary. This is partly to do with etymological obscurities, and partly attributable to an ambiguity inherent in the word, where the value to be attached to 'para' - whether 'parody' is thought to derive from parode, parodia, or paratragodein - is variously interpreted because of its ambivalence: since 'para' means both 'beside' and 'against', and implies both closeness and distance in relation to the ode. The nature of the relationship between model and copy, and the parodist's own attitude to his subject, have consequently been the subject of protracted debate based on various suppositions about etymology and the weight to be attached to 'para' as 'beside', or 'against', or both.

The first use of 'parody' may have been in the form parode, which referred to "the first entry of the chorus ... the whole of the first utterance of the chorus"[16] in the Greek theatre, where the chorus spoke in a different measure from the protagonist. Athenaeus refers to "para ten oden" ("against a /common/ melody"),[17] meaning the passages in a recitation that were spoken and not sung, and were in this way different from the traditional method of performing poems. Or again, a new text might be recited to the music of an older one - hence Quintilian's description of the parode as "singing a new song to a familiar tune".[18] In these cases the parode seems to have acted as a counterpoint to introduce variety into conventional forms and was spoken 'beside' another measure (a song with new words) but, by the same token, 'against' that model: introducing variety. However, a slightly later use in the form parodia is generally accepted as the word from which 'parody' derives - thus the O E D: "παρῳδία ... a burleque poem or song. From παρ (a - beside, in a subsidiary relation, mock - ,

etc. + ᾠδή song, poem". As parodia appears in Aristotle's Poetics the variety that is introduced to an original form apparently consisted in presenting noble models in an ignoble light. Hegemon of Thasos is cited as the first writer of "parodies", and his presentation of men "in a bad light" is contrasted with Homer "who depicts the better type of men" (II,5). Later Greek uses of parodia connect the word with the silloi (attacks on didactic and philosophical verse, said to derive from Timon of Philius) and the cento (patchworks of quotations used for satirical or obscene purposes); while paratragodein refers to those plays which re-presented tragedy as farce - a development, perhaps, of the satyr plays.[19] In the commentaries of the scholiasts, parodia appears as a device for derisively imitating serious works: for Quintilian, for example, parodying involved introducing into one's speech pretend utterances in the manner of an opponent and distorting them so that the argument sounded false and ridiculous.[20] In contrast to parode, then, parodia and paratragodein carried the sense that the counterpoint to the model was comic and mocking, and that the parodist himself could actually be 'against' his model in the sense that he might want to make it look absurd.

This was the generalized, and confused, set of ideas that was revived in Europe towards the end of the Renaissance when the term 'parody' reappeared on the continent.[21] J.C. Scaliger's Poetics (1561) contained a discussion of "Parodia", as did Henri Estienne's first volume of Classical philology.[22] A form of 'parody' first appeared in English recorded use in 1598 in John Florio's A Worlde of Wordes, which gives "parodia" as "a turning of verse by altering some words",[23] and in most early definitions and uses 'parody' carries the sense of non-mocking imitation: Walkington's "all of which in a parode imitating Virgil wee may set downe" (OED). Jonson, however, used the term rather more specifically in 1616 when one of the characters in Every Man In His Humour exclaims on hearing an absurd version of a popular sonnet: "A Parodie! a parodie! with a kind of miraculous gift to make it absurder than it was".[24] Jonson's use of the word is notable because it indicates that the playwright had a clear and well-developed

conception of 'parody' as distinct from imitation, and yet the word is scarcely heard of again until the eighteenth century. In the play Ed. Kno'wel's exclamation occurs after Clement has quoted Matthew's version of the opening lines of Samuel Daniel's first sonnet in the Delia sequence, which actually reads: "Unto the boundlesse Ocean of thy Beautie,/Runnes this poore River, charg'd with streames of zeale".[25] But in Matthew's poem the lines become: "Unto the boundlesse Ocean of thy face,/Runnes this poore river charg'd with streames of eyes" (V.5.23-24). Jonson has retained the structure and style of his original but has altered some lexical items in order to create a sense of comic incongruity which reflects on Matthew as a "towne-gull". The parody is both like and not-like its original: unfamiliar items have been obtruded into a familiar fabric, and this is "miraculous" because it has worked a change as powerful and complicated as ordinary mimesis. The audience must recognize Daniel in Matthew and Daniel's poem in Matthew's "parodie", and be aware that the incongruity between the poem and the parody is actually an oblique statement about Matthew and conventional love-sonnets. (Jonson implies something ridiculous in the model: "to make it absurder than it was".) For Jonson this is a special kind of activity, to be distinguished from imitation, 'turning', simple mockery, or satire - it is "a parodie".

But Jonson's usage was not taken-up in the seventeenth century. Cotgrave's French dictionary of 1611 makes no reference to 'parody':[26] and although the fifth edition of Blount's Glossographia (1681) gave "parodize" as "to change the signification of a verse by altering some words", Thomas Nelson's expanded editions of 1707 and 1719 omitted it altogether.[27] Dryden was more explicit about the nature of parody's 'changed signification' in the 'Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire' (1693) where he mentions "parody" several times in connection with the silli: "They were satyric poems, full of parodies; that is, of verses patched up from great poets, and turned to another sense than the author intended them".[28] Parody here seems to resemble the cento, though the 'turning' that Dryden

describes is specifically connected with the satirical practice of Timon, "where the words are generally those of Homer and the tragic poets, but he applied them, satirically, to some customs and kinds of philosophy which he arraigns" (p.52). But at the end of the century it is evident that there was little concensus about what constituted a parody and, indeed, little interest in the question. This may be attributed to the appearance of the cognate terms associated with 'burlesque' that became current at this time, for the new genres of travesty and mock-epic quickly evolved a clear-cut sense of what 'turning' a verse meant, so that 'parody' became a somewhat redundant term or one to be appropriated indiscriminately by both sides in the high versus low burleque debate.

'Turning' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries involved the incongruous imitation of one literary work by another which exploited the reader's expectation of the relationship between style and theme in particular genres by setting them comically at odds. In low burlesque the Classics would be retold in jingling metres involving the coarse exploits of vulgar heroes; while in high burlesque, the whole epic apparatus would be brought to bear on less-than-epic themes. Travesty and mock-heroic created a disparity between matter and manner based on a sharp division between form and content and the educated reader's genre-expectations. Although this resembles parody's "turning of a verse by altering some words", it is evident that the term is too imprecise to describe these burlesque activities; and, in fact, the words 'burlesque', 'travesty', and 'mock-heroic' established themselves very quickly in the critics' vocabulary in comparison to the Classical 'parody'. 'Burlesque' came to England from Italy via France; and though it was confused with 'travesty' for a while ('burlesque' was used to describe the short-lined, doggerel couplets in which travesties were commonly written, as in Scarron's Virgile travestie en vers burlesques, 1648-1652), it eventually became established as a generic term covering both travesty and mock-epic. John Ozell in the dedication to his translation of Le Lutrin was able to declare in 1708:

> If I distinguish right, there are two sorts of Burlesque; the first w[h]ere things of a mean figure and Slight concern appear in all the Pomp and Bustle of an Epic poem; such is this of the Lutrin. The Second sort is where great events are made ridiculous by the Meanness of the Character and the oddness of the Numbers, such is the Hudibras of our excellent Butler.[29]

The distinction between high and low burlesque seems to have been well-established by 1708, though the use of 'travesty' predates that of 'mock-epic'. 'Travesty', like 'burlesque', came from Italy through France, and its original meaning was in the form "travestire - to disguise ... to change apparel" (Florio, 1598). 'Changing', however, rapidly developed the sense of altering noble themes by applying "a jocular, familiar and undignified treatment"[30] to them, and 'travesty' became associated with the poems of Scarron and his imitators. The term 'mock-heroic', meanwhile, was coined in the course of the critical debate surrounding the relative merits of "diminishing" and "magnifying" burlesque.[31] Dryden described the Lutrin as written in "French heroic verse... his subject is trivial but his verse is noble", while John Ozell translated Boileau's "Heroi-Comique" as "Mock-Heroic".[32]

Until the middle of the eighteenth century virtually all references to 'parody' occur in the context of the burlesque debate, particularly in relation to mock-heroics and stage travesty. In the first instance, parody was coupled with mock-heroics because of its early connotation of "changing signification" by "altering.... words". Unlike travesty, the mock-epic brings the whole style of a genre to bear on its new subject, and mock-heroics necessitate "altering some words" when a familiar style is made to accommodate an unfamiliar subject (while travesty could be said to alter the character of a genre and uses its own style to do so). The mock-epic relies for its effect on the recognition of famous passages from the Classics when they are applied to different, more trivial themes; and Pope used the word "parody" to describe those occasions when he had taken well-known extracts from Virgil and Homer and had maintained the general particulars of style but with reference to the new subject. So he referred to Clarissa's famous speech in The Rape of the Lock (V.9-34) as intended

"to open more clearly the MORAL of the Poem, in a parody of the speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus in Homer."[33] The perception of the difference between style and theme does not involve a satire on the model in mock-heroic verse, but on the new subject, and there is no Jonsonian sense that Virgil is in any way 'absurd' when Pope transforms two lines of the Aeneid so that they read: "Her joy in gilded Chariots when alive, /And love of Ombre after death survive" (I.55-56).

But in connection with stage travesties, however, the word parody was often used to imply a satire on original models, and unlike Pope's use it carried the sense of imitating a model to make it seem "absurder than it was". In this usage - particularly common in France - 'parody' is close to the Classical paratragodein: the comic imitation of tragedy, linked to the buffoonery of satyr plays; and in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries it seems to have been used, at times, almost as a generic term to cover the miscellaneous techniques of theatrical burlesque.[34] It was a controversial activity, since the comic imitation of a prototype involved satirical mockery of it by making its typical devices and set-pieces appear absurd. The general outline of a play (or type of play) might be recognizable, but the characters would be vulgar, the action ludicrous, and the most famous speeches turned to ridicule by the introduction of low matter and metre. La Motte in his preface to Inez de Castro protested about all forms of "parodie" in the theatre; and Fuzelier, who compiled a four-volumed edition of Les parodies du nouveau theatre Italien (1738), replied:

> We maintain that far from converting virtue into a paradox and degrading the truth by ridicule, parody will only strike at what is chimerical and false; it is not a piece of buffoonery so much as a critical exposition. What do we parody but the absurdity of dramatic writers who frequently make their heroes and heroines act against nature, common-sense and truth?... Many tragedies disguise vices into virtues, and parodies unmask them.[35]

Fuzelier's description of parody is entirely different from Pope's. Not only is it conceived of as an activity on a much larger scale than that of "altering some words", it is also a "critical exposition" which directs satire at its models and not at the manners and morals of society. It is

not simple comedy either, since the humour is conceived with reference to an implied literary model - characters are not absurd from their own nature but because they remind the audience of a serious prototype, and when the parodic hero acts against "nature, common-sense and truth", it is not he who is ridiculous since 'he' only exists by virtue of his relationship to an original.

The difference between Pope's and Fuzelier's accounts of 'parody' is typical of the imprecision and confusion that continued to surround the activity at this time. On the one hand, parody could be seen as having to do with an elegant imitation of the Classics which enabled the writer to compare ancient and modern modes, falsifying the sophisticated reader's genre-expectations, and only incidentally directing satire at the original text (in the sense that Homeric heroes might not seem particularly heroic in a contemporary setting). On the other hand, Fuzelier's idea of parody was of a broadly burlesquing activity which comically recast its original so that it appeared absurd and its values turned to farce. At this point the question of the parodist's intention arises, and the issue becomes increasingly confused as critics defended or denied the propriety of parody according to whether they favoured Pope's or Fuzelier's usage: that is to say, without any clear sense of what 'parody' was. This debate was protracted into the second half of the twentieth century, degenerating into a circular argument that the nineteenth century in particular was unable to break out of, where the propriety of parody depended on what the critic counted as a case of parody, and what was thought of as a parody was determined by whether the activity was approved of as legitimate or not.

Johnson's Dictionary definition (1756, abridged), which was included in most subsequent eighteenth century dictionaries,[36] upheld Pope's usage and echoed Florio and Blount: "Parody (parodie, Fr. παρῳδια) A kind of writing, in which the words of an author, or his thoughts, are taken, and by a flight of change adapted to a new purpose". Johnson did not suggest in what the "flight of change" consisted, or whether the "new

purpose" was ridiculing or serious; and his imprecision is reflected in his later use of the word in the 'Life of John Philips', where "parody" appears at once as a harmless novelty (in the senseof parode), a turning of words which gives rise to the perception of an amusing incongruity, and - more famously - a defamation of the original: "to degrade the sounding words and stately construction of Milton by an application to the lowest and most trivial things, gratifies the mind with a momentary triumph over that grandeur which had hitherto held its captives in admiration".[37] The poem that Johnson was referring to was 'The Splendid Shilling' (1701)[38] which was very like the mock-epic in its manner, but with the distinction that the epic apparatus which was brought to bear on trivial subjects was Miltonic and not Classical. Philips's poem was imitated many times during the century[39] and these imitations were generally known as "parodies", but in contradistinction to Johnson's description, 'parody' here seems to have carried the Popeian sense of a Classical pleasantry that does not involve ridicule of the model.[40] Fielding used the term in this way in the 'Author's Preface' to Joseph Andrews (1742) where it is virtually synonymous with mock-epic ;[41] but Richard Owen Cambridge took precisely the opposite view in his preface to The Scribleriad (1751), where parody is like travesty in that it introduces low themes (that, in this case, are intended to "degrade" the model), and is understood to stem from "a certain malignity in mankind".[42]

As the popularity of the major burlesque modes waned, 'parody' seems to have survived as a term to describe incongruous imitations of native models, although the nature of the incongruity remained ill-defined and problematic. James Beattie's 'Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition' (1776) contained a brief discussion of parody in which Beattie, like Fielding, upheld a mock-heroic usage - "Parodies may be ludicrous from the opposition between similarity of phrase and diversity of content"[43]- and declared that since they depended for their effect on recognition of the model, they were actually a compliment to the parodied author, "since only writers of the greatest merit are likely to be parodied" because they are so well-known:

"These mock imitations are honourable to the original authors because tacit acknowledgements of their popularity" (p. 396). Johnson's famous stanza parodying Thomas Percy's 'The Hermit of Warkworth', on the other hand, was described by a contemporary as a piece of "ridicule" that made Percy and his ballad look "contemptible", where the nature of the imitation was such that it was thought to "turn the whole poem into ridicule". These remarks were made by Joseph Craddock, recalling a correspondence with David Garrick on the subject of the "parody" which Craddock summed-up thus:

> I think Dr. Percy had received very great cause to take offence at Dr. Johnson, who, by a ludicrous parody on a stanza in the Hermit of Warkworth, had rendered him contemptible. It was urged that Johnson only meant to attack the metre, but he certainly turned the whole poem into ridicule... Mr. Garrick, in a post-script of a letter to me, soon afterwards asked me, "Whether I had seen Johnson's criticism on the Hermit? it is already", says he, "over half the town."[44]

Parody is here understood to be a "criticism", but a hostile one that has nothing to do with complimenting its model. Craddock also appears to be gesturing towards the notion of parody as reflexive discourse in his remark that Johnson had somehow imitated more than the "metre" so that the result was different from mock-epic, but the methodological implications of this idea were not explored until the twentieth century.

Wordsworth quoted Johnson's stanza in the 'Preface' to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads (1800):

> "I put my hat upon my head,
> And walked into the Strand,
> And there I met another man
> Whose hat was in his hand."[45]

Wordsworth's account is complicated because although he refers to Johnson's verse as a "parody" he nevertheless quotes it as if it were a genuine example of the "contemptible...trivial and simple" verses from which he distinguishes his own and Thomas Percy's work. It is not parody, as some critics have thought, which is a "mode of false criticism", but, rather, the act of confusing "admirable" ballads with those that are trivial and "want sense" - represented here by the parody, which is understood in this context as a piece of genuinely bad writing. Wordsworth both uses the

parody as an example of 'real' bad verse, and then later in the 'Preface' approves of it as a mocking "triumph" over the "contemptible" (p.264) - admirably illustrating the confusion surrounding the term at the turn of the century. This was most evident in the critical response to James and "Horace" Smith's Rejected Addresses (1812), the most popular single volume of parodies published in the nineteenth century.[46] Both the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews agreed that the collection of verses celebrating the rebuilding of Drury Lane Theatre under the auspices of Whitbread's brewery were "parodies", in that the styles of major contemporary poets had been appropriated to describe an amusing theme; and both reviewers - Croker for the Quarterly and Jeffrey for the Edinburgh - agreed with Beattie that such imitations represented an acknowledgement of popularity rather than a slight against the originals. But having agreed that the contents of the 1812 volume were parodies, and justified them as such, both critics then tried to discard the term and find another to describe the verses they were reviewing. Having expressed the hope that the readers would find the "parodies... amusing",[47] Croker then went on to recommend "the imitation of Mr. Crabbe [because] ... the subject is not very dissimilar from those which Mr. Crabbe treats" (p.180). Croker seems to be moving towards an idea of parody as straightforward imitation that is not, after all, amusing; and his unease with the notion of parodic incongruity and its implications is evident in his apologetic conclusion to the review: "We hope we shall be excused in having occupied so much space with a subject that is of mere temporary interest, and of so little importance" (p.181). (In the same issue, Croker had begun a review of George Colman Jnr with the remark: "We are not, at best, great admirers of parody, burlesque, and such small wit.")[48]

In Jeffrey's review the move away from parody as involving amusing incongruities, to parody as imitation, is quite explicit. Jeffrey proposes ridding "parody" of the ridiculing connotations it has acquired through its association with "travestie" by making it synonymous with "mimickry".[49]

Moreover, the highest form of mimicry, in his account, would not involve humour (the "certain ludicrous and light air" (p.437) associated with 'parody') but would be a seriously undertaken imitation, whose object would be to "[let] us more completely into the secret of the original author and [enable] us to understand far more clearly in what the peculiarity of his manner consists" (p.436). The best mimic would be one "able to borrow the diction and manner of a celebrated writer to express sentiments like his own - or to write as well as he would have written on the subject proposed by his imitator" (p.435). The opening of Jeffrey's review, in which these remarks occur, is permeated with a distaste for "levity" (p.437) and a sense that literature could be easily contaminated by proximity to laughter and incongruous imitation - and the feeling that it is not dignified or, perhaps, safe to create amusing disparities between style and theme using contemporary writers as models is in contrast to the playful ease of the eighteenth century in relation to the established Classical genres and the notion of decorum in the mock-epic. Confusingly, however, the rest of Jeffrey's review - eighteen pages in all - goes on to refer to the verses in Rejected Addresses as "parodies" and warmly recommends them to the reader, admitting that the disquisition on "mimickry" was irrelevant since "the pieces before us... do not fall correctly under this denomination" (p.436). He then proceeds to argue Fuzelier's case that parody is justifiable travesty which exposes a writer's weaknesses: "Levity and ridicule may answer the ... purpose of admonishing authors... upon what quarters they trespass on the borders of absurdity, and from what peculiarities they are in danger of becoming ridiculous" (p.437). Like Johnson's account in his 'Life of John Philips', 'parody' is at once used to cover serious imitation, illegitimate "travestie ... of the sublime" (p.437), and as a method of testing the truth by ridicule .

The problematic relationship between the model and its copy in works that appropriated other styles as their own (in various ways and for a variety of different purposes) became the subject of a national debate in 1817 when

William Hone was tried for publishing allegedly blasphemous parodies of the Scriptures. Hone, a Radical printer, had published a series of broad-sheets (illustrated by Cruikshank) that attacked the government and the Prince Regent using the language of biblical texts and the Divine Service to make the polemic memorable - in the tradition of political parody that flourished in the last decades of the eighteenth century.[50] Part of The Political Litany, for example, runs: "From all the deadly sins attendant on a corrupt method of election; from all the deceits of the pensioned hirelings of the Press /Good Prince, deliver us".[51] The Tory government, anxious to silence Hone, prosecuted him for blasphemy, asserting that the use of religious language in the context of politics and personal satire constituted a debasement of Scripture and indicated an irreverence towards holy texts. Hone constructed his defence on the basis of a history of religious and political parody that he had drawn-up, taking examples from the Middle Ages, through the Reformation, down to the eighteenth century. He argued that the sense of incongruity which was created by interpolating satirical matter into the manner of the Bible did not involve ridicule of the Scriptures but was based on a perception of the difference between the religious connotations of the original and the veniality of the new subject being described. Further, he had used the Bible and Divine Service as his models, he claimed, because they were forms familiar to the greatest number of people, and the use of familiar texts made his meaning more memorable. In essence he repeated Beattie's argument that parody was a homage to fame, and supported his contention with an impressive array of political parodies which had conspicuously borrowed metres or song-tunes and 'altered the words' for another purpose that was entirely unconnected with satirizing their models. Despite Lord Ellenborough's hostile summing-up, Hone was acquitted on this evidence and from the proceeds of a public fund raised for him proposed publishing a complete history of parody from the Middle Ages onwards. Although the project failed, enough interest had been generated in 'parody' at this time for Blackwood's Magazine to refer familiarly to "this age of parody".[52]

But there was still no concensus as to what counted as a parody, and consequently the legitimacy of the mode - in a period increasingly concerned with the propriety of laughter - was the subject of argument in the criticism relating to parody in the first half of the nineteenth century. The authors of Rejected Addresses, (which had occasioned Jeffrey's muddled attempts to define parody), themselves published a long preface to the eighteenth edition of their collection in 1833, relating how the volume came to be written, and defining their aims in writing it. Again, their account indecisively wavers between defining 'parody' as a method of copying an original in such a way that a comment on the model is implied in the in the imitation, and 'parody' as a method of dividing form from content that does not necessarily reflect adversely on the adopted form. In the first instance, the Smiths, like Joseph Craddock, seem to be hinting at the reflexive use of language in parody when they proposed that what they were copying was not only the metre but the "turn of mind as well as the phraseology of our originals".[53] They also stated that the parodies were intended as a "burlesque of peculiarities" (p. xiii), and that in the case of Wordsworth "we pounced upon his popular ballads and exerted ourselves to push their simplicity into puerility and silliness" (p. xii). But the preface goes on to describe how writers were chosen as models "whose style and habit of thought, being more marked and peculiar, was more capable of exaggeration and distortion", and proceeds, quite unwarrantably, to argue that only the great poets of the age had such a style, and that the parodies complimented them by choosing them as models, and intended no ridicule but merely to raise a "harmless laugh" (p. xii) by borrowing 'great' styles and applying them to trivial subjects. The Smiths repudiated their earlier criticisms of Wordsworth, and ended the preface with the - again inaccurate - remark: "To the credit of the genus irritabile be it recorded, that not one of those whom we had parodied or burlesqued ever betrayed the least soreness on the occasion".[54]

It seems as though the Smiths were not sure what they were actually doing in Rejected Addresses, but were anxious to assert that it was

blameless; and one finds this set of attitudes towards parody repeated with few substantial variations throughout the nineteenth century. Next to Rejected Addresses the most popular single volume of parodies at this time was The Book of Ballads by Bon Gaultier (1845), the work of Theodore Martin and William Edmonstoune Aytoun, writing under the pseudonym "Bon Gaultier" for Tait's Magazine. In his Memoir of Aytoun (1867) Martin recalled how the parodies came to be written, and like the Smiths, described how he and Aytoun had been drawn to poets "whose style and manner of thought were sufficiently marked to make imitation easy and sufficiently popular for a parody of their characteristics to be easily recognized".[55] But Martin took Beattie's "acknowledgement of popularity" argument much further than the Smiths, and declared: "Assuredly the poets parodied had no warmer admirers than ourselves... it was precisely the poets whom we most admired that we imitated the most frequently. Let no man parody a poet unless he loves him" (p.63). Yet this is simply not true in the case of some of the "Bon Gaultier" parodies; and Tennyson, in particular, was imitated in such a way that was intended to make his early poetry look absurd, as part of Martin's and Aytoun's campaign against the sub-Romantic genres of the 1830s and 1840s.[56] But repeatedly, almost regardless of what kind of activity 'parody' was supposed to embrace, apologists for parody throughout the century stressed, not only a Popeian sense of non-derisive imitation, but a positive regard on the parodist's part for his model: "Reverence is in the nature of the true parodist".[57] "A parodist must be friends with the gods and worthy of their company".[58] This was perhaps an answer to the charge that parody represented "the monkeyish gambols" of the jealous at the feet of the great;[59] and the general tenor of the remarks made by apologists for parody seems to indicate that they were combatting suspicions that literature as a serious, even (in some sense) sanctified activity, could easily lose its magic and become contaminated by being exposed to ridicule or comic imitations in any form. The two most systematic essays on parody written during the nineteenth century - Isaac D'Israeli's 'Parody'

(1834) and Walter Hamilton's 'The Art of Parody' (1885) - both agreed that there were aspects of literature which "should be kept free from the most good-natured ridicule".[60]

Yet whether parody did or did not involve "ridicule", and if it did, how it did - in other words, the whole question of the relationship of the parodic copy to its model - was never discussed at more than a superficial level during the century, and there exists no body of criticism equivalent to that surrounding the burlesque modes of the eighteenth century, for example. D'Israeli proposed a "variable character" for parody that changed according to "the purpose of the application" (p.505) and might or might not direct ridicule at its original; while Hamilton quoted Fuzelier with approval and then added, typically, that parody should on the whole avoid derision in case the reader found himself laughing "at what, at another time, he would have shed tears". A few articles on 'Parody' appeared in magazines and newspapers;[61] but although this was the"age of parody" neither parodists nor critics were particularly forthcoming about the activity, and the 1888 NED definition - against such a confused background - is surprisingly incisive (and upholds ridicule as a central function of parody):

> A composition in prose or verse in which the characteristic turns of thought and phrase in an author or class of authors are imitated in such a way as to make them appear ridiculous, especially by applying them to ludicrously inappropriate subjects; an imitation of a work more or less closely modelled on the original but so turned as to produce a ridiculous effect.

Critics writing in the first half of the twentieth century, like their nineteenth century predecessors, were also preoccupied with the propriety of parody and the parodist's attitude to his subject, at the expense of considering how it is that parodies actually'work'. In her preface to A Parody Anthology (1904) Carolyn Wells stated: "Parody is a tribute to popularity and consequently to merit of one sort or another";[62] while Dwight Macdonald, fifty years later, in his introduction to Parodies: An Anthology (1960) substantially repeated her remarks, adding that "most parodies are written out of admiration than contempt".[63] Or, again, the following comments taken from articles on parody written in 1951 and 1966

respectively: "Parody wears a mask of derision, but behind the mask the face is crinkled in a smile of sneaking sympathy and admiration..."[64] and, "[parody] is a compliment... Some of the best English parodies spring from a generous appreciation which is akin to love".[65] This form of sloppily impressionistic criticism has dogged parody until relatively recently in England, and the subject has engaged the attention of few critics of any standing - which may be due to the stigma attaching to parody as a form of ungracious and philistine harassment of literature (as Leavis thought), or to a view of parody (fostered by those same critics who tried to establish the activity as respectable) as a mild form of harmless amusement not worthy of serious attention. Debate about parody has, by and large, been monopolized by the literary amateur; and while some of the remarks made in monographs, lectures, and parody anthologies[66] have been illuminating and memorable - if only for their crankiness - a higher order of discussion is needed to clarify ideas about how parodies function: one that transcends, for example, Carolyn Wells's division of the mode into "word rendering.. form rendering.. [and] sense rendering",[67] or H.M. Paull's wonderfully eccentric strictures on parody in Literary Ethics (1928), where he argues that "parody...is a distinct form of plagiarism. The parodist... borrows his ideas, form,and often his rhymes".[68]

However, one contribution made by early twentieth century critics towards defining the concept of parody involved an idea of parody as literary criticism - that is, 'criticism' without pejorative connotations, where parody is understood (as Jeffrey suggested) to "[let] us more completely into the secret of the original author", and the act of imitation and exaggeration is seen as one of mastery. In this argument the parodist is one who is intimate with the techniques of his models - since he is able to reproduce them - and sufficiently at home with literature to be able to play with it. So it is asserted that "parody pours criticism into an unforgettable mould"; or that it is "an intuitive kind of literary criticism, shorthand for what serious critics must write out at length", or, again, "parody is a serious art, a long-established mode of criticism which is often far more incisive than the heavy review to which the public has been accustomed since the days

of Dryden".[69] Owen Seaman proclaimed that parody is "a department of pure criticism"; while in his "daydream College for Bards" W.H. Auden would have "no books of literary criticism, and the only critical exercise required of the students would be the writing of parodies".[70] Making the model absurd, in whatever degree, is here understood to be a central function of parody, which performs the classic Shaftesburian exercise of testing the truth (in this case, the merit of a text) by ridicule: the best parodists "take just those tricks and mannerisms to which the mind and metre of the poet are sometimes subject, and, by repeating or magnifiying or otherwise emphasising them, they hold up to his style a magic mirror in whose distortions we may yet test the truth".[71]

The most cogent argument for parody as criticism was put forward in 1966 in an article of the same name by J.G. Riewald, a Dutch scholar.[72] He argued that good parody goes beyond imitating"outer form [and] surface devices" and involves "the attitude, tone and purpose... even the psychological and philosophical habits of the parodee's mind, his spirit" (pp. 126-127). It is a "wilful distortion of the entire form and spirit of the writer captured at his most typical moment", and its aim is "to exaggerate the salient points of the subject so that we can, whilst we laugh at a grotesque superficial effect, gain sharper insight into the subject's soul" (p.131). Parody is an interesting and respectable activity, because in order to write or read it successfully one must have "the closest possible intimacy with the resources of a given style" (p.132). It is a form of "Criticism without Tears" (p.131). Where Riewald's essay is especially interesting, however, is in its suggestion that since parody does not rely for its effect on a simple division between 'form' and 'content' but on a thoroughgoing distorted imitation, its criticism is necessarily oblique and non-discursive and the reader must be able to reconstruct the model that is only implied in the parody in order to compare it with the copy and arrive at the parodist's meaning. The reader "contributes... to the act of translating into direct insights what he, the parodist, only implied" (p.131). In other words, Riewald proposes a role for parody as reflexive discourse, and seems to be suggesting that its "intra-literariness" (p.129) is what distinguishes

it from straightforward burlesque, and that the parodist's attitude towards his subject (the propriety/decorousness of the mode) is not primarily what determines a case of parody. In his emphasis on parody as an act of co-operation between parodist and reader, and parody's status as implied criticism, Riewald seems to be hinting at a role for parody that is related to our understanding of the way texts are transmitted, and as intra-literary discourse is necessarily both like and unlike ('beside' and 'against') its model - whose mockery is only dangerous if analysis itself is thought to be harmful to literary structures. Unfortunately, Riewald does not go on to suggest how it is that different parodies enforce different readings, but instead recants his own argument from intra-literariness to defend parody against charges of malice, in the traditional manner of the nineteenth century: "The most successful parodies are generally of those whom the writer loves and whose genius he expects his reader, too, to revere" (p.128). This is a disappointing conclusion to a valuable essay; but it is interesting to note that as late as 1966 one critic, at least, still felt it necessary to protest the legitimacy of parody as a unique activity worthy of serious attention, and not an attack inspired by idle malice, or a superannuated relic of eighteenth century burlesque modes.

That traditional approaches to the concept of literary parody have been, and are being, undermined is due (as was suggested in the opening section of this study) to recent work on the post-modernist novel and to the earlier influences of formalist and structuralist literary criticism. A systematic and coherent attempt to describe how parodies function and how they should be read is still lacking,[73] but parody is increasingly coming to be seen as a means by which we might start to analyse some of the activities involved in creating, transmitting, and interpreting the literary text. So far this interest in parody has manifested itself primarily in relation to the novel, where the parodist is a writer himself who does not produce parodies in the sense of single, short pieces, but uses parody as an allusive technique to draw attention to the act of fiction-making. He is not

generally a literary critic who mocks his models in order to expose their faults but, rather, someone who appropriates styles in order to re-present to the reader the traditions and conventions of the genre; and his concern is to make us reconsider the sorts of acceptance we habitually give to the novel, so that we ask questions about the "mode of being" of a literary work.[74] The perception of parody in the novel precludes the naive acceptance of the text as an accurate transcript; and though Borges was referring to the adventure story when he wrote that the "novel does not offer itself as a transcription of reality; it is an artificial object which will not tolerate a single unjustified element",[75] this might be applied to all novels where the parodist emphasises the book's status as an "artificial object" that does not mediate a single, uncomplex reality.

The new interest in parody seems to be related to a general climate of receptiveness towards methodologies that are concerned with signification and systems of representation, and with structures. (Jonathan Culler, for example, discussed Henry Reed's 'Chard Whitlow' parody of Eliot in Structuralist Poetics (1975) as an example of language "making its model explicit".)[76] The parodist can now be seen as someone with a special interest in literary language, who holds the mirror up to art in order to investigate the artifice of literary forms. Whereas previous critics writing about parody in the context of burlesque have pointed out that it interferes with the reader's expectation of the normal relationship between form and content, it is now possible to conceive of the parodist as being interested in the entire way in which we experience 'art' as different from 'life'; and from its lowly status as an example of "small wit" at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a strong case could be made out today for parody as a valuable method of inquiry into the nature of aesthetic experience.

c. The Literary Parody

The problem of formulating any theory of literary parody lies in evolving a description that is broad enough to cover the range of activities

implied by 'parody' but rigorous enough so that the term does not lose meaning altogether. The questions 'What distinguishes parody from other literary activities?' and 'What is it that parodies actually do to texts?' admit a variety of answers; and although theories of parody as inter-textual analysis and 'holding the mirror up to art' are valuable, they are too inclusive and imprecise as they stand. As already noted, the word 'parody' is still used loosely on occasions - not only by critics of the self-conscious novel (as interchangeable with 'pastiche', 'imitation', and 'mockery'), but also to cover a wide range of mocking activities involving comic interference with a model. Gilbert Highet, for example, described parody as a type of satire in his Anatomy of Satire (1962), and extended the term to include "parody [that] passes... into action":[77] practical jokes and hoaxes; and by this standard, the playfulness that led Max Beerbohm to embellish his copy of More Leaves from a Journal of a Life in the Highlands with fatuous comments in a facsimile of Queen Victoria's handwriting and to stock his library with improbably titled dummy books,[78] might also be described as 'parodic'. Parody, of course, is not confined to literature, and a general definition might be proposed that would include parody in the arts, and wherever else cases of 'mocking an X in the language of that X' occurred; but, again, this is rather too vague a description to be of use in analysing the nature and function of literary parody specifically.

The literary parody may be said to involve the distortion of the style and spirit of a text so that 'form' and 'content' are no longer experienced as a unique fusion, but an incongruous copy supervenes (the parody) which is similar but not identical to the original. The literary parody closely resembles its model because it appropriates substantially the same language and only signals to an alert reader that it is not genuine (preserving the original relationship between 'style' and 'subject'), or a piece of admiring imitation, by its creation of comic incongruities between the implied model and the parodic version - whether this takes the simple form of rearranging a few lexical items (as Jonson did in his parody of Daniel), or whether the

distorted imitation of a writer's whole aesthetic is involved. The sense of incongruity that is invoked is not typically based on genre-expectation and the pleasure of seeing matter and manner set at odds on a large scale (as in mock-epic or travesty, which rely for their effect on theories of poetic decorum) but on a much slighter disjunction relating to an intimate knowledge of individual styles and the nature of aesthetic representation and interpretation as a whole. Parody, by separating and distorting the elements of any given work, impels the reader towards a realization of the formal characteristics of the original, and no perceptive reader can 'lose himself' in a parody, or 'imaginatively project' or 'sympathise' with one: parodies cannot be read as "a serious statment of feelings about real problems or situations".[79] They draw attention to their own literariness and to those conventions which normally govern our reading of texts, and may be said to reflect art rather than nature. A distinction should perhaps also be made at this point between parody and satire, for though satirists have often used parody as their medium, the parodist is not necessarily motivated by saeva indignatio, and - more pertinently - satire does not include the subject of its criticism as part of its method of criticism. That is to say, satire declaims, berates, and denounces the object of its attack, but the parodist's 'object' is internalized within the parodic text, which is non-discursive and reflexive ("shooting at a man with the weapon of his own form").[80]

The literary mode that parody most resembles is irony, for both parody and irony demand a series of "elaborate ...inferences"[81] relating to the construction of a writer's real meaning when he appears to be saying something else. The reader of both parody and irony is required to read between the lines, since in both cases the texts " 'say' one thing and 'intend' another" (p.7), and the reader must be aware that what he is reading is not a 'straight' statement from the author, otherwise he will have missed the point entirely. Both the parodist and the ironist are deceptive writers who assume the existence of readers sophisticated enough to see through them and join with them in a community of wit. The reader

of parody and irony is required to reject a literal meaning and to reconstruct another, "higher" (p.36) meaning based on his knowledge of particular literary traditions, styles, internal clues in the text, information about the author - in fact, all the critical apparatus that will enable him to grasp the import of a text which doesn't mean what it says, and to arrive with a feeling of achievement at the higher vantage-point of the parodist/ironist.

However, parody differs from irony in its use of a more complex system of implied reference. To begin with in a case of parody, the reader is required to reject a literal meaning through a series of processes not dissimilar to those followed by a successful reader of irony, and in both cases the perception of incongruity is necessary for an accurate reconstruction to take place. The reader recognizes various forms of incongruity and inconsistency within the text (and sometimes extra-textual inferences are drawn as well) and deduces that the writer means something other than he appears to be saying. So far, parody and irony do not diverge - two 'messages' are being sent; if the reader is alert he will succeed in decoding the real message (unmasking the eiron), but if he is not, then he will be duped into believing the statement: "When all was over and the rival Kings were celebrating their victory with Te Deums in their respective camps",[82] or - in parody:

> As we get older we do not get any younger.
> Seasons return, and today I am fifty-five,
> And this time last year I was fifty-four,
> And this time next year I shall be sixty-two.[83]

But where parody and irony differ is in parody's use of the same language as its model to carry both its ostensible and real meanings; and the writer of parody requires his reader to decipher two codes, in that the object of his attention and the language he uses to focus on it are very similar. In the quotation from Candide the irony is made manifest by the obvious external inconsistency that two kings cannot have won the same battle, and the reader rejects the meaning proposed by a hasty reading of Voltaire because of incongruities related to the text and various other

deductions that can be made about Candide and its author. But Henry Reed alerts the reader to the fact that he doesn't mean what he says - (it is Reed writing as 'Eliot' about Eliot, and not Eliot himself making a serious statement) - by the use of a language and style not fundamentally different from Eliot's own. The reader is required to notice that this is not a seriously-meant poem by any poet; that it is Eliot-like, but not-Eliot; and then to analyse the properties of this 'not-Eliotness' and deduce what Reed means by it. So the task of identifying the discrepancies that exist between what we expect of an Eliot poem and what we have before us, together with correctly interpreting what the parodist implies in his use of Eliot's manner, makes the successful reading of parody much more difficult than that of irony; and the problem for the reader is not to see through what a simple ironic statement really means, but to reconstruct and retain an original model in his mind so that he can judge the parodist's deviations from it. It is evident that although parodies may be satiric or ironic, they are complex in a way that satire and irony are not since the parodist's message is further dissimulated by being couched in the style of another author.

The identification and interpretation of this type of discrepancy presupposes a wide and fairly discerning acquaintance with literary traditions and writers on the part of both the parodist and the reader: for if the parody is to be successful the parodist must succeed in conveying his intentions with some clarity but not so obviously that they become gross. If a parody is so like its original as to be indistinguishable from it (that is, if it lacks comic incongruity and could have been written by the model himself), then it will fail; while at the opposite extreme, if enough characteristic original features are not reproduced (so that the parody could be a piece of work written by anybody), then the reader will be unable to interpret it as a case of parody. Many possibilities exist for mis-understanding parody. The parodist may, as described, fail to indicate clearly that he is writing a parody. The reader, on the other hand, may

be naive and unable to penetrate the ostensible meaning of "As we get older we do not get any younger" but regard it as a real, if banal, statement by an unknown poet, or a feeble attempt to be amusing. On the other hand, he may identify the parody but find it offensive because he feels that it is in bad taste, for example, or because it has spoiled a favourite poem. Some parodies are really poor and heavy-handed and a correct interpretation does not entail approval; while some readers, through ignorance or personal foible, are incapable of reading parodies successfully. Parodies, then, require both skilled executors and alert readers.

An example of a parodic reading may be given at this point. In the Christmas of 1912 both the Illustrated London News and the Saturday Review published essays by distinguished contributors on the subject of Christmas. The Saturday Review essayist put forward the unusual idea that far from being a time of jubilation, Christmas was "essentially a dies irae", and under the title 'Some Damnable Errors About Christmas' proceeded to argue his case:

> That it is human to err is admitted by the most positive of our thinkers. Here we have the great difference between latter-day thought and the thought of the past. If Euclid were alive today (and I daresay he is) he would not say, "The angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal to one another." He would say, "To me (a very frail and fallible being, remember) it does somehow seem that these two angles have a mysterious and awful equality about them..." It is not the calendar but the spirit of man that regulates the recurrence of feasts and fasts. Spiritually, Christmas Day recurs exactly seven times a week. When we have frankly acknowledged this, and acted on this, we shall begin to realize the Day's mystical and terrific beauty. For it is only every-day things that reveal themselves to us in all their wonder and splendour. A man who happens one day to be knocked down by a motor-bus merely utters a curse and instructs his solicitor; but a man who has been knocked down by a motor-bus every day of the year will have begun to feel that he is taking part in an august and soul-cleansing ritual. He will await the diurnal stroke of fate with the same lowly and pious joy that animated the Hindoos awaiting Juggernaut.[84]

An extraordinarily naive reader might interpret this as the outpourings of a religious crackpot, but to a more perceptive reader it is obvious that something is wrong with the essay. Its argument is inconsequential and absurd - could anybody seriously claim (at least, in the pages of the Saturday Review) that being run-over by a bus was "soul-cleansing"? It seems

that the author is writing with his tongue in his cheek and is perhaps being ironic at the expense of those who want to make Christmas a solemn occasion.

But the key to the essay lies in the fact that the essayist is not just ironically voicing opinions that he doesn't hold, but that he is not actually speaking in his own voice at all. The author of the Illustrated London News essay was G.K. Chesterton, and the author of 'Some Damnable Errors' was Max Beerbohm, masquerading as Chesterton. It is a case of parody - not that Beerbohm has suddenly turned religious maniac, or that he is mocking gloomy attitudes towards Christmas; but that, by an act of comically qualified empathy he is pretending to be Chesterton writing on the subject of Christmas. This is the knowledge that the reader needs if he is to reconstruct Beerbohm's 'meaning' from the incongruities that are not properly part of the original but manufactured by the parodist: discrepancies which hold the parodist's clues for the interpretation of his work. If the reader is familiar with Chesterton he will recognize the exuberant style of rhetoric, the love of paradox, and the sense of the "mysterious and awful" ubiquitousness of the spiritual life, but he will be aware that all these traits have been exaggerated. Beerbohm has made 'Chesterton' aim to bring off impossible feats of paradox; and because they fail to come off, and because the failure is rather ridiculous, Chesterton's 'style' is experienced separately from his 'subject' and his work is no longer presented as a serious fusion of the two. Moreover, because Beerbohm is accurate in his exaggeration of an already overblown delight in paradox, we allow that the parody actually does make a valid point about Chesterton - though the incongruities are such that pseudo-Chesterton is not damned by them: the parodist does not abuse Chesterton, not does he suggest that he is contemptible. If I have interpreted the parody correctly, Beerbohm is alerting the reader to nothing more dreadful than Chesterton's flamboyance.

A successful reading of parody demands qualities of attentiveness and discernment in the reader, not least because the parodist is - to an

extent - writing in the traditions of rhetoric and through the nature of his parodic imitation tries to inspire the reader with a variety of feelings and attitudes towards his text-model. The proposed reading of Chesterton will not be true of all parodies because some parodists imitate their models in such a way as to make them appear contemptible, while some explicitly abuse their originals, and others merely use the model as a device subordinate to satire or comedy (copying a 'form' and supplying a wholly new 'content'). The answer to the questions 'How do we read a parody?' and 'What is it that parody does?' cannot be single or simple, but must take into account the variety of techniques that parodists employ in order to fulfil their various purposes. What follows is by no means a complete taxonomy of parodic types but rather an outline of the principal methods used by literary parodists in pursuit of their "variable... aims" (D'Israeli).

Although parodists imitate texts, it is obvious - pace Jeffrey - that they do not do so in a straightforward way, and it has already been remarked that parody interferes with the normal relationship between 'form' and 'content' by creating comic incongruities between the parodic text and the model implicit in it. The parody is like but unlike its original (para); and in the discrepancies between the two, the parodist may be said to have created a sub-text which acts as his implicit commentary on the original. This may be more or less complex, depending on how any writer's style and the relationship between form and content is conceived by a particular parodist. The simplest form that a parody can take is the exploitation of a complete divorce between matter and manner, where the parodist maintains the 'form' of his original virtually intact but replaces the original 'content' for one of his own. This is parody in Pope's sense of the word: associated with mock-heroics and poems written in imitation of Milton praising sport and drinking; or political parodies that borrowed famous metres to make arguments memorable and to manufacture slogans. It is the kind of parody that advocates of the homage-to-fame argument cited as being complimentary to the original and involving no ridicule. Technically, in

that 'form' and 'content' are separated in these parodies, this is correct; but as the parodist is free to choose his content, this might involve explicit criticism of the original, which would make the parody decidedly uncomplimentary - as was the case in Owen Felltham's parody of Jonson's 'Ode To Himselfe', for example. Jonson's 'Ode', beginning "Come leave the loathed Stage /And the more loathsome Age / Where pride and impudence in faction knit, /Usurpe the Chaire of wit..." was written after the failure of The New Inne, between 1629 and 1631.[85] Owen Felltham responded in 1631, preserving Johnson's 'form' but turning the 'content' of the poem into an attack on the playwright:

> Come leave this sawcy way
> Of baiting those that pay
> Dear for the sight of thy declining wit.
> 'Tis known it is not fit
> That a sale poet, just contempt once thrown
> Should cry up thus his own.
> I wonder by what dower,
> Or portent, you had power
> From all to rape a judgement. Let's suffice,
> Had you been modest y'ad been granted wise.[86]

This parody stands at the beginning of a tradition of explicit literary criticism which takes the form of criticizing, or abusing, an author in his own metre so that he appears to be condemning himself out of his own mouth, thus heightening the effect of what would otherwise be a straight-forward expression of disapproval.

As suggested, it entirely depends on the parodist in this sort of parody what new subject he will turn an old style on; but the most prolific varieties of parody based on burlesque-division are those related to what might be called 'public' parody, and to comic parody. By public parody I mean parodies whose new content is satirical, political, or a comment on current affairs (newsworthy items of all shades): the form favoured by polemicists like William Hone, for example. Again, the parodist's message is quite plain, and the famous model (traditionally popular songs or the the Bible, in the case of political parodies) is simply a frame to make its meaning memorable. Public parody may range from stirring appeals to revolution, as during the Reformation or during the political disturbances

at the end of the eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth centuries, to milder comments on contemporary manners and events: Punch on the condition of Paddington station, for example (27 September 1883) -

> I know a bank whereon foul road-slush flows,
> Where passing one hath need to hold one's nose;
> Where familiar slop-carts do combine
> To store malodorous muck in foetid line.

Comic parody is that kind where the parodist endeavours to make the new content amusing, partly in its own right, and partly in relation to the old model which would normally be associated with a seriously-meant 'content'. The Victorian comic press is a particularly fertile source of poems about sea-sickness, clumsy servants, and mothers-in-law, written in the metres of Longfellow, for instance, or Tennyson:

> Break, break, break
> At my poor bare feet, O Sea!
> But the artful scamp who has collar'd my clothes
> Will never come back to me.[87]

Anthony Brode's 'Breakfast with Gerard Manley Hopkins' (inspired by the inscription on a cereal pack) is a rather more amusing modern example in a similar vein:

> Serious over my cerials I broke one breakfast my fast
> With something-to-read-searching retinas retained by
> print on a packet;
> Sprung rhythm sprang, and I found (the mind fact-minding
> at last)
> An influence Father-Hopkins-fathered on the copy-writing
> racket.[88]

But in the case of comic parody the disjunction between 'form' and 'content' is no longer clear-cut, and the use of 'serious' poems as a frame for comic and vulgar themes could be construed as a covert, though not wholly articulate, protest against the model. Certainly a comic antithesis (in Fuzelier's sense) of Tennyson's character "Maud" seems to be implied in the rude old servant who refuses to answer the doorbell in:

> Bells in the front hall ringing
> (Where gaslight's appalling),
> Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
> They are crying and calling...
>
> I kissed her rosy cheek,
> She smacked my face in anger:
> Maud is quite seventy,
> I did not like to slang her.[89]

The comicality of the parodist's substitution may sometimes reflect a hostility towards, or disregard of, 'seriousness', 'beauty', 'nobility', or whatever, in an original in a way that denouncing the Prince Regent in the form of the Litany does not. The appropriation of serious styles for comic subjects might actually represent a refusal to acknowledge the merits of the original or a degrading of it - though whether it does so or not depends on the nature of the new comic reference. The comical recasting of Maud seems to imply Tennyson's original because the new Maud is funny at the expense of the old one. On the other hand, George Canning's parody of Nicholas Rowe, 'The Elderly Gentleman', owes little of its farcical, silent-movie quality to its borrowed metre and new reference:

> The wind it blew high and blew strong, as the elderly
> gentleman sat,
> And bore from his head in a trice, and plunged in the
> river his hat.
>
> The gentleman then took his cane, which lay by his side
> as he sat;
> And he dropped in the river his wig, in attempting to
> get out his hat.
>
> His breast it grew cold with despair, and full in his
> eye madness sat;
> So he flung in the river his cane, to swim with his
> wig and his hat.[90]

In contrast to the parody of Maud, comic parodies which try to make their new content intrinsically amusing may be read as straightforward poems without reference to a model, which has been superceded by the new 'matter'. It makes very little difference to the reader's appreciation of Ted Pauker's 'A Grouchy Good Night to the Academic Year', for instance, if he knows that it is written in the style of Praed's 'Good Night to the Season':

> Good night to the Year Academic,
> It finally crept to a close:
> Dry fact about physic and chemic
> Wet drip about people and prose.
> Emotion was down to a snivel
> And reason was pulped to a pap,
> Sociologists droning out drivel
> And critics all croaking out crap.
> For any such doctrine is preachable
> In our tolerant Temple of Thought
> Where lads that are largely unteachable
> Learn subjects that cannot be taught.[91]

In this instance, the primary function of parody as intertextual commentary based on the creation and perception of incongruity has been obliterated, and the reading is direct and unfiltered through an original style - which has become a simple tool for the parodist in his creation of autonomous texts that do not depend for their effectiveness on the reader's knowledge of the original. When this supercession of the model occurs, parodies become part of that larger corpus of light verse, and it is illuminating to consider parody in relation to this wider tradition, for they share similar properties.

Both parody and light verse are kinds of writing that make an intimate appeal to a group of readers who share a community of values and interests - parody (like irony) as a pact and in-joke between parodist and reader, light verse as a sociable communion; parody as "centrally-minded" and corrective of eccentricity and "exaggeration", light verse as "conventional" and "close to the everyday life of [its] time".[92] Both types of writing share a common desire to amuse, as well as possessing a certain sense of elegance in their execution: parody has been described as being endowed with a beauty of economy that enables its effects to be achieved "in a small compass... in the most beautiful manner",[93] while light verse is nothing if it is not elegant and technically faultless - "A concert pianist is allowed a wrong note here and there; a juggler is not allowed to drop a plate".[94] Where parody and light verse do differ, however, is in the nature of parody as a specialized literary technique that involves reflexive language and necessitates a complex reading based on knowledge of an original. It is only when parody loses its intertextuality that it could be read in the same way as we read other types of light verse. Yet, having said this, there is a sense in which light verse itself, like parody, might be thought of as existing in relation to an implied model - in this case, a body of serious "high" verse,[95] and that by habitually taking as its themes subjects considered too low by writers of serious poetry, it mocks their preoccupations and is thus a kind of parody on a large scale. This seems to me to be a

misleading use of the word 'parody' (allusion would be a more appropriate term), but when parody appears to be losing its special intra-literary function by becoming - apparently - simplified into light verse, it should be remembered that light verse itself is not necessarily straightforward and that a shadow-model ("high" poetry) can be discerned behind the whole enterprise.

Nonsense verse might also be mentioned in this context, for here again one seems to be presented with poetry that can be read 'for itself', with no reference to external models. Lewis Carroll's nonsense-parodies are sometimes cited as examples of verse that have given pleasure to readers wholly unacquainted with the Southey prototype of "You are old, Father William", for example, or with Watts's hymns and poems for children.[96] Yet with respect to those nonsense-parodies that Carroll conceived with reference to a specific original, this surely represents an impoverished reading since their non-sense is a deliberately contrived flouting of the sense of their models. Father William's eccentricities are not merely odd and amusing in the context of old men in general but of Southey's old man in particular; and unless the reader is aware of the discrepancies that have been created between the original text and Carroll's re-presentation of it, then the reading will be one-dimensional, accepting the text's declared status as a comic-nonsense poem and missing entirely the criticism of 'improving verse' that is implicit in the parody.

But on the other hand, moving away from the specific nonsense-parody, it could be argued that nonsense itself (like light verse) is a form of very generalized parody which by its refusal to make sense mocks the whole idea of making sense of poems and perhaps the sense-making activity itself (as a process of erecting more or less arbitrary constructs - especially linguistic ones). More specifically, nonsense writing as a whole seems to flout that type of sensibility concerned with expressing the value of the emotional life. It is robust and heartless; dreadful things often happen in the nonsense world, but in the manner of a Tom and Jerry

cartoon nobody is hurt or emotionally affected for very long by their predicament. People and situations are not presented as real but as made-up of words[97] - if a man lives in a "barge" his nose will inevitably be "large"; and the character of the Mad Hatter, for example, derives from the popular expression. This might be compared with modern interest in the fictiveness of characters and events in novels whose 'realness' is an illusion based on accepted conventions of language-use: and parody and nonsense could, in this respect, be said to share a similar preoccupation.

The sense of parody as a unique form in intertextual commentary must not be diluted, but it is perhaps useful to suggest that there are certain areas where parody, light verse, and nonsense writing overlap and sometimes shade into one another. It is not without significance that the "age of parody" was also an age of light verse and nonsense; and although it is essential that a definition of parody as a form of twin-coded, complex reading to be preserved, it is also helpful to see it functioning in the wider context of light verse as a whole, and in relation to nonsense. But beyond this point the term 'parody' can become vague in its all-inclusiveness and used in a casual sense to indicate a piece of work that humorously refuses to conform to tradition or in some other way goes against conventional expectation. Many of Suckling's poems might be described in this way[98] - as displaying an awareness of certain literary conventions but mockingly refusing to obey them. ('Upon my Lady Carliles walking in Hampton-Court garden', for example, vulgarizes the elegant my lady walks tradition; while 'The deformed Mistress' is in the same vein of pleasantry as mediaeval praise of ugly women poems.) Or again, Belloc's verses for children cock a snook at traditional books of "moral instruction" and "inspiring pictures"[99] -"Decisive action in the hour of need /Denotes the Hero, but does not succeed" - where Belloc, like Harry Graham (and Lewis Carroll), is flying in the face of an identifiable tradition of Improving Literature for the Young, although no parody of particular texts is implied in his work.

This is the sort of writing, as suggested above, that is allusive rather than parodic; and where it takes the form of literary jeux d'esprit,

best describes such pieces as Anthony Hecht's 'The Dover Bitch' ("To have been brought /All the way down from London, and the be addressed /As a sort of mournful cosmic last resort /Is really tough on a girl"), or Desmond Skirrow's summary of 'Ode on a Grecian Urn':

> Gods chase
> Round vase.
> What say?
> What play?
> Don't know.
> Nice though.[100]

It is the sort of allusiveness typically displayed by Noël Coward, at the expense of foreign phrase-books, say, ('Useless useful phrases'), or in relation to popular cheering clichés:

> There are bad times just around the corner,
> There are dark clouds hurtling through the sky,
> And it's no good whining
> About a silver lining
> For we know by experience that they won't roll by.
> With a scowl and a frown
> We'll keep our peckers down,
> And prepare for depression and doom and dread,
> We're going to unpack our troubles from our old kit-bag
> And wait until we drop down dead.[101]

Many of the bon mots of Wilde and Beerbohm rely for their effect on a similar reversal of platitude as that exploited by Coward in the last extract - Beerbohm's "I should hardly have recognized you now I have grown a moustache", or, more famously, Wilde's "A man must have a heart of stone not to laugh at the death of Little Nell".[102] In this area of general sprightliness and having fun with traditions (literary and otherwise) may be included the activities of hoaxing, embellishing books (Beerbohm and Orton), writing edible poems, and producing pieces of sculpture that are designed to fall to bits during their first showing. Anti-art could be said to partake of a parody-like challenge to convention and celebration of misrule, although - again - it is more properly described as allusive and is not, in any case, a department of literary parody, with which this study is concerned.

As suggested by the reading of parody proposed at the beginning of this section, the core-function of parody is as a form of intra-literary

discourse and it is this definition which must for the basis of any theory of literary parody. A theory of parody which did not include some description of public and comic parody, or the more general allusiveness of light verse and nonsense, would be inadequate in that it failed to take into account the variety of activities that may be involved in parody, as well as its essentially playful spirit; but what actually distinguishes parody from other forms of literary activity is its incorporation of a text-model within another text which resembles it but is not precisely the same, thus establishing a covert sub-text from which the reader must reconstruct the parodist's meaning. There is no clear-cut division between 'form' and 'content' in the most complex and articulate parodies - the parodist does not merely take a particular 'style' and apply it to another 'subject', nor does he explicitly state his criticism of the model in these cases. Instead, the incongruities are subtle: slightly untypical material is introduced; one element in a given style (understood as a unique combination of 'form' and 'content') is exaggerated at the expense of another - and it is on the basis of these discrepancies that the alert reader must infer the parodist's meaning.

Chaucer, for example, in 'The Tale of Sir Thopas'[103] nowhere states that he found the old-fashioned, rhymed minstrel romances tedious and incoherent. Instead he presents his version of the stanzaic lay, which is based on the most obvious elements of minstrel romance - the hero-knight, magical adventures, long descriptions of finery, and uncomplicated rhyme and metre. But the rhyme has become "dogerel" (925); its short-lines (normally pointed with elegant phrases like "Bright as the sonne it schon")[104] used bathetically: "And I yow telle in good certayne /He hadde a semely nose" (728). Magical adventures come to nothing. Mention is made of an "elf-queene" (788), but a prolix digression on the subject of the knight's clothes, his favourite food, and his horse's apparel, effectively stems the flow of the narrative. Moreover, the finery is not remarkable for its beauty but in that it "cost many a Iane" (735); while the knight himself

does not embody chivalric virtues, but is a good bourgeois and a coward: "Tomorwe wol I meete with thee, /Whan I have myn armoure" (818). Our expectations of a fourteenth century minstrel romance are falsified by these discrepancies, which are absurd versions of aspects of the model. The implications are that Chaucer was sceptical of the hero as conventionally presented, and found the manner of romances banal and their matter clichéd. The response that should be elicited by the mention of a handsome, brave, and beautifully-dressed hero who fights giants and has marvellous, magical adventures, *is* persistently thwarted by Chaucer's conjuring of these stock elements only to let them down with a prosaic bump. The metre is no longer easy on the ear, but proceeds at an irritating jog-trot; the narrator's credulous good-faith is such that he sounds half-witted; and if the hero is well-dressed, it is not because heroes are miraculously born in this state, but because he has money - a commodity from a materialistic reality not usually mentioned in connection with the stanzaic lay. Chaucer's mockery is not savage; he has merely taken certain characteristics of the minstrel romance and vulgarized them slightly, exaggerating and falsifying their features until the become absurd, with the dual implication that life isn't like that and that the minstrels handle their material ineptly anyway.

Chaucer's audience of pilgrims, waiting for an example of their favourite type of writing (as they were encouraged to do by the impeccable first stanza), are forced to reject it as a waste of time: "Thou doost noght elles but despendest tyme" (931). But because they are in the position of naive readers they will not go on to reconsider the stanzaic lay as a form; for although they are not so credulous as to overlook the fact that there is something wrong with Chaucer's poem , they are not sophisticated enough to realise that it is a parody - not a bad example of a particular genre, but a piece of work whose 'badness' is contrived and conceived in relation to a model. Chaucer is mocking the stanzaic lay and its patrons and offering the alert reader the pleasure of joining with him in the perception of the inherent triviality of the rhymed romance and the naivety

of people who find it absorbing - with the implication that what he, Chaucer, has to offer by way of "Tales" is rather superior and can only be appreciated by the discriminating. Part of the irony of 'The Tale of Sir Thopas' is that the naive audience turn on Chaucer as a fool, whereas the sophisticated reader knows that the poet could have written a passable lay if he had chosen because of the facility with which he reproduced its typical characteristics in the parody. The joke multiplies as Chaucer presents himself as being unable to compete with his own characters and ostensibly tells the worst of all the Canterbury Tales. The maker is at the mercy of his audience since he deals in forms and words that are liable to be misunderstood. But he is also a practical-joker - he can fool his readers into accepting as true what is actually a spoof: in parody and, by implication, in 'straightforward' literature too.

Chaucer's criticism, though acute, is essentially good-humoured and playful. His knight is not a gross vulgarian, but only slightly ridiculous, and the narrator is amiable even if his story is interminable and its metre dull. But on other occasions, the nature of the relationship between the model and the parodist's version may be such that harsh and scornful ridicule is directed at the original, and this is the case with parody as it was used in the Jonsonian 'war of the theatres', and in seventeenth and eighteenth century burlesques of the heroic drama. Whereas Chaucer disrupted the fabric of idealized mediaeval romances by introducing bathos and the mildly prosaic, playwrights in the parodies mentioned above tended towards the acerbic and grossly vulgar in their parodies, that were intended to ridicule another author out of existence. Characters from one play turn up in another; actors dress-up as and caricature the mannerisms and voices of the men whom they are mocking; the action is ludicrous; the 'heroes' are gulls and rogues. In The Rehearsal (1671), for example, Buckingham and his collaborators schooled John Lacy (the actor playing "Bayes"/Dryden) to speak like the poet-dramatist and made him up to resemble Dryden.[105] Further, they gave him parodies of the most famous passages from Dryden's heroical-tragedies to recite, so that an original simile from

The Conquest of Granada (1671):

> So, two kind Turtles, when a storm is nigh
> Look up, and see it gathering in the Skie.
> Each calls his Mate to shelter in the Groves,
> Leaving, in murmurs, their unfinish'd Loves.
> Perched on some dropping Branch they sit alone,
> And cooe, and hearken to each others moan.
> (Part II. I.2)

becomes in The Rehearsal:

> So Boar and Sow, when any storm is nigh
> Snuff up, and smell it gath'ring in the Skie:
> Boar beckons Sow to trot in Chestnut Groves,
> And there consummate their unfinish'd Loves.
> Pensive in mud they wallow all alone,
> And snort, and gruntle to each others moan.
> (I.i)

This represents a savage recasting of the original, more closely based on a simple division of style into 'form' and 'content' than Chaucer's parody, and substituting a completely debased for a gently romantic content. Dryden's similes throughout The Rehearsal are not given in versions that gently mock their salient features (unlike 'The Tale of Sir Thopas'), but are brutally vulgarized so that not even the most naive reader could think them genuine examples of Dryden's work. The parodist has simplified the reader's task in this case, for if he knows the model he cannot mistake the parody and the broad, scornful ridicule that is implied in the discrepancies between the two similes. The thrust of the parodies in The Rehearsal is to disrupt sentimental, noble, and high-flown expressions as typically found in the work of Dryden, Orrery, Killigrew, and Davenant by stressing the coarsely prosaic in order to expose the supposed unnaturalness of the heroical drama and its conventions (which are based on stirring or romantic similes and accounts of noble actions).

Both Chaucer and Buckingham, in their different ways, used parody as a form of literary criticism, mocking naive responses to popular heroic stereotypes. But, on a broader front, parody has also been used to explore the various ways in which language is used in literature and to pose questions about the relation between art and reality. The Rehearsal mocks the conventions of the heroic drama by making them so absurd that the

audience cannot believe in the play as a real statement about people and passions. Familiar techniques are made obtrusive, and the astute theatre-goer becomes aware of the formal devices that shaped his original experience of the model when a simile is only allowed to be a figure of speech and not an embellishment that actually moves the listener - that art is artifice, in fact. Chaucer stressed his status as a maker in 'The Tale of Sir Thopas', playfully competing with his own fictions, both controlling and condemned by them; and the implied critical sub-text of any parody may lead on to questions concerning how fictions are made, how we read literature, and the sort of reality art possesses. Parodies may encourage wider speculations about the status of the text and its relation to the world, and the device of a play-within-a-play (as in The Rehearsal) is commonly used by the parodist-dramatist to emphasise the teasing relation between art and reality. Having rejected 'Pyramus and Thisbe', for example, because it is a parody of all the stale rhetoric and clichés of a piece like Damon and Pythias (the specific criticism implied by the parody), the audience must then take the further step and enquire in what sense A Midsummer Night's Dream is more 'real' than the mechanicals' play - if it is. Snug's reassurance to the stage-audience that his play is only make-believe may satirize naive theatre-goers who believe that plays are as real as life; but as we the audience watch an audience watch a play, it becomes evident that we, too, are involved in a similar activity: watching a 'shadow' or something 'amended' by the imagination. It is neither real nor to be easily dismissed. In one sense the play has no more reality than "This man with Lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn /Presenteth Moonshine" (V.i.134) and we are required to reject a superficial reading of art as a transcript of life. But through the transforming power of the imagination, plays do work and prosaic bareness is magically transformed into "Moonshine" - though this itself is an ambiguous notion.

Shakespeare suggests that it is the power of the imagination that invests art with significance and reality, but that conversely reality itself

may be as elusive and delusive as moonshine, and not stable at all. Tom Stoppard makes this point explicit in The Real Inspector Hound (1968) when habitués of The Mousetrap and cosy armchair murders are drawn into the fabric of a play which becomes 'real'. Art and reality, in Stoppard's account, are interwoven and the fictive is always in danger of taking-over the real, which is in itself only another form of fiction. The imagination does not only transform but actually constructs realities that are precarious: as Borges pointed out - "Why does it disturb us that Don Quixote be a reader of the Quixote and Hamlet a spectator of Hamlet? These inversions suggest that if the characters of a fictional work can be readers or spectators, we, its readers or spectators, can be fictitous".[106] Usages of parody that provoke such speculations as these are, again, close to the self-conscious novelist's preoccupation with the status of the literary fiction; and the ploy of telling a story-within-a-story (often a parody) parallels the dramatist's device of the play-within-a-play, and is used for similar purposes of drawing attention to the nature of literary language and the problematic, teasing status of art. It could be argued that not only is parody a festive occasion where the reader may experience relief from the constraints placed on him by the 'serious' readings normally enjoined by literature, but that it is a playful way of exploring not only the aesthetic of a single writer but also the nature of art itself, and as such can legitimately aspire to an important place in aesthetics as well as, perhaps, other areas of thought concerned with language and systems of communication.

PART II : NINETEENTH CENTURY BACKGROUND

a. Intellectual and Social Background

The practice of parody in Western culture has never been confined to a particular age or country, although certain periods have been richer in parody than others - notably fifth century Athens; while in Europe throughout the Middle Ages the parodic sermon flourished,[1] as did a variety of mocking, parody-like activities: the Feast of Fools; the profane Mass; the satirical Divine Service; and all the irreverent activities associated with the Goliards.[2] But in England the "age of parody" as Blackwood's dubbed it,[3] was the nineteenth century where the quantity and variety of parodies written far exceeded that of any previous period.

Although it is difficult to make statements that have a more than superficial application to a whole century, particularly one as diverse as the nineteenth, part of the reason for the popularity of parody at this time may be seen to lie in the nature of parody itself as a unique type of non-discursive commentary that implies a text-model in its own form and assumes a sub-text based on comparison between this model and the parodic copy. As suggested in Part I of this study, this makes certain demands on the reader who must be acquainted with the model if he is to recognize the parody and reconstruct a criticism, or enjoy an amusing incongruity, or respond in whatever manner is enjoined by a particular parody. Although there may be cases where parody can be appreciated as straightforwad poem , this is not its central function,for parody is a form of self-reflexive language. As James Beattie declared in 1776: "Parodies produce their effect on those only who can trace the imitation to its original".[4] In order, therefore, for parody to become a popular activity, it follows that a numerous class of readers must exist who can recognize the parodist's

models and successfully interpret and be entertained by parodies of them. This class did not exist in previous centuries, but in the nineteenth century the expansion of the reading public created the conditions for parody to be received and acclaimed by a wide audience. Moreover, it was particularly important for the development of parody on a large scale that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the parodists' models had become English writers and that parody had transcended its association with mock-epic imitations of the Classics, for this meant that the new reading public did not need the benefit of a Classical education to appreciate parody but could use their knowledge of the models that were becoming widely accessible to them thanks to the general spread of literacy and the increased availability of books.

Factors governing the expansion of the reading public in nineteenth century England have already been well-documented by literary historians.[5] In the context of this study it is the growth of the middle-class readership which is especially significant, since it was among this group that most readers of parody were to be found and for whom the parodies of the day were written. Whereas the mock-epic parody was a form of Classical pleasantry directed at a small, highly-cultured group, the parody of the nineteenth century was directed at a wider, more democratic audience; and it was the nature of this public that determined the character of the parodies written over the period. The most obvious characteristic of this emergent group was the avidity with which it members read; and the prodigious output of novelists, poets, and essayists like Carlyle, Macaulay, Huxley, Spencer and Ruskin, was matched only by the stamina of their readers who demanded the long poem, essay, or novel. The size and enthusiasm of the audience for religious, scientific and aesthetic controversy was

unprecedented; while popularity on the scale of Scott and Byron, and later Tennyson and Dickens, was a similarly new phenomenon. The actual number of people who studied Carlyle, for example, or bought Enoch Arden (first edition of 60,000 sold in a few weeks) [6] should not be exaggerated; but nevertheless, the century as a whole could be described as being intensely interested in the written word, and the demand for reading-material was enormous: whether it was for instructive, inspirational, or topical matter, or for the type of entertainment deemed suitable for the new, respectable, family reading-circle.[7]

This demand for the printed word was met by the gradual cheapening of books after the Napoleonic wars; the introduction of the part-issue, the magazine serial, and eventually cheap editions of popular writers; the development both of the circulating library and the informal book club; the increase in the number of magazines and newspapers afer the repeal of the Paper Duty (halved in 1837; abolished in 1861); as well as a variety of miscellaneous factors covering book publication and purchase - technological improvements, publishers' agreements, and the decline of prices in relation to real wages.[8] The most important development affecting parody, however, was the growth of the periodical press which not only provided an outlet for reviews and serialization of books but frequently published parodies of contemporary writers too. Magazines like Blackwood's (1817), Fraser's (1830), and Tait's (1832), often printed serious reviews with parodies accompanying them; and most parodies in the nineteenth century were first published in the columns of a magazine or newspaper. The increased circulation of the comic papers was particularly significant in this respect, with Punch (1841) the leading publisher of parody in the second half of the nineteenth century, but closely followed by its

imitators: weeklies like Judy, Fun, Comic News, The Man in the Moon.[9]

The nineteenth century, then, possessed the most important attributes needed for the development of a popular parodic movement - suitable outlets for the widespread publication of parodies, and a large and literate reading public who were encountering literary language regularly for the first time. The repercussions of this encounter, as far as parody is concerned, made themselves felt in a variety of ways: all of which, however, might be said to reflect the blend of enthusiasm and naivety that the Victorians and their predecessors brought to the enterprise. The Victorians' delight in word-play, for example, might be seen as a reflection of the exhilaration and exuberance inherent in the act of dicovering and mastering language; and parody is closely related to other forms of Victorian humour involving language-use: the pun, the acrostic, the aphorism, Spoonerisms, malapropisms, nonsense writing, varieties of slang, and even charades. The process of 'reading' a pun, for example (two contrasting images held together by a single sound) is not dissimilar from that of reading a parody (where two 'meanings' are present in one 'form'); and the pun enjoyed extraordinary popularity throughout the nineteenth century. Lamb thought it "perfect as a sonnet, better";[10] while Punch was set up as "an assylum [sic] for the thousands of orphan jokes - the millions of perishing puns, which are now wandering about".[11] Popularized by Theodore Hook, the pun found its chief nineteenth century exponent in Thomas Hood, "Professor of Punmanship":

> His death, which happen'd in his berth,
> At forty-odd befell.
> They went and told the sexton, and
> The sexton toll'd the bell.[12]

Typical collections of the period included Hugh Rowley's Puniana (1867) and More Puniana (1875), while the visual pun also achieved a certain

popularity: a cartoon of a negro cupid, for example, with the caption "black amour". Other variations included number-puns ("4ty 4tunate 4esters 4tuitously 4tifying 4lorn 4tresses") and reverse-puns, where words look the same but sound differently: "Though the tough cough and hiccough plough me through,/O'er life's dark slough my course I still pursue".[13]

Although the nineteenth century carried the pun to tedious extremes, in itself the pun could be said to represent a response to the teasing ambiguities of language, and to the power and occasional intractability of words.[14] Spoonerisms, too - real and manufactured ('toasting the queer old dean') - are a form of trickery with the conventions of language: a joke that tests and questions traditional language expectations by playing with them. In a degenerate form the nineteenth century's verbal inventiveness may be seen in competitions "for the longest sentence including the letters found in the word MAIDEN"[15] (Punch parodied the craze in 1887 by setting "JAM" as the competition word); but at its most complex and invigorating, word-play in the works of Carroll and Lear issued in the kind of nonsense-writing that shares with parody an interest in how it is that words make meaning - sometimes by using puns specifically, but often by suggesting several sets of meanings evoked by the sound of words.

This type of activity indicates something of the freshness and enthusiasm with which the Victorians responded to the written word, in a way that was playful and exploratory: a compound of sophistication and childlikeness. It should also be said that word-play of this sort perhaps made a special appeal to a section of Victorian society because it was a form of innocent humour that was free from sexual innuendo (and therefore suitable for family reading) and involved no unpleasant

Hobbesian implications of laughing at another's defects. The relative merits of "comedy" versus "wit", (and the value to be put on laughter generally), that were so often discussed throughout the century, [16] only indirectly concern parody - though Victorian word-play itself could perhaps be said to derive, in part, from the traditions of verbal wit and epigram establised in the eighteenth century and the Regency. More important is the acceptability of parody to the family because it is inoffensive, where Thackeray's praise of Punch because it contained nothing unfit for small children and women to read (despite his own admiration of Fielding and early review work condemning prudery) might be construed as typical of the period: "We like that our matrons and girls should be pure".[17] This attitude encouraged the proliferation of language-games of the sort described above; and an extremely popular form of parody throughout the century was the simple content-substitution within an original form, where the new content would be comic after the style found to be acceptable in middle-class drawing rooms - tales of domestic mishap, cheeky children, rude servants, sea-sickness, and so on. The comic parody, eliminating coarseness and elevating the idea of "harmless laughter",[18] crowded the pages of magazines and newspapers after 1840 with jokes about "Mothers-in-law, Hen-pecked husbands, Twins, Old Maids... Fatness, Thinness... Baldness, Stuttering, and Bad Cheese".[19]

In this, the Victorian reader appears in a more ingenuous light, and - as already suggested - the relatively new literacy of the nineteenth century middle-classes who became habitual readers inevitably involved a certain naivety that affected the reception of texts (and consequently the function of parody) during the period. In the first place, a large section of enthusiastic readers could be said to have become thoroughly committed to the idea that literature was not a marginal but a serious,

even fundamentally important activity that played a significant part in a person's and a society's life, and was expected to make a major contribution to that life. But where a form of rather naive optimism about the power and status of literary language could be said to enter, is in the view of the writer as an articulate, powerful figure, centrally located in the community, who mediates an accessible reality in language comprehensible to all. This seems to entail - among other things - ideas of realistic representation and socially committed artists, where the writer is expected to express the aspirations and fears of his age and to act as a source of guidance in his response to the immediate problems besetting a period of particularly unstable values, or at least manifest an interest in contemporary society in a straightforward, spokesman-like way that is variously celebrative, authoritative, and comforting. This posits a major role for literature, but at the same time involves certain assumptions about the status of literary discourse and the place of the artist in the community that tends to disadvantage any form of writing thought to be unrealistic or inappropriate to the age - conceived of in Carlyleian terms, that writers must "express sympathy for concrete human things", [20] or favour the "common earth" above the "solitary thinking" that is deemed as injurious as "solitary drinking". [21] This is obviously a gross simplications of one trend in nineteenth century literary culture; but, broadly speaking, parody in the ninteenth century became one of the methods of evaluating contemporary literature and reinforcing disapproval of work that was felt to be inadequate in its response to society or representationally over-elaborate. As a form of self-reflexive discourse in a period where the question 'What should our writers be writing?' was thought to be important, parody was well-placed to assess other types of literary language and, on the whole, it tended to endorse literature

that was thought to be 'realistic' as opposed to 'romantic' - where work associated with the Romantic movement, especially, seems to have been deemed inimical to maintaining the centrality of the writer in society: possibly because it was thought to be eccentric, individualistic, high-brow, or antisocial in its supposed emphasis on the cultivation of individual perceptions at the expense of the community.[22] Both the early and so-called last Romantics were frequently parodied by their contemporaries (as was the enthusiastic Spasmodic school of writers in the middle of the century)for tendencies in their art that were thought to be immoderate, esoteric, and inaccesible to the wider audience, by virtue of the exclusivity of their language and choice of subject-matter. Parody upheld demands that literature be "concrete" (conceived at various levels of sophistication, from fully articulate realism to naive Gradgrindism), and stressed the virtues of common sense and moderation as mediums for the writer's successful communication with the largest number of readers at a given time and place.

This conception of the role of the writer and the nature of aesthetic representation, as well as manifesting an anti-Romantic bias, also implied a certain attitude towards popular literature: which could be thought of as both fantastic and not-serious in the demands it made on its readers. Throughout the century parody was repeatedly used as part of an attempt to educate people to accept a less diversionary function for literature, where reading was understood to be an important, worthwhile activity and parody a method of exposing inferior taste. Yet the presence of such taste was bound to make itself felt in a relatively new group of readers; and while parody could represent an attempt to inculcate more sophisticated reading-habits, so long as the centrality of the writer was asserted in terms of the immediate authenticity and

relevance of his account to the age, Arnold's appeal for earnestness and simplicity, and the complex aesthetic of literary realism, were always liable to degenerate either into a partial rejection of literature as a serious enterprise, or else a hostility towards all art that did not conform to the demand that it be straightforwardly representational. In the visual arts this was reflected in the popularity of painters like Frith and Landseer,[23] and the sort of taste that Dickens caricatured in Hard Times: "You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction of fact. You do not walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets".[24] Precisely because this was the age of the middle-class reader, the essentially youthful exuberance of the nineteenth century's encounter with language and its faith in literature to transcribe and transform the "common earth" had its counterpart in the rejection of some of the processes and values of art, based on the insecurity and ignorance deriving from the emergent class's experience of confronting literature: "the uneasiness that the builder of a material economy forever experiences in the presence of art",[25] exemplified by Froude's comment that"literature might be excellent as ornament, but [it] will not help you stand on your feet alone".[26] The parodist who exposes artifice was also in a unique position to expose whatever was considered 'arty' in the nineteenth century; and many parodists, taking the simplest notions of mimesis and common sense as their aesthetic criteria were frankly philistine in their rejection of contemporary literature - especially at the end of the century when writers were making extraordinary demands of their audience.

Yet whether nineteenth century parodies embodied a philistine mockery of literature, or an evaluation of literary language in the context of the question of art's place in society, or a simple delight

in playing with words and showing-off a newly-acquired familiarity with books - three roles for parody posited above - they were uniformly pervaded by the sense that written language and its relation to reality was important, problematic, and interesting, and that the status of the writer mattered. Nineteenth century parody may be said to be a result of the first full-scale encounter with literary language in England, and there is a freshness and exhilaration about it that is largely lacking in the twentieth century's supercession of the written word as the prime medium of communication and the consequent esotericism of its literature and parody.

b. Parodic Background

Although the nineteenth century was undoubtedly an "age of parody", the popularity of the mode cannot be accounted for without some reference to the tradition of parody which existed in the eighteenth century, for it was on this tradition that the success of Rejected Addresses (1812) and its imitators (which inspired the Blackwood's writer's remark) was founded. As suggested in Part I of this study, parody in the early eighteenth century was hardly to be distinguished from the mock-epic and was based on the elementary strategy of appropriating a lofty metre to describe a less-than-lofty subject. What distinguished parody from mock-heroics at this time was that the former took English rather than Classical poets as its models, and increasingly looked to contemporary writers. John Philips's 'The Splendid Shilling' (1701) began a vogue for Miltonic parodies, of which Gay's 'Wine' (1708), Lady Winchilsea's 'Fanscomb Barn' (1713), and Bramstone's 'The Crooked Six-pence' (1743) are perhaps the most familiar examples. Spenser and Chaucer were also popular models - the young Alexander Pope imitated both;[27] but in 1736

Isaac Hawkins Browne popularized the idea of annexing the style of modern poets for the purpose of describing a trivial and amusing subject in his small volume A Pipe of Tobacco, which praises smoking in the metre of Cibber, Ambrose Philips, James Thomson, Young, Pope, and Swift. Browne called his parodies "imitations";[28] but although his pieces could have stood by themselves as light verse - and, indeed, the popularity of the volume initiated a light verse tradition of poems in praise of smoking[29]- the use of contemporary models was a significant departure: implying a certain amount of critical acumen in the ability to imitate and thus, to an extent, take the measure of, modern work.

This was precisely the function of a series of parodies satirizing the poet Ambrose Philips which appeared in 1725, where the poet's own metre and style were appropriated (after the manner of Felltham on Jonson) to express the writers' unflattering opinions of the poet. Ambrose Philips was the poet most ridiculed by parodists in England before Wordsworth, and Johnson reported of him that "in conversation he was solemn and pompous" and declared that his work had "added nothing to English poetry".[30] A friend of Addison's and Steele's, Philips's version of the Andromache (with its remarkable title, The Distrest Mother) was extravagantly lauded in the Spectator, while his Pastorals were given pride of place over Pope's in Tonson's sixth Miscellany (1709). He and Pope quarrelled over a mocking essay that Pope published in the Guardian,[31] and 'from that time", Johnson asserted, "Pope and Philips lived in a perpetual reciprocation of malevolence" (p.319). In the matter of place-seeking Philips seems to have been no better or worse than his contemporaries; but what drew the fire of the Tory parodists was the publication of a series of short-lined, laudatory verses addressed to the infant daughters of potential patrons which experimented with a naive

style. It was the combination of naivety set against Philips's other motives for writing the poems (as well as a note of only partially suppressed prurience detectable in several of the verses) that provoked a series of broadside parodies, emanating from Dublin, in June 1725 in response to Philips's latest offering 'To the Honourable Miss Carteret' which had been presented to her influential father in the previous month:

> Bloom of beauty, early flow'r
> Of the blissful bridal bow'r
> Thou, thy parents' pride and care,
> Fairest offspring of the fair.....[32]

The broadside parodies included titles like 'To Miss Harvey, a Child of a Day Old', 'Namby Pamby's Lamentation', 'A Christmas Box for Namby Pamby', and 'A Poem Upon R---r a Lady's Spaniel', which was probably written by Swift.[33]

The name "Namby Pamby" originated with the Swift circle as a pretended attempt by a child to pronounce Philips's name, and the term passed into the language through the agency of the most popular of the 1725 parodies: 'Namby Pamby. A Panegyric on the New Versification Address'd to A----. P----.' which was probably written by the burlesque dramatist Henry Carey, author of 'Sally in Our Alley' and possibly 'God Save the King'.[34] The parody characterizes Philips as a witless place-seeker, pretending to nursery innocence in the hope of obtaining financial reward. The simplicity of his verse is presented as both a symptom of mental debility, and a disguise for his own ambitions regarding 'place' and the potential "riper beauties" ('To Miss Carteret') of his subjects; and the parody itself pursues the simple strategy discussed in Part I, of "shooting at a man with the weapon of his own form":[35]

> All ye poets of the age,
> All ye witlings of the stage,
> Learn your jingles to reform,
> Crop your numbers and conform.

Let your little verses flow
Gently, sweetly, row by row;
Let the verse the subject fit,
Little subject, little wit....
Namby Pamby, pilly-piss,
Rhymy-pim'd on Missy Miss
Tartaretta, Tartaree
From the navel to the knee;
That her father's gracey grace
Might give him a placey place...[36]

The parodies mentioned so far all achieved their effects by relying on a fairly clear-cut division between 'form' and 'content', and parody as light verse and parody as literary criticism were two eighteenth century traditions that the nineteenth century inherited. The third - the implicit parody (as represented by Chaucer's 'Tale of Sir Topas' or Beerbohm's 'Some Damnable Errors') which distinguishes parody from burlesque activity as a unique form of self-reflexive discourse - was written with rather less frequency in the eighteenth century than the simple form-content parodies. Swift's 'A Love Song in the Modern Taste' (1733) is rare in this respect, where the parodist takes the popular love-poem of the period (a vapid, weakly-rhymed profession of melancholy sentiment) and slyly exaggerates some of its most obvious properties until the result is unbelievable as a poem and only comprehensible as a parody - a deliberately imperfect copy, in whose 'imperfection' is to be found a criticism of the model:

Fluttering spread thy purple pinions
Gentle Cupid, o'er my heart;
I, a slave in thy dominions;
Nature must give way to art.

Mild Arcadians, ever blooming,
Nightly nodding o'er your flocks,
See my weary days consuming
All beneath yon flowery rocks.

Thus the Cyprian goddess weeping,
Mourn'd Adonis, darling youth;
Him the boar, in silence creeping,
Gored with unrelenting tooth...

Thus when Philomela, drooping,
Softly seeks her silent mate,
See the bird of Juno stooping;
Melody resigns to Fate. 37

Swift's ridicule is mild and playful, but a more devastating form of mockery by implicit parody is to be found in one of the most notable parodies of the period - Fielding's Shamela (1741), which was written to counter the "epidemical Phrenzy" of Richardson's Pamela (1740).[38] The publication and enormous popularity of Pamela (five editions in eleven months) provoked a spate of righteously indignant pamphlets[39] protesting about the morality of a novel where virtue was rewarded in calculable social and financial terms and which, while professing to inculcate chastity, nevertheless dwelt in some detail on scenes likely to excite the very passions they were meant to condemn: "Feeling of the Breasts, fainting, and dying away, may, in your Opinion, Sir, be Excitements to Virtue, but they are too VIRTUOUS a description in My mind for any young untainted mind to peruse".[40] Richardson's critics attacked him both on the grounds of the likelihood of his story (the heroine's literacy was as startling as her innocence) and, especially, its social and ethical morality - it encouraged girls to day-dream about rising above their station; it depicted "Circles of lewdness"[41]; and the whole tendency of the story was towards advocating that girls sell their chastity to the highest bidder in return for riches and position. Yet Pamela was preached from the pulpit and her adventures were the talk of the town; and such was the degree of sympathy and credibility that Richardson's heroine inspired in many readers that the villagers of Slough are reported to have rung their church-bells to celebrate her marriage.[42]

Righteous indignation, however, especially when it took the form of quoting "lewd" passages from Richardson's novel could always lay the author of the objection open to the same charges of prurience as those he was trying to prefer against the novelist, but Fielding avoided this pitfall by ridiculing Pamela in a parody. Shamela was published 2 April

1741, and is among the few accomplished literary prose parodies to have been printed since the Elizabethan period. Although the main body of the parody is framed by letters that explicitly state that "Pamela" is a scheming hussy and will be revealed as such in the "authentick" letters written by "Sham" ("Oliver" to Tickletext"), the rest of Shamela consists of a series of parodic letters which achieve their effect by exaggerating and making fun of Richardson's most typical features. A criticism must be inferred by a comparison between model and copy - and its main thrust is to attack Pamela's status as an innocent abroad who is unaware of the connection between "Virtue" and money, and also to reveal her as a fictional character for whom church-bells should not be rung. Pamela's credibility is undermined because Fielding can make her appear a sham by the simple expedient of endowing his heroine with self-awareness. Shamela knows exactly to what end her actions are tending and is bent on selling her "Vartue" (Letter X) for the highest price. Shamela is an anti-Pamela; and while Fielding copies several of the most famous scenes from Pamela, he 'turns' them from the romantic mode into that of coarse realism. "B." remarked in Pamela that Parson Williams's interest in his serving girl was not entirely pastoral; in Shamela Williams is the heroine's lover and father of her child. Pamela's preoccupation with her chastity is re-presented in Shamela's meditation on her supreme attribute: "I once thought of making a little Fortune by my Person. I now intend to make a great one by my Vartue" (Letter X). Pamela's decision not to capitulate to the wealthy B. unless he marries her is presented as a moral one by Richardson; for Shamela, however, it is a simple matter of consciously working on "Booby" until he desires her so much that he will offer the power and wealth of an aristocratic marriage in return for her pretended chastity.

In the discrepancies between Pamela and Shamela Fielding's mocking commentary on Richardson is quite plain. Few people could be as innocent as Pamela and end-up marrying a Lord; if Richardson's avowed moral is one of undeviating sexual denial, then describing fraught and lingering encounters between the heroine and her master seems a perverse way of demonstrating it (Shamela's passages with Booby are frankly bawdy); and the epistolary technique which enhances Pamela's plight in its use of first-person, present-tense narrative, is awkward — Shamela's spelling mistakes and bad grammar are in contrast to the lengthy and literate letters Pamela writes to her mother, and Fielding mocks Richardson's clumsy attempts to locate his narrative in time in such passages as: "Mrs. Jervis and I are just in Bed, and the Door unlocked; if my Master should come - Odsbobs! I hear him just coming in at the Door. You see I write in the present Tense" (Letter VI). Fielding's parody implies that Pamela is an idealized fiction that cannot be naively believed in (any more than Chaucer's pilgrims ought to accept the minstrel romance, or George and Nell the Quixote-like activities of Rafe in The Knight of the Burning Pestle). Pamela is a sham as a morally credible character just as she is a sham in the wider sense of being the product of Richardson's imagination and novelistic technique, as emphasised by Fielding's repeated references to the inadequacies of the epistle as a narrative mode.

Shamela appeared immediately before Joseph Andrews (which referred to the parody in its opening chapters) and represents a significant stage in the development of Fielding's thought on how the novel should be written and read. Shamela is an appeal for novelistic realism, where realism is conceived of as an antidote to the mind-sapping escapism and technical faults of the sentimental novel. The

parodic sub-text of Shamela implies a type of novel that demands intelligent readers who will not surrender to blatant artifice and the blandishments of works which offer improbable fantasy as believable. Fielding's parody may be seen as an element in the eighteenth century's exploration of the potential and limits of the "Novel" as compared to the "Romance",[43] and it played a critical role both in defining Fielding's personal ideas on the kind of novel he wanted to write and in supporting the claims of the realist novel. It also provided the nineteenth century with a strategy for undermining romantic idealism by introducing elements of crude and prosaic 'reality' into the fabric of the model in the form of parody; and many nineteenth century parodists exploited what Shaw called "the conflict between real life and the romantic imagination", in this way.[44]

Tristram Shandy (1760-1767) carried contemporary ideas on the status of the novel, and particularly the role of the self-conscious, controlling narrator, to preposterously comic (and innovatory) extremes. The omniscient narrator with the power to pattern his creation towards its happy ending has been replaced by the all-intrusive, bewildered, and incompetent (at least as a conventional novelist) Tristram, who cannot even begin his book, much less catch up with himself and present the illusion of flowing narrative - just as Pamela, as Fielding implied, would really have had to write all day in order to produce Pamela, leaving no time for stirring incidents to occur, let alone those described as if they were happening while she was writing. So Tristram announces:

> I am this month one whole year older than I was this time twelve month; and having got, as you perceive, almost into the middle of my fourth volume - and no further than to my first day's life - 'tis demonstrative that I have three hundred and sixty-four days more life to write now, than when

> I first set out; so that instead of advancing, as a common writer, in my work with what I have been doing at it - on the contrary, I am just thrown so many volumes back - was every day of my life to be as busy a day as this.[45]

Tristram Shandy is a self-conscious novel that uses parody in the innovatory ways suggested in Part I of this study, drawing attention to the nature of the book as a language-using object that is modified by the traditions and demands of language and literary convention, and which is an imperfect representation of reality. The plot of the novel is the writing of it: Tristram's attempts to communicate with himself and his readers through the slippery medium of literary language, in a novel which repudiates the demand for an all-powerful narrator and reveals the techniques that give the sense of a present unfolding before the reader's eyes as tricks. Fielding made the same point in Shamela; but whereas he proposed a role for the novel that involved the notion of literary realism as a verisimilar representation, and established an ironic, controlling narrative voice, Sterne's novel questions the whole theory of mimetic representation and what it is that we can legitimately expect novels to do.

Tristram Shandy was eccentric and unique in its time and cannot be said to have bequeathed a direct legacy of parody to the nineteenth century, since its 'oddness' and bawdry meant that it "did not last" for nineteenth century readers.[46] Most prose parodies in the eighteenth century mocked particular authors or, especially, classes of authors rather than playing with and questioning the processes of fictional representation, and prose parody was generally the province of the burlesque novel at this time (although in the early part of the century Swift and the Scriblerus circle made some use of it in their satires).[47] The burlesque novels of the second half of the eighteenth century were comic at the expense of whole traditions and were conceived in relation

to a serious convention without reference to an individual's style, involving ludicrous actions and sometimes ludicrous characters too. The Female Quixote (1752) was a particularly influential mockery of the sentimental romance, taking as its central figure a heroine who confuses romance with real life and tries to put her fictions into action. Mrs. Lennox's theme - taken up by Sheridan and by a series of burlesques of sentimental romances between 1760 and 1820[48] - is that prolonged, unreflecting indulgence in this kind of writing is injurious to rational, adult behaviour, and that the novel reader must be intelligent enough to read a fiction without mistaking it for a moral exemplum. (Fielding reviewed the novel and praised it for "giving a rational as well as very pleasing amusement to a sensible reader".)[49] This form of generic parody, especially of the heroine romance, was popular in the first decades of the nineteenth century, and it was novels like The Female Quixote that largely determined the tone and style of later parodies with their tendency to assert the values of Shavian "real life" as opposed to "romantic" values: where the typical method would involve pitting a heroine deluded by fantasy against a prosaic world of the parodist's constructing which invariably bested her.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, with the decline of the burlesque modes, an increasing number of parodies were written, although verse parodies far outnumbered those in prose and a simple division between 'form' and 'content' was preferred over the implicit parody as being more suited to the tone of parody at this time, which, reflecting the political climate, became more abrasive and polemical. The single most parodied poem in the eighteenth century was Gray's 'Elegy', published by Dodsley in 1751. Parodies of the 'Elegy' generally assumed the form of a straightforward appropriation of Gray's metre and style

for the purposes of substituting another content, humorous or - most often - satirical. The first recorded parody of the poem was also published by Dodsley - 'An Evening Contemplation in a College' (1753) by the Rev. John Duncombe, which is a benign survey of Cambridge life (and among the first of many parodies originating from that university):

> Within those walls, where thro' the glimm'ring shade
> Appear the pamphlets in a mouldering heap,
> Each in his narrow bed till morning laid,
> The peaceful fellows of the college sleep.[50]

Most parodies of the 'Elegy' relied for their effect on the simple burlesque incongruity of setting matter and manner at odds, or they could be read as they stood, as poems or pieces of light verse. But the 'Elegy' was particularly favoured by the satirists of the period who used Gray's measure to convey their own matter more memorably. In a Hogarthian vein, for example, an 'Elegy on Covent Garden' (1776) described the misery of the destitute and criminal poor:

> Let not Ambition mock their humble toil
> Their vulgar crimes and villainy obscure;
> Nor rich rogues hear with distainful smile
> The low and petty knaveries of the poor.
>
> The titled villain, and the thief in power
> The greatest rogue that ever bore a name,
> Await alike th' inevitable hour:
> The paths of wickedness lead but to shame.
>
> ...Are Peers exempt from mouldering into dust?
> Can all the gilded scutcheons of the Great
> Stamp on polluted deeds the name of Just?[51]

Dozens of such parodies were written in the 1760s and 1770s, and many of them were full-length. Several of the more popular were included in The Repository of Wit (1777-1784) where they filled-up half the second volume.[52] None involved the use of reflexive language, or explicitly criticized Gray. They made a twin-fold appeal to the reader: to be appreciated for their contrast of style and subject, and if not that, for the intrinsic interest of their new content.

In contrast to the response to the 'Elegy', however, parodic reaction to Gray's Pindaric odes 'The Progress of Poesy' and 'The Bard' led to satire against the poet and his friend Mason in the manner of Carey on Philips, or Felltham on Jonson - using his own form to express an abrasive criticism. In 1760 a group of Westminster wits, self-styled the Nonsense Club, led by George Colman Snr (a writer of popular burlesque plays) and Robert Lloyd (the poet and then editor of Lloyd's Evening Post) published two parodic odes, which Gray described as "bloody satyrs".[53] The odes were advertised in the Evening Post for 2 June 1760 as "TWO ODES. 1. To Obscurity. 2. To Oblivion", and the next issue of the paper carried a spoof 'Letter to the Editor' (written by Lloyd) that was actually a review of the parodies. "The vices with which our Author charges Mr. G.'s Odes seems to be, a wilful obscurity, a species of false sublime, and a pedantic imitation of Pindar... [The second ode is] levelled at Mr. M.'s Ode to Memory: and the Author seems to think Mr. M.'s compositions in this nature totally void of merit in the sentiment and childish in the style".[54] The 'Odes' themselves simply restate these opinions in the metre of Gray's Pindaric odes - 'To Obscurity', for example, opens with the enquiry: "Heard ye the din of modern rhymer's bray?/ It was cool M___n, or warm G___y,/ Involved in tenfold smoke", and refers to Gray as:

> The shallow fop in antic vest,
> Tir'd of the beaten road,
> Proud to be singularly drest,
> Changes, with every changing moon, the mode.[55]

'To Oblivion' mocks Gray's quieter, Gothic mood and the odes of Mason and his followers who addressed themselves to subjects like 'Oblivion', into which, the parody suggests, their work should rightly fall. Both parodic odes were well-known to the nineteenth century, and Isaac D'Israeli writing in 1834 could still refer to them familiarly as "the most malicious

inventions in literature".[56] It was popularly rumoured that the success of the 'Odes' caused Gray to abandon his poetic career;[57] but if the parodies distressed the reputedly sensitive poet, unlike Ambrose Philips (who offered to thrash Pope for his Guardian essay) he gave no indication of it in his correspondence on the subject. In a letter to Mason dated 7 June 1760 he referred to the odes lightheartedly enough. He guessed that Colman was one of the authors, and asked Mason:

> What have you done to him? for I never heard his name before. he makes very tolerable fun with me, where I understand him (which is not everywhere)... least people should not understand the humour of the thing... he writes letters to Lloyd's Evening Post to tell them who and what it was, that he meant; and says, that it is likely to produce a great combustion in the Literary World: so if you have any mind to combustle about it, well and good! for me I am neither so literary, nor so combustible.[58]

Yet, if not immediately affected by the parodies, it seems likely that their hostility did form an element in the process of public misunderstanding of his poetry which perhaps contributed to the early exhaustion of Gray's poetic powers, and they perhaps also added weight to the argument of those critics who protested that parody was a form of ridiculing activity only undertaken by the wantonly malicious.

The general tendency of parody towards the end of the eighteenth century, as already remarked, was to become harsher and more satirical, and the form of parody most favoured was that of appropriating the metre of a famous song or poem and substituting a heavily polemical content (like the parody of Gray which satirized "the thief in power"). The 1784 Westminster elections produced an enormous quantity of parodic broadsheets, and a great deal of Whig and Radical opposition to the North government took the form of parodies, "Squibs, Songs, and Ballads"[59] which were circulated as hand-bills and later collected into bound volumes. Charles Fox was the object of enthusiastic praise in pieces

like 'A New Song. Tune: Hearts of Oak':

> Come cheer up my lads 'tis to Freedom we steer;
> No tyrant dictators shall manage us here;
> No more shall they send vile dependents on Court,
> The birthright of Britons they ne'er will support.
> United by Freedom, in Freedom remain;
> See Fox is still ready,
> To our cause ever steady;
> Huzzah! we'll elect him again and again.

or, again, 'Victory! Freedom! and Fox!' to the tune of the national anthem.[60] Although Fox was defeated in the 1784 elections, Whiggish and Radical parodies continued to circulate until the advent of the bloodier phase of the French revolution. English Republican parodies that date from this period express idealistic and fervently Utopian sentiments, and preserve a strain of naive, if somewhat blood-thirsty, optimism:

> See, from the universe
> Darkness and clouds disperse;
> Mankind awake:
> Freedom advances near,
> Monarchs with terror hear;
> See how they quake.

or:

> Dear Freedom! sair they've lightlied thee,
> An' ca'ed thee names an' a' that,
> Thy faithfu' friens hae born for thee
> Baith scorn an' grief an' a' that...
>
> We dare na' meet, we dare na' speak,
> We dare na' sing nor a' that,
> Our dearest rights we dare na' seek -
> We'll see them swing for a' that.[61]

These pieces form part of a long tradition of parodic propaganda that goes back to the Reformation and before that to the early Middle Ages. The appropriation of a popular metre is intended to make the new message memorable, and the effectiveness of such parodies depends on the audience's recognition of a favourite tune or piece of verse.

Other political parodies written during the period had a stronger literary reference than these single-sheet tracts which were intended to stir-up popular feeling against the government. Probationary Odes for the Laureatship [sic] was published in 1785 by a group of Whig wits who were already famous for a satire against the Tories called Criticisms on "The Rolliad" which appeared in the Morning Herald throughout 1784. This earlier work was supposed to be a commentary on an epic poem in praise of the Rolle family, with extensive 'quotations'. In fact, it was an attack on the Tory M.P. Richard Rolle who took his political duties notoriously lightly, and had apparently declared that he did not want to waste the summer Vacation "debating about the rights of the Westminster electors. His private concerns were of more concern to him than his rights as a Westminster elector".[62] The later Probationary Odes was principally the work of George Ellis and Joseph Richardson,[63] and again combined literary and political reference by satirizing the king and his ministers who invested the office of Laureate,while at the same time parodying the undisciplined ode which enjoyed a vogue during this period.

The volume was inspired by the death of the Poet Laureate, William Whitehead, and the appointment of Thomas Warton as his successor, and it purported to be an account of how Warton nefariously acquired the position. It was accompanied by twenty-two parodic odes that were supposed to have been submitted by other candidates for the office, and the parodies were prefaced by mock-testimonies in the styles of various public figures 'recommending' them. The book concluded with a scurrilous account of Warton's election to the Laureateship, and a 'Table of Instructions' on how to write an ode: "The omission of a line or two cannot be supposed to make any material difference either in the poetry or in the sense... You must not waste more than twenty lines in invoking

the Muse, nor repeat the word "Hail!" more than fifteen times at farthest".[64] The book is a mixture of straightforward satire, heavy-handed irony, and parody of the ode as a form - the 'Lord Mulgrave' is a characteristic example:

O for a Muse of Fire
With blazing thumbs to touch my torpid lyre...

Farewell awhile ye summer breezes!
What is the life of man?
A span!

Sometimes it thaws, sometimes it freezes,
Just as it pleases!

Although the humour seems leaden and obscure today, Probationary Odes was reprinted several times in the nineteenth century and Byron referred to the volume enthusiastically.[65]

The mixture of parody and politics in Probationary Odes was repeated with even greater success at the end of the century in the magazine The Anti-Jacobin; or, Weekly Examiner (1797-1798). As the violence of the French Revolution increased, several young Whig wits of the 1780s dissociated themselves from Fox and joined the Tory party in the early nineties. Among them were George Ellis, who had contributed to The Rolliad and Probationary Odes, and his friend, the future Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister, George Canning. Canning and another school-friend, John Hookham Frere, had already edited forty numbers of a magazine called The Microcosm whilst at Eton, and between them had written several schoolboy parodies.[66] In 1797, a crucial year in the war between England and France and a time of great domestic instability,[67] the three men decided to start a weekly newspaper that would support the Pitt government against threats from English Jacobins. They chose as their editor William Gifford, who had recently published two satires on the idealistically revolutionary sentiments and vapid poetry of the Della Cruscans;[68] and the first issue of The Anti-Jacobin appeared on 20 Nov. 1797, priced sixpence. It continued to appear on successive Mondays until 9 June 1798.

In the Prospectus and introduction to the first issue Canning

wrote that the aim of the paper was to discredit revolutionary enthusiasm wherever it was to be found in English life, but particularly as it occurred in contemporary social philosophy and literature;[69] and the paper published editorials, essays, and letters denouncing French revolutionaries and English Radicals. But part of the paper's policy was to discredit Jacobinism by making it appear ridiculous, and Canning, Ellis and Frere regularly wrote parodies of writers who were known to sympathize with the Revolution - "to acquire by dint of repeating after them, a more complete knowledge of the secret in which their greatness lies", Canning wrote ironically in the first issue (p.33). These parodies appeared in the "Poetry" section of the magazine (which included loyal effusions as well as straightforward polemic) and were accompanied by a short, explicit "disquisition" on the faults of the Jacobin writer in question; a genuine extract from his work - and then a parody "in further illustration of its principle" as described in the "disquisition" (20 Nov. 1797, p.33).

Southey was the first writer to be singled-out in this way by Canning, Ellis and Frere for his youthful sympathy for the Revolution. In the first issue Canning expressed the opinion that there was not "one good true Poet, of sound principles and sober practice" (p.32) writing in England at that time, and quoted Southey's 'Inscription: for the apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Marten, the regicide, was imprisoned thirty years' as proof of the seditious, anti-monarchist trends in modern literature. Part of the original 'Inscription' runs:

> Dost thou ask his crime?
> He had REBELL'D AGAINST THE KING, AND SAT
> IN JUDGEMENT ON HIM: for his ardent mind
> Shap'd goodliest plans of happiness on earth,
> And Peace and Liberty. Wild dreams!

The parodic 'Inscription' vulgarly recast the model in much the same way as Buckingham and his collaborators did when they parodied Dryden's similes, using the strategy of opposing "the romantic imagination" with

"real [low] life". Thus the sub-title of The Anti-Jacobin's parody reads: 'For the door of the cell in Newgate where Mrs. Brownrigg , the 'prentice-cide, was confined previous to her execution', equating Marten's political crime and Southey's approval of it with that of a sordid murderess who had killed two of her apprentices before being hanged. The incongruity is glaring and crude, turning Southey's precepts on their head by insisting on baseness instead of nobility, the prosaic rather than the sublime:

> Dost thou ask her crime?
> SHE WHIPP'D TWO FEMALE 'PRENTICES TO DEATH,
> AND HID THEM IN THE COAL-HOLE. For her mind
> Shap'd strictest plans of discipline. Sage schemes!
> (20 Nov. 1797, p.36)

The second issue of The Anti-Jacobin also parodied Southey, this time not only for his Radical politics but for the awkward use of Classical metre in some of his early poetry where he attempted to lament the plight of the poor in Sapphics and Dactylics. The central figure in 'The Widow" (Sapphics) crosses a moor in a snow storm and is ridden-down successively by a rich man's coach and a horseman before she finally expires; while 'The Soldier's Wife' describes the plight of a destitute woman and her baby in Dactylics. The metres are cumbrous and unsuited to Southey's sentimental treatment of his subject, and in the issue for 27 Nov. 1797 Canning quoted from 'The Widow' and commented on the mawkishness and clumsiness of its style: "The pathos of the Matter is not a little relieved by the absurdity of the Metre" (p.70). The accompanying parody was written in Sapphics and described an encounter between a Jacobin and a working-man - 'The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder' - where, in keeping with the vulgar disruptions of sentiment, the knife-grinder turns out to be an habitual drunkard who tries to beg sixpence from the "Friend":

"I give thee sixpence! I will see thee damn'd first -
Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance;
Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
Spiritless outcast!"[70]

Later editions of the magazine parodied the Dactylics of 'The Soldier's Wife' in 'The Soldier's Friend' (11 Dec. 1797) which describes how a Radical tries to subvert a drummer-boy with "nice clever books by Tom Paine the philanthropist" (p.169), and in an untitled piece of explicit criticism of the young poet's style (18 Dec. 1797):

Sorely thy Dactylics lag on uneven feet:
Slow is the syllable which thou wouldest urge to speed,
Lame and o'er burdened and "screaming its wretchedness".
(p. 201)

The Dactylic parodies concluded The Anti-Jacobin's attack on Southey, who began his poetic career as he ended it - the object of satire because of his politics. (Byron's 'The Vision of Judgement' (1822), of course, satirized the older Southey's High Toryism.)[71]

The parodies of Southey were the most politically vehement of the collaborations between the four principals of The Anti-Jacobin. Although the remaining subjects of their parodies were selected because they were associated with "the New Morality" (9 July 1798, p.623) of Republican idealism and free-thought, their eccentric literary styles quite as much as their politics were the object of ridicule; and the ensuing parodies of Richard Payne Knight and Erasmus Darwin were distinguished by a light-hearted and sometimes fantastic inventiveness that, for the most part, avoided the crudity of the attack on Southey. Knight (1750-1824) was a scholar, art historian, archaeologist, a friend of Fox and M.P. for Ludlow until 1806. In 1796 he published The Progress of Civil Society, a didactic poem in six books. It consisted of several thousands of heavily annotated rhymed couplets lamenting the fall of man from savage innocence into civilized corruption, and represents the fag-end of the

eighteenth century didactic poem - so called, according to Canning, "from didaskein,to teach, and Poema, a poem; because it teaches nothing and is not poetical" (26 Feb. 1798, p.557). The Anti-Jacobin's parody, 'The Progress of Man', began to appear on 19 Feb. 1798 and ran for four issues, complete with Scriblerus-like parodic footnotes and elaborate lists of contents : "Various stations assigned to different animals:- Birds - Bears - Mackarel. - Bears remarkable for their fur - Mackarel cried on a Sunday - Birds do not graze - nor fishes fly - nor beasts live in the water. - Plants equally contented with their lot" (19 Feb. 1798, p.524). The parodic text itself exaggerated the solemn treatment that Knight afforded his speculations and exploited a vein of inconsequential liveliness wholly inappropriate to the dogged tones of the model:

> Ah! who has seen the mailed Lobster rise,
> Clap her broad wings, and soaring claim the skies?
> When did the Owl, descending from her bow'r
> Crop, 'midst fleecy flocks, the tender flow'r;
> Or the young Heifer plunge with pliant limb,
> In the salt wave, and fish-like try to swim?
> (19 Feb.1798, p.527)

But after The Rovers (which will be discussed in Part III of this study), the most popular parody in The Anti-Jacobin was 'The Loves of the Triangles', modelled on Erasmus Darwin's eccentric The Loves of the Plants (1789). This poem (together with The Oeconomy of Vegetation) formed the second part of The Botanic Garden which was published in 1791, in order - as the poet declared - "to enlist the Imagination under the banner of Science".[72] Each canto in the original was prefaced by a complicated list of contents- "philosophic notes" were appended; and the text was interspersed with protracted extracts of conversation between Darwin and an old bookseller. The poem was so eccentric that it perhaps only failed by a degree of ridiculousness to be a parody of itself, as

Darwin described the "Gay hopes and amorous Sorrows of the mead":

> From giant oaks, that wave their branches dark,
> To the dwarf moss that clings upon their bark,
> What beaux and beauties crowd their gaudy groves,
> And woo and win their vegetable loves.
> (I. 6-10)

The Anti-Jacobin parody began with a prose 'Introduction' mocking Darwin for his sympathies with Rousseau and accusing him of reversing Pope's maxim until it read: "Whatever is - is WRONG" (16 April 1798, p.164). The parodists declared that their aim was to "enlist the IMAGINATION under the banners of GEOMETRY" (p.165), and by applying Darwin's style to the subject of plane geometry they exaggerated the poet's original proposition to its logical but absurd conclusion. So, instead of plants, the parody describes the amours of geometrical figures, and its gods and goddesses are "Hydrostatics" and "Conchoids". The Muse of didactic poetry tells "How Loves and Graces in an Angle dwell;/ How slow progressive Points protract the Line" (16 April 1798, pp.170-171), and the figures of geometry are described as if they had human attributes. The climax of the parody relates how "Mathesis" successfully woos "Isosceles":

> - Yet strives the Fair, till in the Giant's breast
> She sees the mutual passion flame confess'd:
> Where'er he moves she sees his tall limbs trace
> Internal Angles equal at the Base;
> Again she doubts him, but produced at will
> She sees th' external Angles equal still.
> (7 May 1798, p.275)

'The Loves of the Triangles' is a clever, schoolboyish form of wit, and like 'The Progress of Man' is as much a parody of the long didactic poem as it is a satire against Darwin's politics. (It appeared in four parts, from 16 April 1798 to 7 May 1798.)

The Anti-Jacobin stopped publication on 9 July 1798 after the thirty-sixth number. This was partly due to the political commitments of Ellis, Frere, and Canning in particular, who was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the time. According to Frere, Canning was satisfied

that the magazine had "given a wrench to public opinion" and was content to retire while the paper was still a success.[73] Moreover, the situation with regard to France had changed in the course of 1798, and the threat of domestic revolution was receding. Wordsworth's disenchantment with the Revolution was shared by many of his contemporaries, while Southey began at this time the process of recanting his youthful enthusiasms which eventually led him to 'A Vision of Judgement' (1821). Canning became immersed in his political career; Frere returned to Classical translation, and later wrote the innovatory burlesque The Battle of the Monks and Giants (1817-1818); Ellis began contributing to the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews; while Gifford became editor of the Quarterly Review. The Anti-Jacobin was bound and re-printed several times in the nineteenth century, and the parodies seem to have retained their popularity, and certainly their fame, throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries.[74] They represent the immediate parodic legacy of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, and the magazine perhaps did more to popularize the concept of parody than any other single eighteenth century text, and created a receptive audience for a later generation of parodists.

The eighteenth century as a whole, however, bequeathed a variety of parodic activities to the nineteenth. There were the good-natured parodies of John Philips and Hawkins Brown which exploited a simple burlesque division between form and content in order to entertain by creating amusing incongruities, or perhaps to make poems 'in their own right'. Or again, satirists and polemicists borrowed styles to make their meanings memorable; and explicit literary criticisms of writers and texts were also made using this method. More complexly, Swift and Fielding offered no direct statement to the reader to guide him in his interpretation of a parody, but instead required that a criticism should

be inferred from the nature of the discrepancies between the parodic text and the implied model. For Fielding parody was also a means of clarifying his ideas on how the realist novel should be written; while Tristram Shandy was a unique jeu d'esprit that played with the whole idea of mimetic representation in narratives (although its influence on nineteenth century parodists was probably slight). It might further be suggested that the general tendency of many eighteenth century parodies - Tristram Shandy apart - was to support conservative, moderate, and commonsensical attitudes in literature and society, and that the nineteenth century's endorsement of these attitudes in its own use of parody was inherited and developed from aspects of the eighteenth century's use of the mode. It might be argued, for instance, that in his choice of low or light-hearted matter (in the case of John Philips, or any parody based on burlesque division) the parodist is expressing his preference for themes that avoid the excessive and singular; while the extravagances of sentimentality and notable eccentricities of style were the subjects of Carey's, Swift's, Fielding's, Colman's and The Anti-Jacobin's parodies.

This, then was the varied background from which parody developed in the nineteenth century. The final part of this study constitutes an examination of various nineteenth century parodic texts, and attempts to evaluate their role in relation to the contemporary reception of literary movements (principally Romantic) and writers of the period.

PART III : NINETEENTH CENTURY PARODIC TEXTS

Chapter 1. Parody of the Romantic Novel

The Anti-Jacobin prepared the ground for a popular parodic movement in the nineteenth century; and during the first years of the new century when fear of revolution and the war with France still dominated English life, the political parodies of the last quarter of the eighteenth century continued to influence 'public' parody, and both opposition to, as well as support of, the Regency was carried on throughout the period by means of a simple formal appropriation of well-known styles - as in Hook's comment on the imprisonment of the Hunt brothers in 1813 (after Cowper):

> I am tenant of nine feet by four
> My title no lawyer denies,
> From the ceiling quite down to the floor,
> I am lord of the spiders and flies.[1]

But more important as far as the development of literary parody during the nineteenth century is concerned was the challenge made by the Romantic poets and novelists to accepted uses of language and theories of literature; and it was on the legacy of literary parody bequeathed by the previous century that the nineteenth century drew in an attempt to assess and assimilate a radical and influential movement in the arts.

The anti-romantic (in the broadest sense of the term) tendency of parody in previous centuries has already been noted in Parts I and II of this study, and Fuzelier's description of parody as supporting the claims of "nature, common sense, and truth"[2] might be seen as a kind of parodic manifesto which increasingly influenced the practice of parody in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where parodies typically mocked eccentricity, mannered styles, all forms of intense emotion, and 'unrealistic' narratives; and when a full-scale Romantic movement became popular at the end of the eighteenth century it was perhaps inevitable that it should be a target for parodies which, broadly speaking, championed realistic rather than romantic modes and favoured "common sense" above individual intuition. Obviously there is a danger in generalizing about the nature of realist versus romantic writing in general and

the Romantic poets and novelists in particular - in the light of their disparate aims and achievements; but it would not be misleading, at this point, to suggest that while the conservative approach of The Anti-Jacobin was generally preserved with respect to parody of the early Romantic poets whose innovations were regarded with suspicion, it was Fielding's response to the kinds of entrancing fiction represented by Pamela (with his twin demands for more realistic narratives and the spread of more discriminating reading-habits among a gullible audience) that dominated parody of the Romantic novel: which, compared to the poetry of the period, was an area of uncertain achievement encompassing much that was badly written and stalely imitative but which nevertheless accrued a large public who resembled Chaucer's pilgrims in their unsophisticated and enthusiastic acceptance of an enormous quantity of second-rate literary titillations. Parodists of the Romantic novel, then, unlike their counterparts in poetry, were concerned to expose the trashiness of some of the offerings of the circulating libraries, as well as to oppose Romantic modes of perception and expression; and they tended to do this by asserting the value of realist narratives as being less delusive and worthier accounts of the world than those offered by Romantic novelists, who were seen as purveyors of a form of destructively idealistic fiction-mongering that pandered to the shallowest elements in public taste.

Before considering parodies of the Romantic novel, however, this rather imprecise term should perhaps be clarified. As used in the context of this study it is intended to designate those novels written in the last decades of the eighteenth and first years of the nineteenth centuries which "manifest some of the thematic and stylistic characteristics evident in the new poetry and drama of the time".[3] This includes the novel of sentiment as developed from the French romances of writers like Mme de Scudéry, for example, and from Pamela - popularized by Mary Robinson, Charlotte Smith, Elizabeth Hervey, and their followers; and the Gothic novel - ranging from the relatively mild suggestiveness of Mrs. Radcliffe's

ghostly castles, to the full-blooded Terrorist novels of "Monk" Lewis and other imitators of the German schauer-Romantik.[4] In Clara Reeve's famous definition "the Novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it was written. The Romance, in lofty and elevated language, describes what has never happened nor is likely to",[5] and this distinction between "Novel" and "Romance" was commonly made throughout the early part of the eighteenth century, with writers like Smollett, for example, defending the veracity of the novel against the delusiveness of the romance, which in his opinion had "*[*lost*]* sight of probability ... *[*and*]* applied to the wonder rather than the judgement of readers".[6] Insofar as one can refer to 'the Romantic novel' as the product of a particular period, it should perhaps be understood in terms of a development of this "Novel" ("real life and manners"; "probability ...*[*and*]* judgement") versus "Romance" ("lofty and elevated"; appealing to "wonder"; not-"likely") argument, where the Romantic novelist's point of view is exemplified by Horace Walpole's protest about the 'plainness' of Sir Charles Grandison and its depiction of society: "I was so tired of sets of people getting together, and saying, 'Pray, Miss, with whom are you in love? and of mightily good men that convert your Mr. M____s in the twinkling of a sermon.' "[7]

The most articulate Romantic novelists may be seen as a group of writers who were defined by the challenge they presented to the concept of the novel as a genre that purported to offer a transcript of reality - that is to say, a veracious account of individuals located and uniquely defined in a complex mesh of temporal, social, and economic relationships. Defenders of the "Novel" (as opposed to the "Romance") emphasised its authenticity as an accurate method of describing people in a given place and time, whereas Romantic novelists inclined to stress instead the subjective, non-social nature of Fuzelier's "truth" and the a-temporality of individual vision (Wordsworthian "spots of time"). On the one hand, proponents of the "Novel" stressed its significance as "a full and

authentic report of human experience"[8] understood in terms of the individual's relationship to the community. But on the other, "human experience" as understood by Romantic novelists was not seen as being determined primarily by a man's immediate social context, nor adequately described as if it were; and the individual in Romantic novels tended to mediate his own reality, with the result that events in this sort of fiction are often subjective, highly-coloured, and extraordinary (in keeping with the subject's problematic relation to, and perception of, a-temporal reality).[9]

Such a distinction is necessarily rather crude, but it does indicate some of the grounds on which parody of the Romantic novel was based at this time. The implication, for example, that individuals are not necessarily defined by the society they inhabit might be seen as representing a challenge both to common sense notions of objective reality as well as to the social structures which are the embodiments of that 'real', and which the Romantic individual typically shuns. When Smollett declared that the romance outraged "probability", the idea of the 'probable' involved social, moral, and philosophical, as well as aesthetic issues; and the threat of Romantic novels could be interpreted as correspondingly more extreme in a period of political disturbance such as the one which characterized the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The novels of Godwin,Wollstonecraft, and Mary Hays, for example , were parodied (in the manner of The Anti-Jacobin) for the seditiousness as well as the implausibility of their narratives, which featured the extraordinary deeds and personalities of heroes and heroines who were at odds with society. Edward du Bois's St. Godwin (1800) exaggerated into farcical proportions the prodigious endowments and brooding misanthropy of the pre-Byronic hero as represented by Belthlem Gabor in St. Leon (1799); while a combination of the espousal of the emancipation of women and an injudicious reading of Romantic novels led the heroine of Sarah Green's Romance Readers and Romance Writers (1810) to unwanted pregnancy and attempted suicide.[10] In these parodies, Romantic individualism is conceived of as

a socially disruptive force, inimical to the health of the social and literary community.

In a less political vein, critics of the Romantic novel also stressed the dangers of confusing this kind of narrative with "real life", for once the sphere of action in a novel is removed from the realms of the 'probable' then a special appeal to the imagination is involved, and the reader is invited to participate in stories about "what has never happened nor is likely to". But one of the problems facing Romantic novelists was that they were writing in a mode that was increasingly habituating its readers to accurate descriptions of the sorts of events and characters that they could recognize, as it were, photographically; and in this sense, the "Novel" could be taken as believable/credible narrative - a form of mimesis that was as near to the truth as made no difference. But the reading-strategy required for a Romantic novel was rather different: it is not 'probable' narrative; events like that do not happen in "real life". But since it was written in a mode that, with growing frequency, stressed its veracity as a transcript of reality, opponents of the Romantic novel could claim that it was easy to confuse the two styles of writing and to extend the same kind of belief to the "Romance" as to the "Novel" - and, dangerously for realist claims for the novel, to value it above 'probable' narrative. Fielding had derided credulous readings in Shamela, as had Mrs. Lennox in The Female Quixote; and when forms of the sentimental and Gothic novels began to enjoy an extraordinary popularity towards the end of the eighteenth century,[11] and the "Romance" threatened to supplant the "Novel" in popular favour, parody as a means of exposing artifice and endorsing the claims of "common sense" and literary realism came into its own as a method of criticizing that kind of writing which was felt to be overblown, fanciful, too-subjective, and socially disruptive.

Like Henry Fielding fifty years previously, Jane Austen began her novel-writing career by parodying the type of novel she would least have wanted to write herself; and, like Fielding, she also took as her model

a species of sentimental romance. Her juvenile Love and Freindship [sic][12] draws attention to the implausibility of the heroine romance by exaggerating its most characteristic features until they become laughable and absurd; and the parody is, again, the work of a nascent realist, mocking the Romantic novel for offering itself up as believable narrative and ridiculing those readers who confuse what is obviously a fiction with real life. Like Austen's mature work, the thrust of Love and Freindship is towards establishing the "Novel" as an account of plausible events and ordinary people: a credible and life-like form of mimesis that is to be preferred to the "Romance". A series of parodic letters from "Laura" to "Marianne" ludicrously compresses the most obvious attributes of novels like Elizabeth Hervey's Melissa and Marcia (1788) or Charlotte Smith's Ethelinde (1789); and the inferences to be drawn from Austen's exaggeration and distortion are sufficiently obvious. When Laura announces her romantic pedigree of beauty, sensibility, and a score of remarkable accomplishments, the implausibility of her claims and her selfish absorbtion in her own personality are immediately made apparent in Austen's version of Heroinism:

> My Father was a native of Ireland & and an inhabitant of Wales; My Mother was the natural Daughter of a Scotch peer by an italian Opera-girl - I was born in Spain and received my Education at a Convent in France ... But lovely as I was the Graces of my Person were the least of my Perfections. Of every accomplishment accustomary to my sex, I was Mistress ... In my Mind, every Virtue that could adorn it was centred; it was the Rendezvous of every good Quality & of every noble sentiment. (pp. 77-8)

Laura lives with her parents "Claudia and Polydore" in "one of the most romantic parts of the Vale of Uske" (p. 77). When a young man knocks on Laura's door - "The noble Youth informed us that his name was Lindsay - for particular reasons however I shall conceal it under that of Talbot", (p. 80) - she falls in love with him immediately. They marry, and visit Lindsay's sister Augusta, who, as her name suggests possesses "none of that interesting Sensibility or aimiable Simpathy in her Manners and Address", and thinks the marriage imprudent. Edward, accordingly, renounces his family and refuses his father's offer of financial support -

(Edward to Augusta):

> "Support! What Support will Laura want which she can receive from him?"
> "Only those very insignificant ones of Victuals and Drink (answered she.)
> "Victuals and Drink! (replied by Husband in a most nobly contemptuous Manner) and dost thou then imagine that there is no other support for an exalted Mind ... than the mean and indelicate employment of Eating and Drinking?"
> "None that I know of, so efficacious." (returned Augusta).
> "And did you never feel the pleasing Pangs of Love, Augusta? (replied my Edward). Does it appear impossible to your vile and corrupted Palate, to exist on Love? Can you not conceive the luxery of living in every Distress that Poverty can inflict with the object of your tenderest Affection?" (pp. 83-4)

The parody continues over fifteen letters to tell the story of Laura and Edward, and involves a series of journeys during the course of which Laura discovers a long-lost grandfather and two brothers ("Gustavus" and "Philander" - who turn out to be thieves); stays with a relative who evicts her when he discovers her stealing money and encouraging his daughter to run away with a fortune-hunter (Laura thinks the relative the wicked tyrant beloved of popular novelists); and finds, at first sight, a soul-friend in Sophia: "She was all sensibility and Feeling. We flew into each other's arms and after having exchanged vows of mutual Freindship for the rest of our Lives, instantly unfolded to each other the most inward Secrets of our Hearts" (p. 85). The parody ends with a coach crash in which Laura's and Sophia's husbands - having been released from the Fleet for debt - are killed: "I [did] rave thus madly and should not then have left off, as I was not in the least fatigued, had not Sophia who was just recovered from her swoon, intreated me to consider that Night was now approaching and that the Damps began to fall" (p. 100). Sophia catches her death from swooning on damp ground, however, and the heroine retires to Scotland: "Where I can ... indulge in a melancholy solitude, my unceasing Lamentations for the Death of my Father, my Mother, my Husband & my Freind" (p. 109).

Love and Freindship draws attention to its parodic status by its reference throughout to all those Chaucerian prosaic elements that are

inimical to sustaining the fabric of the "Romance" - the "Victuals and Drink" on which the realist Augusta insists as being necessary for survival in the world as it is commonly to be found outside the pages of Romantic novels. The actions of Laura and her friends must be judged in the light of our normative concept of reality, where "Poverty" and "Distress" are not interesting "Luxeries" and every stranger we meet will not turn out to be a wealthy relative; and in this context, such narratives are necessarily discredited as false-to-experience because romantic fictions are extremely vulnerable to the incursions of the mundane. Of course Austen is being deliberately unfair to the Romantic novel by matching it against pragmatic and 'low' realities in the parody, but in this juvenile work she is pressing the case for realism and - by inference - for more accurate and intelligent descriptions of what it might be like to be bereaved or to live in poverty than those offered by Laura or Edward. Laura and her circle are deluded by a fiction which they try to act out in their lives; and although the misapprehensions under which they labour are sometimes amusing, Austen does not fail to point out the serious implications involved in believing in the wrong kinds of fiction as accurate descriptions of the world (thinking that poverty might be "pleasing", for example). The irony of the parody's title is that there is neither love nor friendship to be found among the professors of exquisite sensibilities, since the heroine is actually callous and insensitive in her behaviour towards others because she is always acting a role - the mourning widow, the bosom-friend, the new-found relative. Her attempts to live out her life on the lines of a popular novel effectively prevent her from knowing how to act with regard to other people's feelings, for she has no conception of their reality but only of her own sense of self - culled from the pages of heroine romances which violate 'probability' and, Austen implies, tell us little about the world. (It is significant that Laura's chosen means of expression is the epistle - a vehicle designed to relieve the individual spirit: to be contrasted to the measured exchanges of social

discourse.)

The dangers (social, moral, and intellectual) of confusing romance with reality was the theme of most of the burlesques and parodies of the Romantic novel of the last years of the eighteenth and opening decade of the nineteenth centuries, and dreadful tales date from this period concerning young girls who had modelled themselves on sentimental or Gothic novels only to fall from virtue or into discontent because life was dull compared to books.[13] Austen returned to the themeof the relationship between different types of fiction and reality, with particular reference to the moral failure inherent in popular representations of Heroines, in Northanger Abbey (written in 1798) where a parodic version of the Radcliffeian heroine is actually seen in action in the complex environment that was only implied in Love and Freindship. Set in the fully-articulated 'probable' world, the nature of the Romantic heroine is thrown into sharp relief by the sets of contrasts that are established between Isabella Thorpe (a sensibility heroine and descendant of Laura) and the Catherine Morland of whom it is written that "no one who had ever seen *[her]* in her infancy, would have supposed her born to be an heroine";[14] between Northanger Abbey and Bath society; and between Catherine as Emily St. Aubert (when she allows her belief in an improbable fiction to distort and invade her perception of the world) and Catherine in her prosaically unassuming, 'sensible' role.

In Northanger Abbey the world of the Gothic-sensibility romance (popularized by Ann Radcliffe and her cheap imitators at the Minerva Press)[15] and the sociable world of the realist novel confront each other, and the fiction of inexpressible emotions and remarkable adventures is defeated by the steady pressure of a form which assumes that most emotions can be described and that people can communicate with each other fairly adequately through the medium of normal discourse: although the exemplary impulse behind Northanger Abbey perhaps rather spoils its aesthetic coherence as a novel in its own right. Romance is introduced into a fabric in which

the author and characters, for the most part, mean what they say to be descriptive of the world around them, and where language is a medium of communication which people try to use accurately and not as a means of Laura-like self dramatization. Isabella's discourse, by contrast, represents the destructive influence of Romantic fictions on this concept of the world and the "Novel", for Isabella does not mean what she says and her words bear no relation to the realities of the novel as Austen presents them. Isabella, like Laura, behaves like a heroine in a Radcliffeian romance with her sudden soul-friendships and exquisite sensibilities, but in the wider perspective of Northanger Abbey her professions cannot be equated with her performance, and the reader sees that she is unperceptive about herself and insensitive to the welfare of others, and that this is a moral failure contingent on her acting as a Heroine.

Isabella's confounding of fiction and reality, however, is not an innocent one, since she manipulates the image of the sensibility heroine to her own ends. Catherine, on the other hand, represents a type of naive reader who must learn to develop her own native good sense as far as her judgement of novels and their relation to her life is concerned, so that she can distinguish between fictions that are meant as entertaining diversions and are not to be confused with representations of real life; and facts - in the form of ideas about the world, and descriptions of it - that explain more accurately people's feelings about themselves and each other than "romance writers" do. When Catherine in her 'sensible' persona sees Henry dancing with another woman, for example, two courses are open to her: she can faint and "consider him lost to her for ever, by being married already"; or, observing and recording accurately, she can be "guided ... by what was simple and probable" (p. 53) and notice that the dancers resemble each other and deduce that they are brother and sister. The latter course fits in with the true state of affairs in the novel as we know them to be; while the former is a conjecture that would only be

appropriate in the context of a Romantic novel and not in terms of the 'probable' narrative that Austen is offering her readers.

On another occasion Austen wrote that what she demanded of a novel was "Nature and Probability",[16] and it is by judging the "Romance" by this standard in parody that its credibility is destroyed. We as readers cannot believe in the Gothic sections of Northanger Abbey (a promisingly titled book for the gullible) because they are outweighed by the intrusive presence of the 'natural' and 'probable' by which Austen lets us know what is really going on; while Catherine's Gothic conjecture (when she casts General Tilney as Montoni and herself as Emily St. Aubert) is similarly thwarted by the discovery of a laundry-list in place of a mysterious parchment and the realization that her description and interpretation of her experience is childishly and injuriously wide of the mark. The events at Northanger Abbey do not lend themselves to this sort of explanation; and Catherine is forced to learn that the vicissitudes of a heroine do not involve the spectacular cruelties and adventures of Otranto, but that the wearing difficulties of daily existence must instead by overcome in the course of a "common life" (p. 19) - which involves the painful realization that mean natures are quite as unpleasant as (and more intractable) than anything dreamed-up by the Gothic novelists.

Austen's parodic strategy is to confront sensibility with sense (Laura and Augusta, and Isabella and Catherine are early sketches of Marianne and Elinor Dashwood) so that the former is discredited and Austen's version of "Nature and Probability" is established as the more veracious and intelligent account of Catherine's situation. Again, Austen is unfairly weighting the dice in favour of realism since it is she who guides the reader's sense of what is 'actually' happening; but if she suggests that the boundaries between fiction and reality must be observed in the case of disruptive, extravagant fictions that might encourage silly and anti-social behaviour, she does not push the case for literary realism so far as to obscure the sense that ultimately all fiction is

made-up, including her own, and that even realist techniques only offer an approximation between words and things. If Catherine is reminded throughout the book that she is not a heroine in a popular romance, Austen also performs a similar service for her readers; for although Catherine does enjoy a conventionally happy ending, Austen ironically draws attention to the fictive nature of her own novel:

> The anxiety, which in the state of their attachment must be the portion of Henry and Catherine, and of all who loved either, as to its final event, can hardly extend, I fear, to the bosom of my readers, who will see in the tell-tale compression of the pages before them, that we are all hastening together to perfect felicity. (p. 250)

Austen's technique of appropriating the language and themes of the Romantic novel and refunctioning them in the light of "moderation and composure ... *[and]* the common feelings of the common life" (p. 19) was taken up by other parodists of the period, who perhaps tended to stress the prosaic antidotes to the "Romance" of "Victuals and Drink" rather more aggressively than Austen had done, with the result that realism was rather narrowly and incorrectly conceived as being narrative that deals with low subjects, and the Romantic novel was slighted because it was thought of as fanciful and fastidious in its avoidance of common (vulgar) life. Austen's disruption of romantic fictions did not involve the introduction of broadly vulgar themes taboo to romance: the closest she comes to this in Northanger Abbey is in the discovery of the laundry-list and Mrs. Morland's parting advice to her daughter - which does not take the Radcliffeian form of expressing "a thousand alarming presentiments of evil ... *[and]* cautions against the violence of noblemen ... and baronets", but consists of advising Catherine to "wrap yourself up very warm about the throat ... and try to keep some account of the money you spend" (pp. 18-19). But disabling the illusion of romantic narratives by introducing the prosaic (money, food and drink, woolly scarves) was a strategy generally pursued, with varying degrees of tact, by parodists throughout the period.

The editors of The Anti-Jacobin used parody in this reductive way,

employing broad vulgarisms and introducing the grossly mundane into the fabric of the German Gothic romance in their popular parodic play 'The Rovers; or, The Double Arrangement'.[17] Jane Austen had already glanced at the Gothic hero in Lesley Castle, where young Lesley was said to be "but five and twenty, and has already given himself up to melancholy and Despair";[18] but the English Tory wits were more emphatic about the political and social implications of disaffected Wertherism, and interpreted Godwin's and Lewis's heroes, and their German prototypes, as a species of Jacobite revolutionaries who by virtue of their supposedly extraordinary and super-human depths of passion and intellect were set apart from society and threatened its stability by their assertive individualism. Canning, Ellis, and Frere were alert to the political rather than the aesthetic (or moral-aesthetic) overtones of the Romantic hero; for while the more genteel forms of Gothic novel might encourage girls to be silly if they were credulous readers, in its Germanic form Gothicism could be seen as a threat to the security of the nation in time of war - with its apparent sanction of murder, robbery, assassination, diabolism, and various forms of free-love. Accordingly, the parody in The Anti-Jacobin lacks the comparative subtlety of Austen's approach, since the authors were out to ridicule Gothic novels and plays with whatever material came to hand, so that their intentions could not be mistaken - although, again, it is interesting that they chose parody as their weapon and evidently trusted its efficacy as compared with straightforward denunciation (as represented, for example, by T.J. Matthias's The Pursuits of Literature).[19]

'The Rovers' glances at Schiller's The Robbers, Koetzebue's Count Benyowsky, and Goethe's Stella among German works; English stage adaptations of Gothic novels;[20] Godwin's Caleb Williams (1794); and Lewis's The Monk (1796) and The Castle Spectre (1797). It involves two sets of lovers and the children from their various intrigues; a soul-friendship between "Matilda" and "Cecilia"; a hero imprisoned in a dungeon by a tyrannous prince; and a revolution. The plot is complex, and the stage

directions (after Koetzebue) voluminous. As in Love and Freindship and Northanger Abbey, 'probability' is the touchstone by which the protagonists' actions and statements are to be judged, and since many of them are absurd and undertaken in defiance of common laws of morality, the parody casts doubt on the authenticity and desirability of the original fictions. So, while "Rogero" is imprisoned in a Gothic dungeon (that might normally symbolize the constraining powers of an unsympathetic society, or provide a correlative for the hero's introspection and gloom), in the parody the outside world continually impinges on his solitude in a form that makes his predicament and musings seem absurd - he is, for example, still wearing an untarnished suit of armour after eleven years; he has a guitar with him which is still in tune; he eats nothing but prefers to rhapsodize over Matilda, and so on. The conventions of the Gothic novel are overturned by such easy appeals to the reader's sense of likelihood, because of course Rogero couldn't really survive in such circumstances; and to reinforce the mockery, he is given a comic song to sing:

When e'er with haggard eyes I view
This Dungeon that I'm rotting in,
I think of those companions true
Who studied with me at the U-
- NIVERSITY of Gŏttingen
- NIVERSITY of Gŏttingen.[21]

The convention of soul-friendship is treated in a similar way in the parody when Matilda and Cecilia, meeting for the first time, exchange a remark about the weather which leads both of them to recall "those blissful moments when the rays of desire first vibrated through my soul". and so - in the space of fifteen lines - to "swear an eternal friendship" and "agree to live together" (p. 424). But as the conversation continues, it is interrupted by Matilda's enquiries about dinner, and detailed descriptions of what the two eat (parodying Goethe's bread-and-butter cutting Charlotte) follow. This is precisely the kind of reference that is inimical to sustaining romantic fictions, and the parody collapses

into farce under the pressure of protracted references to Austen's "Victuals and Drink". The method is fairly crude, and the concept of realistic fiction as necessarily involving reference to the prosaic and consequent dismissal of any narratives that involve things that couldn't really happen like that and in that particular order (the probability of time-sequence, as well as of events and characters) is naive in a way in which Austen's version of realistic narrative is not. But, then, The Anti-Jacobin's parody was not primarily conceived as furthering the claims of the "Novel" over those of the "Romance", but as dealing a disabling blow to Romantic literature in its politically and socially subversive aspects.

The technique of grossly vulgarizing Romantic subject-matter was also pursued, perhaps surprisingly, by M.G. Lewis, better known for The Monk and other full-blooded Gothic stories, plays, and ballads. But among Lewis's early writings is a parody of the Romantic novel, and he continued throughout his career to parody the genre in which he was most successful - proclaiming himself an artificer even while he capitalized on his success as a best-seller of extravagant fantasies. Unlike the collaborators of The Anti-Jacobin, he was not inspired by any political motives in writing these parodies; not were they a stage in his development as a realist, as they had been for Fielding and Austen. They represent, rather, a jeu d'esprit: a joke at his own and his readers' expense, and perhaps a little light relief from the business of being seriously Gothic. As an undergraduate at Oxford he had parodied the more sentimental side of the Romantic novel and those heroines who imagine that each man they meet is in love with them - The Effusions of Sensibility (1791); while his later verse parodies in Tales of Terror and Wonder (1801) exploited the mundane "Victuals and Drink" style of undermining the popular Gothic ballad of the period by setting serious styles to low themes, making a burlesque division between 'form' and 'content'.[22]

Tales of Terror and Wonder contained a number of serious ballads, with titles like 'The Bleeding Nun', 'The Black Canon of Elmham', and

'The Sword of Angantyr'. But alongside such pieces as his translation of 'The Erl-King' and a cycle of ballads including 'The Water-King' and 'The Cloud-King', Lewis printed parodies that related comic anecdotes in the same metre as the serious poems, so that the horseman riding through the forest in 'The Erl-King', for example, reappears in 'The Cinder-King' as "Betty", a kitchen-maid. Similarly, the ballad 'Alonzo the Brave and Fair Imogene' from The Monk is recast as 'Giles Jollup the Grave and Brown Sally Green'; and instead of a spectral lover pledging a toast before carrying his bride off to the grave, the hero and heroine have become an apothecary and a sempstress who enjoy a drunken dance together. If these parodies represent an appeal for more realistic fictions and a more critical attitude towards the Gothic ballad, then it has been greatly simplified, and the reference to low subjects must be seen as a form of shorthand for that realist concern articulated at greater length and with more subtlety by Austen. However, it seems likely that the comic pieces in Tales of Terror and Wonder express, rather, Lewis's playful delight in inverting a serious form; a humorous standing-back from his own work; and perhaps a mild hoax at the expense of book-buyers who might expect all the tales to be equally terrifying or wonderful .

As already suggested, however, the most inventive and thoughtful parodies of the period explored the relationship between Romantic fiction and "real life", and the problem of determining in what sense such fictions represent reality. Austen placed both Laura and Catherine in situations where they would be liable to confuse art and reality - in Catherine's case, in order that her expectations of the world as derived from Romantic novels might be falsified; and this technique of confronting a deluded hero or heroine with an inescapable reality (manufactured by the parodist) that cannot be explained in terms of the "Romance" proved one of the simplest and most effective means of mocking Romantic novels at this time. Mrs. Lennox provided the basic framework for such parodies in The Female Quixote (1752), and a quantity of this kind of work was written in the last decade

of the eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth centuries, especially. Jane West, for example, wrote two partly parodic novels in which girls who think themselves heroines try to put their Romantic practices to work in the realist's world, only to discover that the pressure of events is too great and they must abandon their fantasies if they are to survive and learn to negotiate the world - The Advantages of Education (1793) and A Gossip's Story (1797). The heroine of the anonymous Susanna; or, Traits of a Modern Miss (1795) similarly indulges in a series of fictions about herself and her surroundings (culled from circulating library novels), none of which are appropriate to her actual situation;[23] and Maria Edgeworth repeated this Female Quixote style of parody in one of her Moral Tales (1801) - 'Angelina; or, L'amie inconnue'.[24] Angelina has modelled herself on heroines like Mary Hays's Emma Courtney and Mary Robinson's Angelina, and her initiation into the real world of social and linguistic convention and domestic responsibility follows the typical pattern of confrontation between Romantic and commonsensical views of reality, and the defeat of Angelina's romantic expectations. So the idyllic country cottage is lonely, cold, and damp; and Araminta (l'amie inconnue of the title) turns out to be the whisky drinking, vulgar Mrs Hodges. The good sense (and high social position) of Lady Frances Somerset rescues the heroine from "the nonsense of sentimentality",[25] and the "moral" is that the reformed Angelina has "acquired that which is more useful to the possessor than genius - good sense" (p. 282). This tendency to value "good sense" above "genius" is extremely marked in most parodies of the Romantic novel; and if one had to name a single trait common to parodies in the nineteenth century as a whole, this would perhaps be it: the repeated stress on common sense and moderation at the expense of personal intuition and extremities of emotion and style.

Edgeworth made the point explicit in 'Angelina'; but with a lighter touch and more good-humour, William Beckford (like "Monk" Lewis) turned from writing Gothic tales to parody in Modern Novel Writing; or, The Elegant

Enthusiast (1796) and Azemia (1797). Both works parody the novel of sentiment, with especial - though not unkind - reference to the work of Beckford's sister-in-law, Elizabeth Hervey. Modern Novel Writing describes the "Interesting Emotions of Arabella Bloomville", and the parodies ("interspersed with poetry")[26] simply compress and exaggerate the most obvious features of the sensibility novel until they become laughable. The heroines act out their fantasies, but there is no rude awakening for them at the end of the book (as there was in Edgeworth's "moral tale") and Beckford allows them to continue penning excruciating verses and to faint away on every conceivable occasion without confronting them with a world of decorous behaviour and domestic accomplishments. It is left to the reader to bring his own sense of 'probability' into play and to perceive that Arabella and Azemia would be silly and tedious to know in reality if they persisted in their enthusiastic adherence to the roles of Hervey-like or Radcliffeian heroines.[27]

Peacock, on the other hand, adopted a more orthodox parodic approach of engineering a clash between people in the grip of Romantic delusions and a society in which traditions and conventions must be observed and which makes certain prosaic, practical demands on its inhabitants. The young Shelley's tendency to live out his life along the lines of a Gothic novel made him particularly vulnerable to charges of confusing art and reality; and in Nightmare Abbey (1818)[28] Peacock imagined Shelley, Coleridge and Byron gathered together at a convivial houseparty where they are forced to eat meals and make conversation, and generally try to negotiate ordinary social situations - for it is the brooding, "anti-social" aspects of Romanticism that figure prominently in Peacock's analysis of what happens when German Gothicism meets Byronic "blue devils" (p. 66; p.1). Most of the characters in Nightmare Abbey labour under delusions about the real world (that is, the situation in the novel as the reader knows it to be), and they can only be disabused of them by being forced to be "social" - with embarrassing consequences if they fail: as when Mr. Toobad falls

into the moat and is netted by Mr. Asterias as a species of mermaid (p. 121).

The confrontation between the young Romantics and the "common daylight of common sense" (p. 10) is invigorating and sometimes farcical, for although Peacock is making a serious point about "Scythrop"/Shelley and "Flosky"/ Coleridge who obscure what they mean by using elaborate vocabularies and construct their views of the world according to eccentric and impractical systems, the way in which their plans go wrong and they are unable to communicate with each other is conceived in terms of comedy rather than the earnest morality of Edgeworth, for example. For all his reputation as a thinker, Flosky is unable to offer a single word of practical advice to anybody ("if any person living could make report of having obtained any information on any subject from Fernandino Flosky, my transcendental reputation would be ruined for ever", p. 79); and like all the characters who dream dreams and see ghosts in Nightmare Abbey he is confounded in the end by a reality he cannot explain - and dives out of the nearest door when a 'ghost' appears (p. 121). Similarly, Scythrop, with all his marvellous facility for invention, must ultimately bow to the inescapable fact that Stella is hidden in his specially constructed labyrinth; and all his comically misleading talk about the structure of the ear, with which he tries to drown his father's voice, cannot prevent her from hearing the truth about Marionetta. (The inferences to be drawn are that Scythrop has built an artificial labyrinth when reality is complicated enough already, and that his use of language is designed for speculation - talk about the structure of the ear - without regard to reality: that is, proper hearing.)

Scythrop's confusion of life and art springs from a naive misunderstanding of the language and status of fiction, and he is only rescued from delusion when he has to face the fact that his women have left him and that polygamy doesn't work very well in early nineteenth century England. Like a Gothic hero, and the young Shelley himself, he sits up all night with poison and a pistol, but is finally unable to enact the Romantic cliché.

"Real life" claims him, for he is forced to recognize that death cannot be incorporated into the stories he weaves about himself since he will no longer be there to fabricate them; and Peacock shows him prevaricating and tampering with clocks so that the hour of his death may be postponed. Romance is confronted with mundane reality in the ultimate form of death, and cannot survive the encounter. Since he wants to live, Scythrop is forced to conform to the prosaic demands of the world - and this is signified by his decision to listen to his father's commonsensical advice ("next time ... have but one string to your bow", p. 145) and his final comment to the butler, having lain aside the poison and demanded, Austen-like: " 'Bring some Madeira.' " (p. 146).

The acquisition of "good sense" that is learned by testing fictions against reality was the theme of one of the most successful parodies of the period - Eaton Stannard Barrett's The Heroine; or, Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader (1813), which was dedicated to George Canning.[29] The book tells the familiar story of a girl who tries to live like a Heroine, and the amusing and sometimes painful ordeals which she must undergo before she recognizes that Romantic novels are "entertaining" but when

> indulged in extreme, act upon the mind like inebriating stimulants; first elevate, and at last, enervate it. They make it admire ideal scenes of transport and distraction; and feel disgusted with the vulgarities of living misery. Besides, they incapacitate it from encountering the turmoils of active life; and teach it erroneous notions of the world, by relating adventures too improbable to happen, and depicting characters too perfect to exist.
>
> (III, pp 253-4)

In Barrett's terms, art which encourages disengagement from the "vulgarities" and "turmoils of active life" is undesirable, and better reading-habits must be instilled in the public by making them aware of the implausibility of the Romantic novel as an account of the world. Predictably, then, his heroine is brought face to face with a series of vulgar and disillusioning incidents that are designed to encourage "good sense" and sympathy for "living misery". However, The Heroine is unfairly characterized by the extract quoted above, which occurs after the "fair romance reader's" repentance while she is being instructed by her Tilney-like lover, Robert

Stuart; and what distinguishes The Heroine from many other parodies of the period is a Peacockian vein of comic inventiveness that runs through all her adventures. The contrast between romance and real-life is not heavily moralized because Cherry Wilkinson (a farmer's daughter who decides that she is really a Heroine called "Cherubina de Willoughby") is an engaging character whose adventures become progressively more extravagant and absurd, and who acts on her Romantic convictions with skill and a Quixote-like tenacity that is admirable, at times.

The book begins with Cherry rejecting her father because he is not a villain but a doting parent who is "descended from nothing better than a decent and respectable family" (I, p.31). She then renounces her own name because it reminds her of "plumpness and ruddy health" (I, p.32), when Heroines must be pale and languid. Misreading a land-deed of her father's, she becomes convinced that she is an heiress who has been fostered-out to Wilkinson, and so she decides to set out for London to confront her destiny. In London she falls in with a group of rogues and actors who play-up to her fantasies, believing her to be rich but mentally deranged; and "Montmorenci" (real-name Abraham Grundy) dons a suit of armour and makes ardent protestations of love to her. But his letters to Cherubina mingle passionate declarations with reminders that "Héloïse lent money to St. Preux" (II, p 21); and Cherry finally decides not to marry him after he has two teeth knocked-out in a fight: on a " 'principle founded upon the Law Heroic ... which rejects as Heroes, the maimed, the blind, the deformed, and the crippled' " (III, p. 110).

With the help of the sensible aristocrat Lady Gwyn, Robert allows Cherry to believe that she has come into her inheritance, and she is crowned lady of the manor in a parody of the famous bays scene from Mme de Staël's Corinne. Cherry is gradually disabused of her illusions, however, when she meets the woman masquerading as her mother: "Lady Hysterica de Bellamour", a fat inebriate who lives in a cellar swarming with toads;[30] and then later discovers that all her favourite heroes and

heroines, who appear before her in a pageant arranged by Montmorenci and his friends, have led unhappy lives after the conclusion of their respective stories. Eventually Cherry discovers the disadvantages of living in a cold, ruined tower, and the duplicity of her actor friends - and, by inference, that of "romance writers" too. Her credulity has been imposed on, and she comes to recognize that her picture of the world as populated by ideal beings enjoying wonderful Gothic adventures has led her into mostly laughable but some morally reprehensible errors. A course of useful books finally cures her of her desire to pursue the "profession ... of heroine" (III, p. 184) as embodied in the figure of the "Eternal Friend":

> "Blushing" [said the Eternal Friend] "is my chef d'oeuvre, I blush one tint and three-fourths, with joy; two (including forehead and bosom), with modesty; and four, with love, to the points of my fingers. My father once blushed me against the Dawn, for a tattered banner to a rusty poignard."
>
> "And who won?" said I.
>
> "It was play or pay," replied she, "so the morning happening to be misty, we had no sport; but I fainted, which was just as good, if not better."
>
> (III, p. 185)

By the time The Heroine was published both the Gothic and sensibility novels were in decline, so that Barrett's parody might fittingly stand as their epitaph.[31] It is difficult, however, to estimate the effect of the parodies discussed above on contemporary reading-habits and literary taste, or to do more than draw tentative conclusions about the relationship between parodies which direct laughter at models and the eventual obsolescence of those models. Though the Romantic novel became outmoded in this form, the Heroine remains an indestructible type, and a form of Gothicism resurfaced in the Newgate novel.[32] Yet since some of these parodies were comparatively popular, it seems likely that they helped speed the process by which literary movements become stale and unfashionable for one generation of readers (leaving the next generation to be re-educated by new parodies written in response to new modes); while in the case of Austen, it is evident that she used parody positively, as a means of defining her own theories of the novel. What might perhaps be said about parody of the Romantic novel as a whole is that by mocking the sillier offerings of

the circulating libraries (The Tears of Sensibility, The Effusions of Love, The Cottage of Mystery)[33] it attempted to initiate readers into more sophisticated reading-habits; and that it helped to foster a climate of opinion that was hospitable to literary realism by making "Nature and Probability" the criteria by which novels should be judged, and by which the "Romance" obviously, ludicrously, and - it might be argued - unfairly fails.

Parody of the Romantic novel, broadly speaking, encouraged the acceptance of an idea of the "Novel" as opposed to the "Romance" by ridiculing the reader's demands for stirring adventure and large emotional gestures, and proposing instead alternative functions for the novel which recognized the fictive status of all novelistic representation and the symbolic nature of language, but asserted the possibility of creating viable and interesting fictions out of the topic of "human nature... in the midland counties of England" (Austen, Northanger Abbey, p. 200). As a complement to these ideas, however, it can be seen that parodists often walked a thin line between demanding 'realism' and demanding 'realistic' narratives based on a pragmatically conceived notion of reality and the philosophy of "Victuals and Drink" understood in its simplest terms. The notion of "common sense" is liable to degenerate into philistinism and a hostility towards all art that is not straightforward mimesis or a representation of life as experienced by most people which offers an immediately verifiable, one-to-one account of reality; and Romantic literature may be rejected in favour of 'realistic' narratives with as little innovation and artifice (artiness) about them as possible, on the grounds that it interferes with this simple, expected relationship between image and object. In parodies of the Romantic novel, the tendency to prefer "good sense" to "genius" represents a generally laudable and intelligent attempt to combat the type of overwrought outpouring whose every hero was a genius and where rational behaviour was almost entirely in abeyance. But this attitude could harden into one of philistine mistrust of the idea

of genius itself and any aesthetic behaviour deemed eccentric; and this bias is particularly noticeable with reference to parody of the Romantic poets.

Chapter 2. The Romantic Poets and their Parodists

As described in the previous chapter, parodists of the Romantic novel may be seen as endorsing demands that the "Novel" should be about "Nature and Probability", and generally supporting realist as opposed to romantic modes of fiction. In the case of parody of the Romantic poets the parallel is by no means exact, but a similar principle, nevertheless, seems to have guided both parodists of the Romantic poets as well as Romantic-novel parodists, and the standard of 'probability' was invoked in both cases - with the difference that as far as Romantic poetry is concerned, the notion of the 'probable' involved the idea of poetry as it had been hitherto received into the community as a High, civilized and sociable art deriving from Augustan modes, and had little to do with representations of everyday "real life and manners" that caused parodists of the Romantic novel to use lifelikeness as a criterion for judging fictions. But both sets of parodists tended to support Edgeworthian claims for the value of "good sense" above "genius", and the innovatory aesthetics of the Romantic poets could be said to violate notions of common sense as much as the improbable adventures of Heroes and Heroines - for although perhaps only Scott and Byron could be accused by their detractors of encouraging readers to confuse fictions with real-life, the Romantic poets challenged 'probability' (what might realistically be expected of poetry) by their interference with received ideas of representation and traditional notions of poetry as one of the fine arts: and the question implicit in the work of parodists of the Romantic novel - 'Is this what we expect of life?' - recurs in parody of the Romantic poets in the form, 'Is this what we expect of Poetry?'

At this point a difference in tone between parody of the Romantic novel and parody of Romantic poetry becomes evident for the rather obvious reason that while the former was often engaged in ridiculing second-rate fictions by appealing to a sophisticated, evolving concept of literary realism, the latter addressed itself to some first-rate poetry and tested

it against a pragmatic standard of "common sense" that cannot be applied to poetry generally speaking, and in this particular case was either synonymous with a staid and outmoded idea of 'the poem' inherited from a previous age, or represented the only (very inadequate) touchstone that the reader of Romantic poetry might possess in the absence of a critical vocabulary that would enable him to make aesthetic sense out of the new poetry. Not surprisingly, then, parody of the Romantic poets - with several notable exceptions - tended to be anti-innovatory and obtuse: directing ridicule at what today would be considered the great Romantic achievements. But it provides a valuable index of contemporary taste in that it does express some of the difficulties encountered by readers and critics in coming to terms with revolutionary work equipped only with conventional and inadequate ideas about the function of the poet and of poetic language (and in this sense the response of the parodists might be seen as paradigmatic of the reception of all innovatory texts), as well as indicating the specific kinds of opposition that the Romantic poets had to overcome before the value of their work was recognized.

The problem of assimilating early Romantic poetry is perhaps demonstrated by the fact that few parodies of the Lake school were written before 1812 when its members were producing some of their best work. Coleridge had parodied himself, Lloyd and Lamb in 1797, in three sonnets written at the expense of his own youthful pretensions, and under the significantly plebian soubriquet "Nehemia Higginbottom", 'Sonnets attempted in the manner of contemporary writers' exaggerated the "characteristic vices" of the group's early style in order to repudiate - according to Biographia Literaria - "low, creeping language and thoughts, under the pretence of simplicity ... *[and]* the spirit of doleful egotism".[1] Southey also wrote two series of parodies, 'The Amatory Poems of Abel Shuffelbottom' and 'Love Elegies' (1799) which anticipated the charges of latter-day Della Cruscanism that would be made against the Romantic poets and asserted his own independence from the decaying school of Merry;[2] while Lamb -

who approved of Coleridge's parodies - subsequently parodied his own grossly sentimental 'Angel Help' in 'Nonsense Verses'.[3] But the poets were repudiating criticisms that were not levelled against them by a wider public until fifteen years later; and as far as the most significant publications of the period are concerned, there exists no body of contemporary parody of Lyrical Ballads (1798) or Poems in Two Volumes (1807). It seems that the poetry of the early Romantics was perhaps so unusual that it at first discouraged parodists (except the Romantic poets themselves) from attempting to master and assimilate the disruptive texts through imitation and mockery.

But the main reason that the Romantic poets were not immediately parodied as their counterparts in the novel were, lies in the nature of the conditions that are necessary before any parody on a large scale can be written - that is to say, as suggested in Part II of this study, on the existence of a large reading public and, by implication, writers who are widely read by that public. These conditions were fulfilled in the case of the Romantic novel; but although the Lake School was recognized as a significant movement in modern poetry by the reviewers,[4] and Lyrical Ballads went to a fifth edition in 1805, it was not until Scott and Byron, especially, began publishing (The Lay of the Last Minstrel, 1805; Childe Harold, 10 March 1812) that a 'mass' audience could be said to have been created for poetry. The closure of The Anti-Jacobin two months before the publication of Lyrical Ballads, and the general difficulty and relative unpopularity of early Romantic poetry effectively precluded much parody of the first Romantics; but the publication of the first two cantos of Childe Harold (five hundred copies in three days; 4,500 in under six months)[5] proved a turning-point for parody of the Romantic poets, because in the figure of the Childe the parodists were able to recognize a Hero in the line of the Romantic novel (who had proved susceptible to parody), and one, moreover, at the heart of a familiar "epidemical Phrenzy". The parodic response to Byron, in turn, provoked a parodic retrospective of

the work of the other major Romantic poets and established parody as a popular mode for treating their performances after 1812, when the nineteenth century might properly be described as an "age of parody".

Even so, parody of the Romantic poets (and parody in general throughout the nineteenth century) might not have become as popular as it did were it not for the publication, also in 1812, of Rejected Addresses - the seminal text in the development of nineteenth century parody. This volume was inspired by a literary competition run by the Committee for the Rebuilding of Drury Lane Theatre (which had recently been burned down and was being rebuilt under the patronage of the brewer, Samuel Whitbread) for a poetical address to be spoken on the opening night (10 October 1812). The event attracted an enormous amount of publicity: the cash prize was substantial, and the newspapers had been extracting copy for several months from the circumstances of the funding (the juxtaposition of Art and Drink); and the subject became even more newsworthy when it was discovered that all the entries had been sent off to be judged by the newly-famous Byron who had dismissed them as uniformly bad and offered to write and deliver the address himself. Meanwhile, the brothers James and "Horace" Smith had hit on the idea of publishing a series of joke-addresses in which the most eminent poets of the age would be represented as having submitted characteristic poems on the fire and rebuilding, only to have them rejected by the (spurious) Committee. Rumours of the Smiths' project were also reported,[6] and an unofficial competition ensued to see whether the Smiths could publish their volume before the real Committee could publish Byron's address and a selection of genuine entries.

In the event, the Smiths beat the Committee by two weeks, and Rejected Addresses was published (and immediately sold-out) on 3 October 1812. Byron delivered his address on the 10th; and the publicity surrounding the opening days was augmented by the behaviour of the eccentric Dr Thomas Busby and his son, who had to be ejected from the theatre on the 14th when the younger Busby jumped onto the stage and tried to recite the

address that his father had unsuccessfully submitted to the genuine Committee. Dr Busby was allowed to recite his poem on the following night (inaudibly, according to Byron); and Byron decided to capitalize on the event, and on the popularity of the parody of Busby's Darwinesque style in Rejected Addresses, by publishing 'Parenthetical Address. By Dr. Plagiary' in the Morning Chronicle, 23 October 1812.[7] As the Smiths admitted, the events of 1812 "formed an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances which could not fail to insure the success of Rejected Addresses".[8] It went through fifteen editions in two years; was praised by Byron, who thought it might promote the sales of Childe Harold;[9] and received long and favourable notices in the prestigious Edinburgh and Quarterly reviews.[10]

Technically, Rejected Addresses is an expansion of Hawkins Browne's idea in A Pipe of Tobacco of grouping a series of parodies of contemporary poets round a single theme, but the Smiths' volume was more ambitious in its scope and includes eighteen poets and three prose writers (Johnson, Cobbett, and the editor of the Morning Post), with the Romantic poets occupying a central position. For the most part, the volume relies for its effect on a contrast not dissimilar from that typically employed by mock-heroics, where a serious style is set against a lighthearted theme - so that, for example, the whole weight of Johnson's style is brought to bear on the subject of the stage-door: "a ligneous barricado decorated with frappant and tintinabulent appendages". (This parody was presumably included because Johnson composed the address for the opening of the original theatre.) Occasionally the lightheartedness of the new theme involves the sort of comic vulgarizing that Lewis employed in Tales of Terror and Wonder, as when the great clans of The Lay of the Last Minstrel are transformed into groups of hobnail-booted firemen called "Muggins" and "Higgenbottom", or the opening of Southey's The Curse of Kehama (1810) becomes: "Midnight, yet not a nose/From Tower-hill to Piccadilly snored";[11] but Rejected Addresses generally avoids this gross method of undermining

a poem's seriousness by an appeal to low comedy, and preserves a lightness of touch in contrasting old styles to incongruous subjects - exemplified in the parody of Crabbe ('The Theatre') or 'Drury's Dirge' by "Laura Matilda":

> Lurid smoke and frank suspicion
> Hand in hand reluctant dance:
> While the God fulfils his mission,
> Chivalry, resign thy lance.

The most significant aspect of Rejected Addresses' achievement, however, lies not so much in its domestication and modernization of a burlesque mode (where the Smiths demonstrate their mastery of contemporary poetic idoms by indulging in playful reversals of expectation that set matter and manner at odds), but in its unique parodic concentration on the Romantic poets who were thus made available as accessible subjects, as it were, to readers and parodists of the period. The Smiths gave parodic characters to contemporary Romantic poets and showed in what ways they could be imitated, and this paved the way for an enormous quantity of parody of Scott, the Lake School, and Byron especially. In 'A Tale of Drury Lane', for example, the Smiths set Scott's verse romances to plebian themes, infusing the Romantic original with prosaic elements in the manner of Romantic novel parodists: and this was a style of mockery taken up by later parodists. Again, their parody of Byron - 'Cui Bono?' - was the first to caricature the "moody and misanthropic sentiments"[12] of Childe Harold and to place him in the line of Romantic-Gothic heroes already parodied by Canning. The Smiths' Byron is all "fastidious pilgrim" -[13] a world-weary, over-subjective Hero who derives melancholy pleasure from a sense of futility and isolation that is more imaginary than real; and, riding the crest of Byron's 1812 popularity, the parody casts the poet good-humouredly as a poseur who, histrionically and with youthful bravado, claims to have drained life's cup to the dregs. But the parody begins prophetically: "Sated of home, of wife, of children tired, /The restless soul is driven abroad to roam": and later parodists elaborated more disapprovingly on the results of the introspective melancholy that the

Smiths had characterized lightheartedly in 1812.

Most significantly, however, Rejected Addresses articulated in parody what critics of the Lake school had complained of in reviews (increasingly since the publication of Poems in Two Volumes) concerning the "infantine" language and low subject-matter of the poets associated with the school.[14] Theories of 'probability' based on received notions of poetry dictated that it was just as misleading to find meaningful realities in celandines and peasants as in Italian scenery with bandits, and that Wordsworth's (in particular) poetic language was obtrusively artificial and unnatural in the light of normative concepts of poetic discourse; and while the Augustan Jeffrey's review of Wordsworth's 1807 Poems is a classic statement of its kind in its demand for traditional poetic elevation and loftiness,[15] the Smith's parodies of Wordsworth and Coleridge set the seal on the popular image of the Lake school as being exclusively and babyishly devoted to the Ambrose Philips type of "meek Simplicity" that Coleridge had repudiated in his self-parody fifteen years previously.[16]

'Playhouse Musings' parodies Coleridge's early conversation poems and makes joking reference to the unfortunately-titled 'To a Young Ass'. His diction is specifically characterized as a species of flat-footed prose, cut-down into verse lengths:

> Oh! 'twas a goodly sound, to hear the people
> Who watch'd the work express their various thoughts!
> While some believed it never would be finish'd,
> Some, on the contrary, believed it would.

But the most enduring caricature is that of Wordsworth as an earnest bore, drivelling about the countryside, peasants, and children in language so simple it borders on the inane; and Rejected Addresses popularized the critics' charges that Wordsworth was a nursery bard writing for children, childishly, and fixed an image of the poet that is still potent today. Byron accused him of puerility and of writing "namby pamby", saying that some of the 1807 poems reminded him of the songs his nurse used to sing him;[17] but the Smiths made the charge memorable in the picture of the poet

presented in 'The Baby's Début', which is spoken in the guise of a child and exaggerates simplicity into puerility - as Johnson's stanzas on Percy had done:

> Well, after many a sad reproach,
> They got into a hackney coach,
> And trotted down the street.
> I saw them go: one horse was blind,
> The tails of both hung down behind,
> Their shoes were on their feet.

As the Smiths admitted in their preface to the 1833 edition of Rejected Addresses the parody was intended to make the poet look ridiculous and was written at a time when the authors still found his work too strange and perplexing to take seriously;[18] but this was the image of Wordsworth and the Lake school which stuck in 1812, and which was subsequently copied by other parodists and critics. It helped to foster the persistent misunderstanding of their work which caused Coleridge to write to Southey on the subject of Rejected Addresses and its charges of "affected Simplicity and Meanness of Thought and Diction": "This slang has gone on for fourteen or fifteen years against us and really deserves to be exposed".[19]

Rejected Addresses was an unprecedently successful volume of parodies which popularized parody for the nineteenth century while at the same time drawing attention to the Romantic poets as ideal subjects (for their offences against "Nature and Probability"). Works that capitalized on its immediate fame included the Committee's real addresses, published under the title Genuine Rejected Addresses (1812), and Accepted Addresses (1813) - a collection of parodies falsely attributed to James Smith.[20] The popularity of the Smiths' volume also had the effect of recalling to its contemporaries the parodies of the previous century (especially A Pipe of Tobacco, The Rolliad, Probationary Odes, and The Anti-Jacobin);[21] and when the Poet Laureate, Henry Pye, died in 1813 the Satirist published applications for the post from 'Wordsworth', 'Byron', 'Southey', 'Scott' and 'Crabbe';[22] while the anonymous Leaves of Laurel; or, New Probationary Odes was specifically modelled on its eighteenth century predecessor, though it took the Romantic poets as its subject. In 1814 Horace Twiss

published Posthumous Parodies of the Poets with the Smiths' publisher, John Miller; while James Hogg's The Poetic Mirror appeared in 1816, offering itself as a semi-parodic anthology of "the Living Bards of Britain".[23] Peacock wrote Paper Money Lyrics in 1825 (though it was not published until 1837) -[24] a series of polemical parodies written in the metres of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Moore, Hunt and others, denouncing the introduction of the new paper money to which Peacock was fanatically opposed; but, after Rejected Addresses, the most popular volume of parodies published during the Romantic period was Warreniana by William Frederick Deacon.[25] Robert Warren was the manufacturer of the age's best-advertised brand of bootblacking, and the joke of the volume hinges on the rumour that Byron had been paid to compose rhyming puffs for Warren's rivals, Day and Martin,[26] for Warreniana represents the Romantic poets as having done just that.

In the wider context, however, the popularity of Rejected Addresses initiated a parodic movement that might be seen as a mocking counterpart to the Romantic movement, where parody represents an attempt to come to terms with Romantic innovation in literature by comically imitating texts (as an exercise in getting their measure and mastering them) and by testing models against tradition and a broader, received aesthetic. Selected parodies of Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron and other second generation Romantic poets will be considered in the remainder of this chapter as representing a significant aspect of the contemporary response to their work.

a. Walter Scott

The Smiths' parody of Scott relied for its effect on what has been termed 'shorthand realism',[27] where displacing a serious content by low subject-matter could be construed as representing the challenge of the realist to the romantic modes: so that the covert critical directive to the reader instructs him not to believe in the poem because it is not an accurate representation of "real life and manners". In this area parodists

could accuse Scott of a similar failing as the Romantic novelists; and on occasion the parodic introduction of prosaic material serves the same purpose of forcing a comparison between what commonly happens in the world and what happens in a Scott poem, where nostalgia and Heroism might be confused with the actual "turmoils of active life" as Barrett described them in the admonitory conclusion to The Heroine.

The Smiths' parody was actually not the first parody of Scott to exploit the technique of low content-substitution in order to thwart belief in the poem. Six weeks before Rejected Addresses was published George Colman Jnr (son of the burlesque dramatist who, together with Robert Lloyd, had parodied Gray's odes in 1760) had published a large, quarto volume, Poetical Vagaries, which contained a parody of The Lady of the Lake - 'The Lady of the Wreck'. In the advertisement to the parody Colman characterized Scott as a "Maker of the Modern-Antique ... a Constructor of the dear pretty Sublime and sweet little Grand; - a Writer of a Short Epick Poem stuff'd with Romantick Knick-knackeries".[28] In order to disrupt the "Sublime" fabric of Scott's romances, Colman transposed the setting of The Lady of the Lake to the bogs of Ireland and replaced the original characters with comic, bawdy Irishmen so that sentimental idealism is dispersed under a barrage of predictable jokes about the Irish and the transformation of the heroine into someone who behaves like a descendent of Shamela, and the heroes into characters who possess - and act up to - names like "Sir Tooleywhagg O' Shaughnashane" and "Lawrence O'Toole of the Bishoprick". 'Harp of the North' becomes 'Harp of the Pats', and the love song "The Rose is fairest when 'tis budding new" becomes "The egg is daintiest when 'tis swallowed new" (and the metaphor of the fading rose is replaced by that of a rotting egg). In addition to the low subject, the parody also introduced copious and irrelevant footnotes and was printed in large type with enormously wide margins: in mocking reference to the charges of 'bookmaking' that were frequently levelled at Scott at this time.[29]

Colman's method was crude, in both senses of the term, and the reviewers

immediately censured the poem for its "indecency", with the result that the 'clean' humour of Rejected Addresses received an even more favourable press when it was compared to Colman's parody.[30] But although the example of Colman ensured that low comedy would avoid the sexually gross in nineteenth century parody, the idea of exposing the "Modern-Antique" to tests of 'probability' in the form of low-life inspired several parodies of Scott's poetry between 1812 and 1817. Jokeby; A Burlesque on Rokeby was perhaps the most successful -[31] a full-length parody which appeared a few weeks after the publication of Scott's poem in 1813, with the setting transposed to the East End of London. This time the substitution served a satirical purpose, since Scott's noble aristocrats with their chivalric values, and the rich people who could afford to buy Scott's books describing them, were contrasted to the destitute inhabitants of London. For the author of Jokeby, as for Austen and other parodists of the Romantic novel, the danger of being beguiled by art into forgetting the "vulgarities" and "living misery" (Barrett) of life involved a moral failure; and in the preface the parodist made the point explicit and upbraided anybody who would pay two guineas for a book "which would keep many a poor family from starving" (p. 1).

Jokeby went through several editions during the early part of the century,[32] and it was imitated by such pieces as Smokeby and 'Rokeby the Second' - which was prefaced by an essay on the art of 'bookmaking' in which pseudo-Scott remarks: "It must be known to everyone that in modern bookmaking, little depends on the poetry of a poem. The notes are the thing on which success depends".[33] It is difficult to estimate the effect of such parodies on Scott's contemporary reputation and his own poetic practice, but Rokeby was his last successful verse romance and he abandoned the genre altogether with the anonymous Harold the Dauntless (1817). He expressed himself on various occasions as being entertained by the parody in Rejected Addresses,[34] but the introduction he added to the 1830 edition of The Lady of the Lake indicates that later parodies annoyed him - he

compares himself to a horseman galloping through a village "followed by ... curs in full cry ... On this principle, I let parody, burlesque and squibs find their own level".[35] However, the fact that magazines and periodicals could still appropriate his metres for public parody late in the century (Punch, 30 August 1884, for example) indicates that his verse romances were still popular with a wide public, and that the familiar canonization process of work approved by time had taken place: where the parodist uses for his own purposes what is evidently a memorable form, and implies no censure of the model but, rather, a homage to its fame .

b. Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The Smiths' parody of Coleridge had cast him as a Lake Poet, prosily interested in trivia; but after the publication of several essays, the poems of 1816 and 1817, and Biographia Literaria (1817) parodists increasingly urged vulgar contact with "real life" on him as an antidote to his "metaphysical" tendencies (understood here as a synonym for airy-fairy , impractical involvement with art and abstract speculation at the expense of the commonplaces of normal existence). After 1816, the old image of "meek Simplicity" Coleridge was supplanted by a caricature of the poet as an errant mystic, talking unintelligible Gothic and Kantian mumbo-jumbo, and subject to overwhelming fits of Inspiration that set him apart from the rest of humanity, in a dream world. Peacock's description of Mr. Flosky in Nightmare Abbey is probably only a slightly exaggerated version of the poet's image at this time: where Flosky composes verses in his sleep, writes in shuttered rooms by blue candlelight, and discourses endlessly and incomprehensibly on philosophy. When another member of the house-party admits that he cannot follow his conversation, Flosky replies (living up to the implications of his name: philoskios, a lover of shadows) - "I pity the man who can see the connection of his own ideas. Still more do I pity him, the connection of whose ideas any other person can see. Sir, the great evil is, that there is too much commonplace light in our... literature; and light is a great enemy to mystery" (p. 48-9). As Peacock

describes it, Flosky's language is not designed to facilitate understanding but instead promotes confusion and morbid introspection, and encourages the public to "shun the solid food of reason for the light diet of fiction" (p. 51). Whenever Flosky is called upon to cope with practical problems in the book he is unable to do so because he has been overwhelmed by the life of the imagination and the "genius" that has destroyed his "common sense"; and, like Edgeworth, Peacock makes the point explicit in his opening description of the philosopher-poet as a man who "plunged into the central opacity of Kantian metaphysics ... till the common daylight of common sense became intolerable to his eyes" (p. 10). Flosky's fictions deceive him about the nature of reality, and, self-centred as he is, he has no practical advice to offer troubled members of the house-party (and, by extension, will soon have nothing to 'say' to his public). According to Peacock in Nightmare Abbey this is a flaw in Romantic literature as a whole, where introspection leads to delusion and alienation from the community of "real life and manners".

Coleridge's other parodists exerted themselves to prove Byron's remark about the poet: "Obscurity's a welcome guest",[36] although instead of Peacock's neat juxtaposition of idealists trying to operate in a far from ideal world and his well-articulated reservations about certain aspects of Coleridge's thought, later parodists tended to direct rather heavy-handed ridicule at the whole idea of "genius" and countered anything that smacked of Romantic eccentricity or obscurity with broadly comic vularizing, typified by Warreniana's 'The Dream, a Psychological Curiosity' ("I guess it was frightful there to see /A lady so scantily clad as she /Ugly and old exceedingly") and William Maginn's Blackwood's parodies of the Romantic poets. Maginn carried the pose of a bluff, hearty, commonsensical man, chirpily convinced of his own sanity and the absurdity (and ease) of the Romantic undertaking to great lengths in his work for Blackwood's Magazine (which he joined shortly after its founding, in 1818), and the early issues of 'Maga' are crowded with his articles and parodies relating to

the Romantic poets. A Classicist and a Tory, he made little effort to come to terms with the innovatory aesthetic of Romanticism, but preferred instead to dismiss it as self-evidently absurd to anyone with a modicum of common sense; and writing under the pen-name "Ensign Morgan Odoherty" (to symbolize his Irish joviality and forthrightness) he bumptiously rejected the claims of the early Romantics: "Why will Coleridge and Wordsworth continue to bother the world with their metaphysics? FANCY and IMAGINATION! Neither of them can tell the difference".[37]

This is an example of the kind of opposition that Wordsworth's and Coleridge's poetry met with among its contemporaries - crude in itself, and reinforcing popular images of the poets as divorced-from-life eccentrics with nothing to offer the 'average reader'. It represents the point where art is dismissed because it is arty and supposedly has no bearing on a grossly simplified notion of "real life", and where poetry is turned on its head simply by being subjected to an onslaught of vulgarly comic references:

> "The waine is fulle, the horses pulle,
> Merrily did we trotte
> Alonge the bridge, alonge the road,
> A jolly crewe, I wotte:" -
> And here the tailore smotte his breaste
> He smelte the cabbage potte![38]

Maginn treated 'Christabel' in the same way in 'Christabel, Part Third' - the first of several parodic and serious attempts made in the course of the century to provide the poem with a conclusion.[39] The parody imitates the surface of Coleridge's poem with its mysterious heroine, incantatory rhythm, and imprecise, suggestive imagery; but whereas the model conjures an atmosphere of mystery, the parody descends steeply into bathos: "Tho' the baron's red cloak through the land hath no fellow, /Thou should'st not thus venture forth without an umbrella!" Maginn's humour is aggressive in its assault on Coleridgeian "mystery", and the "real life" that his heroine has to face is that Geraldine was a man who has made her pregnant;[40] while the mysterious weaving and ecstasy of 'Kubla Khan' and 'Christabel' find their prosaic counterpart in the heroine's drinking herself to sleep

at the end of the parody.

Coleridge's annoyance with the persistent and wilful misunderstanding of his work was exacerbated by parodies like these, and he is said only to have approved of a lost parody, Christabess (1816) -[41] although he would probably have accepted Hogg's 'Isabelle' in The Poetic Mirror (half parody, half serious imitation) as a tribute:

> But they are coming by this way
> That have been dead for a year and a day;
> Without challenge, without change,
> They shall have their full revenge!
> They have been sent to wander in woe
> In the lands of flame, and the lands of snow.[42]

Later in the century parodists appropriated Coleridge's metres for their own extrinsic purposes, as they did with Scott - indicating, again, which poems had been received into the acceptable, no longer shocking body of English literature. (Most parodies of this type were of 'The Ancient Mariner'.)[43] But contemporary parodies reveal the kinds of doubts felt by some readers about Coleridge's poetry and prose, and the sorts of opposition that had to be overcome before his work could be accepted as no longer threateningly revolutionary or half-baked, but more impartially assessed as the nature of his achievement became plainer with the passage of time.

c. William Wordsworth

In comparison to Wordsworth, Coleridge's reception by his parodists was relatively mild, for Wordsworth was the most widely parodied of the Romantic poets, seemingly because his early poems and theories of poetic diction presented the most radical challenge of the period to received ideas of poetry as involving certain standards of loftiness and material suitable for poetic discourse. Like other kinds of Romantic language, Wordsworth's usage, measured against traditional practices, appeared wilfully eccentric and strange; not designed for normal communication; and emphatically not what readers of Poetry expected. His interest in what his detractors called "Simplicity and Meanness of Thought and Diction"[44] was not held to make the poetry more 'real' as it might have in the case of

the novel, or to manifest a "common sense" in Wordsworth that was felt to be lacking in Coleridge; but was, instead, interpreted as an affected and/or simple-minded challenge to accepted notions of poetry as an elevated medium for conveying "powerful impressions and interesting reflections".[45]

In the light of the poet's unequal achievement and because of flaws in his poetic theory one may sympathize with the perplexity and impatience of some of Wordsworth's detractors, and it is a notorious commonplace that Wordsworth is, at times, unconsciously his own best parodist - "Spade! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands".[46] The sudden bathetic lurches and mundane elements that had to be introduced into the fabric of the Romantic novel, for example, or into Scott's and Coleridge's poems, are already present in his work and Wordsworth could be said to have done half the parodist's job for him by his own occasional inability to avoid the ridiculous in his poetry. But having said this, accurate though some of the parodies are in exaggerating the poet's failures, they must also be seen as reinforcing that frame of mind that resisted the poet's intentions because they ran counter to conservative ideas of poetry, typified by Jeffrey's review of the 1807 volume where certain subjects and styles of discourse are stated to be unpoetic per se and where leech-gathering is dismissed in the same breath as Wilkinson's spade.[47] Wordsworth's parodists, like his critics, were acute in their analysis of some of his specific failings, but they seem - on the whole - to have been oblivious to, or dismissive of, the broader implications of his poetry; and the widespread imitation of the Smiths' portrait of the poet as a nursery bard meant that parody effectively strengthened that kind of judgement which persisted in treating the poetry flippantly and was unable to distinguish between 'Alice Fell' and the Immortality ode.[48]

It would not be possible within the confines of this study to ennumerate the dozens of contemporary parodies that, following the Smiths' lead, stressed unrefined diction, low subject-matter and simplicity

bordering on puerility as the distinguishing features of Wordsworth's work.[49] The British Press (3 March 1813) published a typical parody of this sort - a poem supposedly written by a disciple whose 'Preface' parodied Wordsworth's 1800 preface to Lyrical Ballads and hammered home its point with heavy-handed irony: "I fear much, lest some meaning, which may have crept into my verses, should prove destructive of that exquisite simplicity at which I aim".[50] That Wordsworth elevated "simplicity" at the expense of "meaning" and cultivated a ridiculously childish naivety was consistently implied by contemporary parodists who were embroidering the image presented by 'The Baby's Début'. Peacock caricatured the poet as "Mr. Paperstamp" in Melincourt (1817) where he is said to be noted for his "infantine lisp" and collection of Mother Goose pictures; while as the first man in the boat in 'Sir Proteous' (1814) Wordsworth is characterized in the same way as he had been by the British Press:

> The first he chattered, chattered still,
> With meaning none at all,
> Of Jack and Jill and Harry Gill
> And Alice Fell so small.[51]

The publication of The White Doe of Rylstone and a collected edition of his poetry in 1815 led to the renewal of charges of "sweet nursery phrases" against the poet; and with the appearance of Peter Bell in 1819 these criticisms were redoubled, and a spate of parodies followed in illustration of the Monthly Magazine's remark: "Mr. Wordsworth, the father of the baby school of the Lakes, has published some new rhymes for the nursery".[52] Written in 1798, Wordsworth had delayed publishing the poem until 1819 "to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception";[53] and in his preface he stressed the high calling of poetry and expressed the hope that the poem would fill "permanently a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached" (p. 331). Peter Bell proved so attractive to parodists because of its unfortunate juxtaposition of the pompous preface (which again stressed the importance of

exploring "the humblest departments of daily life" in "the language really used by men") and Wordsworth's leaden attempts to be humorous in the opening of the poem. The combination of Wordsworthian earnest simplicity and the spectacle of the most "unsportive" of poets trying to cut a caper,[54] together with the self-congratulatory preface dedicated to Southey (whose parodic image at this time was one of a ludicrous bore) immediately provoked a spate of parodies - most notably from the second generation of Romantic poets and their circle.

John Hamilton Reynolds saw the manuscript of Peter Bell before the poem was published, and his parodic version - Peter Bell: A Lyrical Ballad - appeared anonymously a few days before Wordsworth's genuine poem, with the declaration on its title-page: "I do affirm I am the REAL Simon Pure".[55] Again, it is difficult to estimate the effect of the parody on the critical reception of Wordsworth's Peter Bell, but theoretically the effect of the parody would be to ensure that when the real poem appeared it could not be taken seriously because it would be falsified by memories of the parody. (The fact that the precise model would be unknown to readers of the parody does not matter since Reynolds's version reproduces features associated with Wordsworth's early verse as a whole.) Moreover, the parodic preface assured the reader that any subsequent poems called "Peter Bell" would be fakes and not worth purchsing: cutting the ground from beneath Wordsworth's feet by asserting that his poem would be lies; a hoax; a piece of artifice designed to deceive the public. Reynolds's preface went on to parody Wordsworth's theories of poetic diction and the dedication to Southey:

> It has been my aim and my achievement to deduce moral thunder from buttercups, daisies, and celandines... Of Peter Bell I have only this much to say: It completes the simple system of natural narrative, which I began so early as 1798. It is written in that pure unlaboured style, which can only be met with among labourers.
>
> (pp. iii-vi)

The import of the 'preface' is sufficiently obvious: Wordsworth is vain (Reynolds's poet speaks of his "perfect compositions", p. iii); he draws his inspiration from peculiar, unPoetic sources (buttercups and

daisies); and his style-implied by the pun on "labourers" - is both forced (unnatural) and vulgar.

The verse parody which follows is written in the same manner as 'The Baby's Début', belabouring the trivial and assuming the accents of a half-wit or a young child:

> Betty Foy - My Betty Foy, -
> Is the aunt of Peter Bell;
> And credit me, as I would have you,
> Simon Lee was once his nephew,
> And his niece is Alice Fell.
>
> He is rurally related;
> Peter Bell hath country cousins,
> (He had once a worthy mother)
> Bells and Peters by the dozens
> But Peter Bell he hath no brother.
>
> Not a brother owneth he,
> Peter Bell he hath no brother;
> His mother had no other son,
> No other son e'er call'd her mother;
> Peter Bell hath brother none.

The parody concludes with a vision of a country graveyard where all Wordsworth's rustics are buried, alongside the Ancient Mariner and Wordsworth himself (a "blessed tomb"). It is perhaps the classic Wordsworth parody: accurate and witty in its comic imitation of the poet's humourlessness and lapses into the prosaic, but reinforcing a set of rigid ideas about the necessity for loftiness and elevation of diction that hindered contemporary acceptance of Wordsworth's major work.

Byron's parody of Wordsworth represents an extension of his 1807 review of Poems in Two Volumes where the younger Romantic poet described his growing dissatisfaction with his once-admired senior, and in this sense the parody expresses the later Romantics' impatience with their predecessors. Yet it is evident that Byron was also writing in the Augustan tradition of upholding certain conventional aesthetic values in poetry; and in the same month that Shelley wrote Peter Bell the Third (October 1819 - see below) Byron completed the third canto of Don Juan, which included a three-stanza complaint about Peter Bell and The Waggoner: " 'Pedlars', and 'Boats', and 'Waggons!' Oh! ye shades /Of Pope and Dryden, are we

come to this?" (c). Byron's distaste for Wordsworth, expressed in the couplet: "We learn from Horace, 'Homer sometimes sleeps;' /We feel without him, -Wordsworth sometimes wakes" (xcviii), represents the dislike of the aristocratic Classicist for uncivil, "vulgar" verse,[56] and his 'Epilogue' (parodying the 'Prologue' to Peter Bell) is in the same line as Jeffrey's criticism of Wordsworth and all those parodists who directed ridicule at the poet because his work was not conventionally sublime . After the manner of Felltham on Jonson, Byron simply appropriated Wordsworth's own metre to abuse the poet, and the result is a not particularly inventive diatribe:

> There's something in a stupid ass;
> And something in a heavy dunce;
> But never since I went to school
> I heard or saw a greater fool
> As William Wordsworth is for once.
>
> And now I've seen so great a fool
> As William Wordsworth is for once;
> I really wish that Peter Bell
> And he who wrote it were in hell,[57]
> For writing nonsense in the nonce...

Shelley's objection to Wordsworth, however, expresses none of Byron's Augustan reservations about the poet, nor the feeling of other contemporary parodists that Wordsworth's work was eccentric and threatening to tradition. The passages relating to Wordsworth in Peter Bell the Third, rather, express the young poet's sense that Wordsworth had become outmoded by 1819 and that he had not, in fact, pursued his innovations far enough; and of all the parodists Shelley is perhaps the most perspicacious in recognizing the merit of the poems up till 1807 but then noting a subsequent decline in power. His analysis is sufficiently well-known not to require further comment in this study - except perhaps to note that Shelley wrote the poem on the basis of Leigh Hunt's reviews of Reynolds's parody and Wordsworth's poem in the Examiner (26 April and 3 May 1819, respectively) without having seen the originals of either,[58] and that - like Byron's 'Epilogue' - the humour of the piece depends on the spectacle of seeing the poet apparently condemning himself out of his own mouth:

But from the first 'twas Peter's drift
To be a kind of moral eunuch,
He touched the hem of Nature's shift,
Felt faint - and never dared uplift
The closest, all-concealing tunic.
(Part the Fourth, ix)

In contrast to Shelley's parody of Wordsworth, which notably refrained from criticizing his "Mean diction", Blackwood's Magazine ran a series of parodies of the poet between 1819 and 1821 which typified attitudes to Wordsworth that persisted in regarding all his work since 1798 as babyish, simple to the point of half-wittedness, and missing all the elegance of real Poetry. The parodies were mainly the work of William Maginn, whose resistance to Coleridge has already been mentioned; and Maginn's parodies show that, as late as 1821, he still regarded Wordsworth's poetry as being laughably indecorous and unacceptably innovatory. In 'Billy Routing: A Lyrical Ballad', for example, he implied a familiar criticism of the poet's diction and choice of subject-matter:

Billy Routing walketh lamely -
Lamely - lamely walketh he;
Billy Routing cannot work
You'd swear his leg was made of cork,
(I never saw him bend his knee.)[59]

and 'Billy Blinn' (May 1821, pp. 139-40) repeated the joke of describing foolish peasants in elaborately simple language.

The only parody of his early work that Wordsworth is said not to have taken exception to is Catherine Fanshawe's 'Fragment' -[60] a piece which avoids both Maginn's tendency to cheap bathos and Reynolds's seductive but distorting comedy. 'Fragment' requires a close and careful reading since it only betrays itself as a parody by slight awkwardnesses, when the parodist is flat-footed without being over-absurd:

There is a river clear and fair,
'Tis neither broad nor narrow;
It winds about like any hare;
And then it takes as straight a course
As on the turnpike road a horse,
Or through the air an arrow.

The parody emphasises the strangeness of the poem "A slumber did my spirit steal", as well as recalling - by deliberately confusing literal inches

with spiritual height - the famous occasion in the first draft of 'The Thorn' (1798) where numeracy takes the place of vision: "I've measured it from side to side,/'Tis three feet long and two feet wide".[61] In the parody, the rustic mother expresses a hope that her little boy might be transmogrified into a willow tree: "He'd be four times as tall as me, / And live three times as long".

Wordsworth tried to defend his work against the charges of his critics by using parody himself, but the result was a lumbering imitation of Milton's 'Tetrachordon' sonnet:

> A Book came forth of late, called PETER BELL;
> Not negligent the style - the matter ? good
> As aught that song records of Robin Hood;
> Or Roy, renowned through many a Scottish dell.[62]

Like Ambrose Phillips, Wordsworth lacked the wit to defend himself gracefully (which is partly what made him such an attractive subject for parodists), although the fact that he should think of using parody perhaps indicates how popular the activity was at this time.

Although most parodies of the period were of Wordsworth's simple style, a few took as their model the discursive, philosophic work The Excursion (1814). Just as Maginn had countered Colerdige's 'metaphysical' tendencies by introducing a vulgar subject-matter into the form of the original, so he recast The Excursion as 'The Kail Pot': "Sweet are the songs of Nathan Goose, and strong /Yea! potent is the liquor that he sells";[63] but the most competent parodies of Wordsworth's reflective style are to be found in Hogg's Poetic Mirror and 'The Flying Tailor' in particular.[64] Hogg's method throughout the parody consists in bringing Wordsworth's earnest style of speculation to bear on a series of propositions that are not suited to repay such scrutiny, and although the subject is very similar to one of the poet's own choosing, a sense of comic incongruity intrudes in the over-dogged persistency with which pseudo-Wordsworth describes the plight of "Hugh Thwaites", a child born to aged cripples, who is distinguished by his ability to jump enormous distances but is prevented from doing so by being apprenticed to a tailor:

> Oft have I heard him say, that at this time
> Of life he was most wretched; for, constrained
> To sit all day cross-legged upon a board,
> The natural circulation of the blood
> Thereby was oft impeded, and he felt
> So numbed at times, that when he strove to rise
> Up from his work, he could not, but fell back
> Among the shreds and patches.

Hogg's covert criticism is not dissimilar from that of parodists writing on the 'baby-ballad' style, and he implies that the poet has confused the mundane with the poetic and blurred the distinction between life and art by presenting 'life' as 'art' (unlike the Romantic novelists, who could be accused of presenting 'art' as 'life').

A rereading of some of these parodies renews a modern reader's sense of how revolutionary Wordsworth's poetry seemed to his contemporaries, and of the kinds of resistance they put up - by constructing an image of the poet as a dealer in trifles and infantile speculation - that for more than twenty years prevented widespread recognition of what later generations have regarded as his great work. It is significant that critical parody of the poet became almost non-existent after the publication of the River Duddon sonnets (1820), the Ecclesiastical Sketches (1822) and Memorials of a Tour on the Continent (1822) when Wordsworth was hailed as a respectable writer whose innovatory period was at an end.[65] Once the poet had conformed to the period's conservatively-biased thought on the question of serious poetry and suitable style, and readers had become familiar with his early work, parody of him virtually ceased. The only major exceptions are Landor's 'Malvolio' (published in 1837) in which Landor maliciously casts doubt on the poet's ability to live the simple life he praises in his writing; Hartley Coleridge's revenge for being called a "six years Darling of a pigmy size":

> He liv'd amidst th'untrodden ways
> To Rydal Lake that lead; -
> A bard whom there was none to praise,
> And very few to read ...
>
> Unread his works - his "Milk White Doe"
> With dust is dark and dim,
> It's still in Longman's shop, and oh!
> The difference to him!

and James Kenneth Stephen's famous late nineteenth century parodic summation on the subject of Wordsworth's achievement (after the 1807 sonnet, 'Thoughts of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland'):

> Two voices are there: one is of the deep;
> It learns the storm-cloud's thunderous melody,
> Now roars, now murmurs with the changing sea,
> Now bird-like pipes, now closes soft in sleep:
> And one is of an old half-witted sheep
> Which bleats articulate monotony,
> And indicates that two and one are three,
> That grass is green, lakes damp, and mountains steep:
> And, Wordsworth, both are thine ...[66]

The "two voices" refers both to the poet's unequal achievement and to his initial choice of diction and subject-matter: indicating that as late as 1891 he was still being mocked for the same reasons as he had been in 1812, and that the sense of what is ridiculous in Wordsworth was, and is, largely governed by the wider sense of what counts as sublimity in poetry.

d. Byron

As suggested earlier in this chapter it was the popularity of the Byronic hero as represented by Childe Harold (and subsequently by the Giaour, Selim, the Corsair, and Lara) that initiated the vogue for verse parody that persisted until the end of the century; and in the moody and misanthropic nature of the Byronic hero - as first characterized by the Smiths - parodists could recognize a typical figure from the world of the Romantic novel: the self-absorbed outcast; the "genius" in rebellion against the "common sense" of the rest of society who must be made to confront "real life" and accept his human responsibilities. Moreover, it might also be thought of as being particularly important that readers should not want to be like, or admire, Byronic heroes after 1816 and 1819, when the poet's treatment of his wife and the publication of the "blasphemous" Don Juan[67] could be interpreted as the direct outcome of his adherence to Romantic ideals put into action; and while the Smiths' parody was indulgent and lighthearted in its characterization of Byronism as a harmless posture adopted by a young man, and Hogg imitated Childe Harold as a serious homage in The Poetic Mirror,[68] after 1816 parodists increasingly expressed their

feeling that the Byronic fiction was pernicious and that the cultivation of introspective individualism was responsible for the disruption and "blue-devilling of society" (p. 105) that Peacock described in Nightmare Abbey.

Peacock's "Mr. Cypress" represents a study of Byron after the immediate success of Childe Harold and the verse romances (concluding with Lara in 1814) had abated and been marred by events in his personal life, but before he had encountered the hostility of the critics towards his dramas and Don Juan. In the novel, pseudo-Byron's conversation is based almost entirely on passages from Childe Harold[69] so that Byron seems to condemn himself out of his own mouth as a man who lives his art, and - in the context of the novel - is no more competent than Flosky or Scythrop in dealing with what is actually going-on around him. Like them, he lacks moral maturity in his response to life, which is that of a thwarted and spoiled idealist crying for the moon of "ideal beauty"; and "Mr. Hilary", the voice of Peacockian common sense, points out that these sort of (Romantic) attitudes are incompatible with performing the moral (classically moderate and socially conservative) imperatives: "To reconcileman as he is to the world as it is, to preserve all that is good, and destroy or alleviate all that is evil in physical or moral nature" (p. 109). These are the goods sought by the "wise" - distinguished in Edgeworthian terms from the illusion-chasing geniuses who "throw away the substance in catching at the shadow" (p. 109); and both Romantic writers and readers must be reeducated into accepting that they have a common humanity and must realize their ideals (by identifying with the ordinary passions, hopes, and fears of mankind) in a world which will always be imperfect. When Cypress theatrically remarks: "The sum of our social destiny is to inflict or endure", Hilary counters: "Rather to bear and forbear, Mr. Cypress" (p. 107) - emphasising the virtues of a humane moderation that is directed towards others and is not self centred.

Peacock's verse parody of Byron characterizes a mood of world-weariness and half-pleasurable abandonment to melancholy that runs counter to Mr.

Hilary's notions of human and artistic responsibility; and Peacock's judgement of Byron, like that of Shelley and Coleridge, is that he has failed to come to terms with the world because he propogates fictions that are misleading and morbid, and advocates exclusive, impractical, and anti-social behaviour. Mr. Cypress's "lyric agony"[70] might be partly a pose, but in relation to the "intellectual blight" (p. 41) being disseminated by Romantic-Gothic writers, it is potentially a dangerous one:

> There is a fever of the spirit,
> The brand of Cain's unresting doom,
> Which in the lone dark souls that bear it
> Glows like the lamp in Tullia's tomb:
> Unlike that lamp, its subtle fire
> Burns, blasts, consumes its cell, the heart,
> Till, one by one, joy, desire,
> Like dreams of shadowy smoke depart.
> (p. 111)

In the good-humoured vivacity of Nightmare Abbey, however, the sombre implications of "blue-devilling" are not developed, and Byron is let off lightly; but other parodists began to express a more open hostility towards the poet after the publication of the first two cantos of Don Juan on 15 July 1819. Once again Blackwood's Magazine led the attack, and a series of essays and parodies appeared over the next five years, contending that Byron's "genius" and "power" had been overborn by his "vice" and "profligacy".[71] 'Remarks on Don Juan' commented that "the strain of the whole poem is pitched in the lowest key" (p. 513); and three issues later, in November 1819, Maginn expressed in a parody a popular critical view of the poet as a "wretched debauchee".[72] 'Don Juan Unread' (in the metre of Wordsworth's 'Yarrow Unvisited') was perhaps the best-known Byronic parody of its time, and for many years appeared as a tail-piece to the commentary in Murray's edition of Byron's work. Maginn's criticism is quite explicit - the public may have yielded at one time to the seductive qualities of Childe Harold and the verse romances, but Don Juan is the ultimate fruit of such indulgence:

> "Oh Rich," said I, "are Juan's rhymes,
> And warm its verse is flowing!
> Fair crops of blasphemy it bears,
> But we will leave them growing ..."

The political implications of Byronism are also stressed by the High Tory Maginn, for whom Romanticism portended the overthrow of the established social order, the disruption of the Church, and the end of privileged education:

> "When Whigs with freezing rule shall come,
> And piety seem folly;
> When Cam and Isis curbed by Brougham,
> Shall wander melancholy;
> When Cobbett, Wooler, Watson, Hunt,
> And all the swinish many,
> Shall rough-shod ride o'er Church and State
> Then hey! for Don Giovanni."

Maginn continued to undermine the credibility of the Byronic hero in Blackwood's by his more familiar technique of comic vulgarizing in such pieces as 'The Mad Banker', 'Daniel O'Rourke', and 'Childe Paddy's Banishment to New Holland'.[73] He turned The Giaour into 'The Galiongee', in praise of smoking; set 'Stanzas for Music' to the subject of drunkenness; while 'Darkness' ("I had a dream which was not all a dream") became 'Drouthiness': "I had a dream which was not all-my-eye".[74] Rumours of the forthcoming publication of Cain (1821), meanwhile, provoked an anticipatory parodic review which purported to describe and quote extracts from this "sacred drama" - 'The First Murder; or, The Rejection of the Offering'.[75] The 'quotations' are ludicrous, and the commentary - anticipating charges made later in the century against the Spasmodics -[76] implies that attempts to make a closet-drama from such a subject are both silly and presumptuous.

In contemporary parodies of Byron one may chart the progress of his decline in critical favour between 1812 and his death in 1824 - the year of Warreniana's Maginn-like 'Childe Higgens', a completely vulgarized version of Byron's poem that involved the adventures of a plebian hero in Billingsgate. As in the case of Wordsworth, Byron's parodists dismissed his finest poetry together with his meretricious work; and while the Smiths' and Peacock's analysis of Byronism appears substantially correct to modern taste, contemporary judgements relating to what is morally acceptable in poetry - which dictated that Don Juan should receive an

unfavourable reception among the conservatively-biased parodists of the period - are themselves unacceptable in the modern context.

e. Shelley, Keats, and the Cockney School

Compared to the poets discussed above very little parody was written of Keats and Shelley and the poets associated with the so-called Cockney school, although critics could level similar charges of immorality and absorbtion in a poetic pose against Shelley as they had against Byron, and the prose-critical response to Keats and the Cockneys was notoriously severe. But the only notable parody of Shelley written in the period was Peacock's portrait of him as Scythrop Glowry in Nightmare Abbey, where he is depicted as a young enthusiast (in the line of parodic heroes and heroines) deluded by his readings of German horror stories, and nothing is said about his poetry; while virtually no parodies of Keats exist.[77] Ten years after the publication of Rejected Addresses the vogue for parody was undoubtedly waning; but, in addition, the reason for the scarcity of parody in Shelley's case can perhaps be located in the nature of the poems themselves which are too diffuse to lend themselves easily to imitation, so that the "brilliance, vacuity, and confusion"[78] of which the critics spoke deterred potential parodists of his work (whose religious, moral, and political philosophy could perhaps be more easily anatomized in the context of the more conventional review or essay than in that of parody).

In relation to Keats, it might be said that the poet also lacked a style which lent itself easily to parody and that, as well, his relative unpopularity meant that he was not a good subject for parody.[79] Only the persistent Blackwood's Magazine pursued a policy of parody towards Shelley, Keats, and the Cockneys, and parodies appeared in connection with the famous 'On the Cockney School of Poetry' series (October 1817 - December 1822): adding ridicule to an already richly vituperative vein of abuse. The Radical Leigh Hunt was an obvious target for 'Maga's' Tories, and Keats suffered through his association with the elder poet (although he

was actually the least abused of the Cockneys in Lockhart's reviews),[80] while Shelley was brought into the argument because he was held to have encouraged the School in a form of the latter-day Della Cruscanism. To the Blackwood's staff the Cockneys were parvenues who violated standards of poetic decorum (like Wordsworth, Hunt claimed that "the proper language of poetry is in fact nothing different from that of real life")[81] and conspired to undermine the moral bases of society by their choices of proscribed subject-matter and styles of living. Lockhart, perhaps helped by Maginn, concluded the fifth number of his 'Cockney' series with "a specimen of the regular Cockney Essay and Sonnet"[82] which parodied Hunt's slanginess and implied that the poet was vulgar, badly-educated, suburban, and thoroughly egocentric. The parodic sonnet was addressed to 'Myself', and pseudo-Hunt muses on Hampstead Heath:

> I love to walk towards Hampstead saunteringly,
> And climb thy grassy eminence, Primrose Hill!
> And of the frolicsome breeze, swallow my fill,
> And gaze all round and round me. Then I lie
> Flatily on the grass, ruralily,
> And sicken to think of the smoke-mantled city ...

The parodic essay, meanwhile, stressed a bumptious vulgarity which was seen as being part of the writer's general ill-breeding and poor education: "Petrarch wrote sonnets. This, I think, is pretty generally known - I mean, among all true lovers of Italian poetry ... When I inform my readers that Shakespeare wrote sonnets, I know they will be inclined to receive the revelation with a bless-my-soul sort of stare" (pp. 99-100).

Blackwood's invoked similar standards of decorum, elevation, and civility in relation to Hunt and the Cockneys as they had in the context of Wordsworth's 'low' poetry; and one of the magazine's most brutal and ill-considered reviews of Keats and Shelley (possibly by Maginn) arose from its policy of defending the dignity and loftiness of Poetry in the face of Romantic attempts to experiment with poetic language and break with Augustan traditions. 'Remarks on Shelley's Adonais' (December 1821)[83] began by comparing the Cockneys to the Della Cruscans, who are said to

have displaced the true language of Milton and Pope with the poetry of "sympathy"; and the essayist deplored the influence of Shelley in aiding a revival of the sort of poetry which sets too high a value on personal responses to experience and is distinguished by its "pestilential hatred of everything generous, true and honourable ... [and a] daring and fiend-like insult to feeling, moral lies and Christian principle" (p. 696). The first Della Cruscans, the essayist asserted, were interested in "every thing belonging to their own triviality" and so wrote poems informing the world of a lap dog's sleepless night; the second generation, accordingly, lament the death of a Cockney: a young man who wrote "silly and presumptious work" filled with "vulgar indecorums" (p. 697). 'Adonais' is reviled as an example of Cockney egocentricity and wallowing in emotion for emotion's sake; and the death of Keats is compared, in two parodies, first to an accident to a popular London marshall who broke his leg on Lord Mayor's Day ("O weep for Wontner, for his leg is broke", p. 698), and secondly to the death of a tom-cat: "Weep for my Tomcat! all ye Tabbies weep, /For he is gone at last" (p. 700). The philosophy of judging poetry by standards of common sense that relate to received ideas about who writes poetry, what sorts of subject they should address, and what language they should use, is carried here to its logical and unpalatable extreme - and the standard of decorum which demands that the reader accept the death of Keats as he would that of a cat (hardly a "triviality" in terms of the Christian morality to which the essayist so frequently alludes) has become tyrannical and brutishly philistine.

The last-mentioned parody is an example of an extreme reaction to Romantic poetry, where the demand that the poet be a spokesman for his community and uphold the traditional function of poetry as an elevated and civilized art has hardened into an absolute intolerance of innovation in any form; and the response of Blackwood's Magazine might be seen as representing the fear of the privileged that the dignity and high standing of Poetry would be undermined by the new, critically unsanctioned Romanticism. While it was not often as crudely expressed as in the Shelley-Keats parody,

Romantic parody in the nineteenth century tended to support a conservative response to poetry, and to reinforce anti-experimental and anti-subjective attitudes in aesthetics: where a preference for "common sense" above "genius" and for decorousness above "vulgarity" might lead to well-directed ridicule of the wilder excesses and enthusisams of the Romantics (as in Peacock's work, for example), but could result, equally, in Maginn-like dismissiveness of Romantic aims and a mistrust of any poetry that did not conform to inflexible standards of poetry as a High art. Varied though the aims and achievements of the Romantic poets are, it is evident, I think, that similar pressures were brought to bear on them by parodists who directed laughter at whatever was deemed eccentric in an effort to persuade the poet to conform to traditional expectations regarding poems and poets, and to avoid the singular, the immoderate, and all forms of discourse which by their 'oddness' might be thought of as private rather than public, or as encouraging antisocial behaviour of all types: from revolution to belief in improbable fantasies.

The parody of the period represents one aspect of the age's encounter with Romanticism, when a large and relatively untutored audience tried to come to terms with a powerful and popular movement. In a sense, the parodies constitute a warning to the reader to beware of naivety in his response to possibly beguiling fictions, and not to jettison standards that had served eighteenth century poetics well in favour of an uncritical acceptance of what the new poetry had to offer. But, equally, many of the parodies demonstrate the inadequacy of the contemporary critical vocabulary for assessing the Romantic achievement, and the difficulty experienced by the poets' contemporaries in trying to respond to the poetry in ways that avoided the naive adulation heaped on Childe Harold but which involved a greater degree of critical acumen than appeals to pragmatic notions of common sense and the outmoded tenets of the Augustan era.

Chapter 3. Thackeray: Parody as a Prelude to 'Vanity Fair'

After the virtual exhaustion of the Gothic novel and the novel of sentiment by 1820, and the deaths of the younger Romantic poets in the 1820s, little parody was written until the 1840s, corresponding with the so-called interregnum in literature marked by these years. In the first quarter of the century, conditions for parody had been ideal - a mass readership came into existence at the same time as a popular and controversial literary movement was flourishing, and parody had been used as a method of evaluating and trying to come to terms with the achievement. But over the next twenty years, although the middle-class reading public continued to expand in number, there was nothing approximating to an important movement in the arts at this time and no widespread parodic activity such as that associated with the Romantic poets and novelists. And yet the period was not without literary interest: Browning and Tennyson, of course, published in the thirties, as did Dickens; the Spasmodic school of poets (closely associated with the work of Robert Montgomery) was founded by Philip 'Festus' Bailey in 1839; a sub-Romantic genre of poems and ballads, typified in the work of Letitia Landon ("L.E.L."), Felicia Hemans, and Sarah Flower Adams was extremely popular; while the Silver-fork and Newgate novels became best-selling successors to the sentimental and Gothic novels of the previous decades. The thirties were by no means a dormant period, and are only properly characterized as an interregnum by the absence of a body of major works of outstanding merit, or a single dominant literary movement. The period following the death of Keats, Shelley and Byron, and preceding the publication of Bells and Pomegranates and Tennyson's 1842 Poems, was actually an extremely active one for popular poets and novelists; and writers like William Harrison Ainsworth, G.P.R. James, Charles Lever and Bulwer Lytton, all enjoyed extensive sales and a large audience, as did contributors to the poetical albums (like Lady Blessington's Keepsake) of the twenties and thirties.[1]

The existence of such a body of popular literature played a significant

role in the development of Thackeray's fiction - which in its turn influenced the development of the realist novel in England after the publication of Vanity Fair in 1847/8 -[2] for Thackeray served a protracted literary apprenticeship in the 1830s, and like Austen and Fielding before him, developed his ideas on the novel partly through the medium of parody of the most popular romantic fictions of the day. By parodying the aesthetic contrivances of Richardson and Radcliffe, Fielding and Austen might be thought of as simultaneously alerting readers to what they conceived of as a "debasing of the novelist's currency"[3] while asserting the value of realist representations of "the ordinary train of human events and the modern state of society";[4] and Thackeray was evidently writing in the same tradition when he began his career as a novelist by parodying those of his contemporaries who, as it appeared to him, were exploiting a gullible public's taste for feebly sentimental poetry and novels that made no attempt to describe "morals and manners"[5] but relied instead on easily elicited responses to popular heroic stereotypes and stirring appeals to the romance inherent in stories of "what has never happened nor is likely to" (Reeve). Thackeray's early parodies represent his first attempts to clarify a concept of the novel that did not involve 'debasing its currency' in the way of popular historical, Society, and Newgate novels; and parody may be seen as part of the "constant criticism of novel-conventions" referred to by Kathleen Tillotson that helped to "clear[···] the ground for himself and his readers by indicating the kinds of novel he would never write".[6] In order to present the reader with a persuasive account of "Nature and Probability", Thackeray, like Fielding and Austen, first had to mock improbability in literature and expose absurdities and inadequacies in other fictions by parodying them so that the revolutionary "Novel without a Hero" might be more acceptable to a public accustomed to Heroes and Heroines; and, again, the connection between parody and literary realism seems to be a fundamental one, as Harry Levin has noted: "To convince us of his essential veracity the

novelist must always be disclaiming the fictitous and breaking-through the encrustations of the literary. It is no coincidence that from Rabelais to Jane Austen, so many realists have begun as parodists".[7] The following chapter will seek to elaborate Tillotson's account and to support James Wheatley's contention that "parody ...is both conceptually and biographically fundamental to Thackeray's career as a novelist".[8] This will in turn lead on to a consideration of the role of parody in the evolution of Thackeray's satirical-realist aesthetic in the years preceding the publication of Vanity Fair, set in the perspective of earlier parodies of Romantic novels.

Thackeray's earliest, schoolboy attempts at parody were conceived in the broadly vulgarizing tradition of introducing the comic-mundane into poems normally associated with lofty or sentimental topics - thus "L.E.L.'s" "Violets! - deep blue violets" became "Cabbages! bright green cabbages", while T.H. Bayly's "I'd be a butterfly born in a bower /Where roses and lilies and violets meet" underwent a similar change: "I'd be a tadpole born in a puddle /Where dead cats, and drains, and water-rats meet".[9] This childish mistrust and dislike of sentimental, drawing-room verse was echoed in Thackeray's maturer work, which displays both the writer's unease in the presence of large emotional gestures generally, and a positive desire to undermine the "trumpery... feeble verse" that "encouraged bad taste in the public"[10] by parodying it; and in adult life he wrote several verse parodies in the style of his Charterhouse pieces - 'Sorrows of Werther', for example, which, in the line of Canning, Edgeworth, and Peacock, recapitulates the old joke about the bread-cutting Charlotte: in Thackeray's version, Werther blows "his silly brains out" while Charlotte "like a well-conducted person, /Went on cutting bread-and-butter".[11] There is no place for Germanic heroism in Thackeray's aesthetic, which is all on the side of normal behaviour and the decorum of everyday life; and super-sensitive people - at this stage in his development, at least - are objects of ridicule. In the "Fitzboodle" paper 'Ottilia' (1843), the

melancholy sentimental ballad written by young women for young women ("She never would willingly let off the heroines without a suicide or a consumption")[12] predates Mark Twain's better-known account of the species by thirty years, and Thackeray parodies it twice in the same paper: once in 'The Willow Tree', which purports to be an authentic piece of Ottilia's work and only indicates by its subtle over-posing that it isn't; and once in a vulgar version which effects broadly comic substitutions. In Ottilia's version the heroine wanders by a "pale river" and commits suicide in it; and the parody concludes with the pre Pre-Raphaelite refrain: "Domine, Domine! /Sing we a litany, /Wail we and weep we a wild Miserere!" In the second parody the heroine's lover keeps their riverside tryst and the girl stays out all night, pretending that she has lost her door key. The refrain in this version advocates aggressively commonsensical behaviour as an antidote to romantic sentimentalism:

Hey diddle diddlety,
Cat and the Fiddlety!
Maidens of England, take caution by she!
Let love and suicide
Never tempt you aside
And always remember to take the door-key!

Already, in these minor pieces, Thackeray is announcing the sorts of themes and styles that do not interest him, and several of the satirical novelist's maturer traits are apparent - his dislike of genteelly effusive language and feeble emotionalism (which contrasts with the plain-speaking and vigorous characterization that Thackeray had praised in Fielding's novels as early as 1836);[13] his mistrust of character stereotypes and extravagant sentiment (representing, perhaps, a repudiation of his boyhood taste for historical and Gothic novels);[14] and his concern that readers should not be satisfied with this sort of writing. In his earliest parodies Thackeray opposed the 'ideal' in literature with the vulgarly 'real', and in this he was possibly influenced by his youthful reading of Theodore Hook and Pierce Egan, although the writer whom he most obviously resembles is William Maginn - whose robust and hearty dismissiveness of the Romantic poets dominated parody in Blackwood's Magazine until 1830, when he left

and founded Fraser's. It was under Maginn and in the Blackwood's/Fraser's tradition of parody and criticism that Thackeray received his early training as a writer.

The influence of the Maginn circle on Thackeray would repay a more detailed study than Miriam Thrall was able to devote to it in her 1934 history of the early years of Fraser's Magazine, and Maginn himself seems to have been a fascinating and influential figure.[15] A brilliant, constitutionally bumptious Irish Classicist, arch-Tory, and drunkard, he dominated middle-brow periodical life throughout the twenties and thirties with his forthright criticism and abuse of his contemporaries; his veneration of Fielding and the eighteenth century; and his own immense facility in the fields of translation, imitation, parody, and light verse. Under his editorship Fraser's pursued a campaign of reviews, essays, and parodies directed against "ostentatious or elaborate style and overdressed sentimentality or emotion"[16] in literature, in which their favourite targets were Bulwer Lytton and, to a lesser extent, the young Disraeli. Maginn's Classical training reinforced the magazine's general policy of upholding standards of formal excellence, urbanity and decorum in literature; and long practice at imitating and translating the Greek and Roman poets made parody an ideal vehicle for the mocking imitation of modern literature - where, burlesque-like, the Augustan ideal of 'the poem' could be invoked by setting matter and manner grotesquely at odds (by introducing low subjects), and commonsensical notions of real-life could be made to prevail by matching romantic material against the prosaic. The result is not what we would normally think of as either decorous or restrained - "My heart leaps up when I behold /A bailiff in the street" -[17] but Maginn is, nevertheless, writing in Augustan and anti-romantic traditions when he abuses Bulwer as a fop and high-prater, or lets Moore down with a bump by introducing vulgar comedy into 'The Last Rose of Summer' - 'The Last Lamp of the Alley' - and, moreover, his concern that the reading public should not be beguiled by shoddy romancing seems to have been a

genuine one, aimed at improving the quality of novel-writing.[18]

Thackeray wrote for Fraser's for about ten years,[19] and developed his anti-romantic, parodic, and satirical talents under the tutelage of Maginn and in an irreverent atmosphere of real "Victuals and Drink" at the Fraser's round table, where Thackeray's favourite Fielding rather than Bulwer was venerated as the admirable novelist. It was as a Fraser's writer and protégé of Maginn that Thackeray began to develop his idea of literary realism, starting in the crudely high-spirited Fraserian style of opposing the works of authors who Thackeray later condemned in Pendennis (1850) as "sham/ming/ sentiment or mouth/ing/ for effect",[20] by introducing low material through the agency of parody in order to discredit them. In this, he was guided by the typical swagger of the magazine whose most popular series included 'Ruminations round the Punch Bowl' and the 'Symposiacs',[21] and the naive assumption that vulgarity is more real than refinement and that a low subject-matter necessarily enforces a realist (understood as 'more competent') reading. Thackeray's development as a novelist involved the refining of these techniques and the eventual transcending of the rollicking Fraser's aesthetic until he was in a position to write his own novel that would "convey as strongly as possible the sentiment of reality".[22]

The positive service that Fraser's performed for Thackeray during these years was to direct his attention towards the popular fictions of the day, and - by its very bumptiousness and abrasiveness - to ensure that his own work would avoid the sentimentality and stereotyping that eventually did overtake it.[23] So long as Thackeray was engaged in mocking others he was less inclined to be indulgent about his own writing; and although he remained, perhaps, too long influenced by the cruder aspects of Fraser's humour, the satirical, abusive, and pugnaciously commonsensical tone of the magazine kept his work free from some of the faults he condemned in others. But more importantly, in terms of this study, Fraser's provided a platform for Thackeray to express and develop his ideas on

what the novel should be like by engaging him in their campaign against popular literatue, with especial reference to the Society novel of dandified high-life, and the Newgate novel; and much of Thackeray's early work, when not overtly parodic, was antithetically conceived in relation to these models. Thus the "Yellowplush" papers with their badly-educated, comic-servant narrator mock books of etiquette and the novels of Catherine Gore, Charlotte Bury, Disraeli and Bulwer (in his Silver-fork style) which purport to give an account of Society's "morals and manners"; while 'Catherine' and Barry Lyndon could be thought of as anti-Newgate novels. By mocking and parodying novels outlawed by Fraser's, Thackeray eventually evolved a concept of novelistic realism as he began to elaborate on the "real life" with which he, in the manner of parodists of the Romantic novel, typically opposed idealized fictions in order to expose their inadequacy as accounts of the world - just as Austen elaborated the 'natural and probable' (that Love and Freindship only implies) into an articulate account of Bath society in Northanger Abbey.

Moreover, Thackeray's satire may be seen to derive from this same, ultimately parodic source: for just as earlier parodists of the Romantic novel introduced the mundane and the prosaic into the fabric of the "Romance" to demonstrate its inability to assimilate these elements and to suggest that reality was different from the way it was presented in such stories, so refuting Mrs Gore's fictions in the "Yellowplush" papers, for example, involved the introduction of intractable material whose nature had to be such that it would discredit her account of Society as idealized and inaccurate - in this case, the portrayal of the low intrigues of Deuceace and the veniality of his circle. It is evident that it is only a short step from suggesting that Mrs Gore's novels do not adequately describe the world, to suggesting what it is that high-society is really like and enlarging the unidealized parodic material (by which her fictions are judged and found wanting) into satirical realism proper. "Parody, explicitly criticizing a mode of literature, develop*[s]* into

satire, implicitly criticizing a way of life",[24] and this movement is central to Thackeray's aesthetic, where parody exposes literary fictions which often transpire to be fictions about society and the way people conceive themselves, and the standards of "real life" that he invokes become progressively more complex and influenced by the satirical-mundane with which he counters the appeal of the Silver-fork and Newgate novels.

It is through antithesis and parody that Thackeray progressed as a novelist, using models to define his own stance, but responding to them in an increasingly skilful way that culminated in the parodic-realist Vanity Fair in which he manipulated aspects of popular novels to form part of a flexible, articulate narrative on the theme of delusive fictions.[25] In his early work the "sentiment of reality" is too often confused with the presence of the mundane and low, and satire does not progress beyond denunciation or laboured irony, but later maturity is prefigured in such pieces as 'The Professor', 'Catherine', or 'A Shabby Genteel Story', for example. 'The Professor: A Tale of Sentiment' appeared in Bentley's Miscellany in 1837,[26] at about the same time as Thackeray began to contribute regularly to Fraser's. It is very much in the tradition of earlier parodies of the Romantic novel where notions of good sense and accurate representations of "real life" are played off against a palpable fiction in order to reveal the delusive nature of romance. Adeliza in 'The Professor' acts like Cherubina or Lewis's Miss Simper when she faints away during a dancing lesson because her instructor looks into her eyes: " 'A glass of water,' cried Adeliza... The dancing-master hastened eagerly away to procure the desired beverage, and, as he put it to her lips, whispered thrillingly in her ear, 'Thine, thine for ever, Adeliza!' " (pp. 113-14). James Wheatley has analysed this passage well, arguing that its exaggerations imply linguistic and moral standards relating to reasonable descriptions of glasses of water and to sensible behaviour;[27] and it is clear that Adeliza is deluded by her belief in a fiction and her use of a language which corresponds so poorly to fact: for in hearty

Maginn-style Adeliza's surname is Grampus and Dandolo is not an aristocrat but a Cockney oyster-monger who speaks badly and is a fortune hunter to boot. Adeliza tries to act out her romantic fantasy in this unromantic context, and she becomes "a MANIAC!" (p. 126). She goes mad, Thackeray implies, because her fiction (conceived in terms of language-use and behaviour) cannot sustain the pressure of reality - where water is not normally "the desired beverage" and people do not faint when someone looks at them. To the naive reader Thackeray is pointing out that words and things are not necessarily related in his contention that if water isn't "water" but becomes "the desired beverage" and people believe this to be an accurate description of the world, then they labour under Adeliza-like misapprehensions about the nature of reality which eventually lead to madness or delusion of one sort or another. Not only does 'The Professor' repudiate the sentimental romance as an adequate vehicle for Thackeray's idea of the novel, but it also - though rather more inelegantly than Austen - poses questions about the way reality is mediated through language, and the status of literary fictions generally.

Throughout the 1830s and 1840s Thackeray was defining his attitude to the novel and its function, and in 1840 remarked significantly: "We back the reality against the romance".[28] At this stage in his career, his concept of "reality" derived negatively, as I have suggested, in the form of a parodic antidote to Adeliza-like exaggerations, so that at times he is led to make crude over-simplified statements of the order: "You might call a hat a 'swart sombrero,' 'a glossy four-and-nine,' 'a silken helm to storms impregnable, and lightsome as the breezy gossamer;' but in the long run, it's as well to call it a hat. It <u>is</u> a hat; and that name is quite as poetticle as another".[29] This narrowly conceived view of reality and language was in keeping with <u>Fraserian</u> mistrust of "ostentatious or elaborate style", but it does not represent a mature idea of literary realism, and Thackeray had to criticize and mock a variety of novels before the tension between "romance" and "reality" proved a

fruitful one and his notion of a minimally distortive language rose above the level of calling a hat a hat. Thackeray's review work of this period increasingly emphasises the importance of fidelity to detail, the writer's first-hand knowledge of his subject, and the avoidance of 'glamour' in literature;[30] but it was largely through his parodic response to novels that he evolved an increasingly complex sense of the "reality" that he invoked as a touchstone by which popular fiction was to be judged, and abandoned the simple hat - sombrero dichotomy.

Yet, in a sense, the over-simplified remarks about the hat were a necessary stage in Thackeray's development and were actually effective in the context in which they occurred. 'Epistles to the Literati' was addressed to Bulwer Lytton whose Silver-fork novels Pelham (1828) and Devereux (1829), and Newgate stories - Paul Clifford (1830); Eugene Aram (1832); and Ernest Maltravers (1837) - were enormously popular and typified to Maginn, that style of "ostentatious" writing that Fraser's deplored, and encouraged people to believe in and admire idealized heroes of the type repudiated by the Tory magazine: the pseudo-aristocrats (Bulwer as a parvenu who has no right to talk about his betters), and criminals in rebellion against ordered society. Maginn made Bulwer the focus of Fraser's attack on degeneracy and bad taste in modern literature in much the same way as he had Byron in the earlier Blackwood's, and when Thackeray joined the magazine he participated enthusiastically in its "ribald impertinence*[s]*"[31] against the novelist, having already recorded in his diary his reaction to Eugene Aram: "It is a very forced and absurd taste to elevate a murderer for money into a hero. - The sentiments are very eloquent clap-trap".[32] Thackeray's subsequent remarks about the hat must be seen in relation to his opinion of Bulwer's fiction, where a misuse of language ("clap-trap") is thought to lead to a distorted moral vision: "For one who is always preaching of Truth, of Beauty, the dulness of his moral sense is perfectly ludicrous. He cannot see that the hero into whose mouth he places his favourite metaphysical gabble... is a fellow as

mean and paltry as can be imagined".[33] Imprecision in Bulwer's writing and his high-flown style mean that he cannot come to terms with the real nature of his subject, and instead of presenting a Fielding-like "strong real picture of human life" accurately and unrhetorically reported, he distorts "the whole truth about human nature"[34] and glamourizes high-society and criminality: confusing fact with fiction, and encouraging his readers to do the same.

Against Bulwer's "premeditated fine writing"[35] which obscures the nature of reality, Thackeray set his own "ethic" of "telling the truth"[36] - conceived at this stage, in the face of Bulwer's "metaphysical gabble", as using the simplest words to describe the ordinary activites of average human beings, and not the extremes of society: aristocratic and criminal. By criticizing and parodying Bulwer, Thackeray began to refine this set of ideas on the sphere of activity of the novel and the role of novelistic language; and, moreover, like Maginn, he came to reject the vatic role of the artist as a solitary genius, in the light of Bulwer's claims to special privileges (exemption from the criticism to which he was notoriously sensitive, and unique insight into the nature of the True and Beautiful). In 'Mr. Yellowplush's Ajew' (1838) Thackeray presents "Bulwig" speaking in an ungainly pastiche of his own novels and making boastful, Byronic claims for the uniqueness of the artist and his independence from society:

> "Look at me. I am the first novelist in Europe. I have ranged over the wide regions of literature and perched on every eminence in its turn. I have gazed with eagle eyes on the sun of philosophy, and fathomed the mysterious depths of the human mind. All languages are familiar to me, all thoughts are known to me, all men understood by me... But the knowledge is only emptiness; the initiation is but misery, the initiated, a man shunned and bann'd by his fellows."[37]

But in the context of the story Bulwig is an affected little man who literally dines-out on his reputation and, in the manner of a Peacock novel, is easily outwitted by the other members of the dinner-party and his pretensions revealed as false. The solitary, mystical eccentric is forced to measure his ideals against society and he fails because he has

lost contact with reality and his fellow men and has manipulated language until it stands at such an oblique relation to the world that - as Thackeray contended in 'Epistles to the Literati'- all it is capable of conveying is "sham scentiment, sham morallaty, and sham poatry" (p. 316). So Bulwer's play The Sea Captain (1839) - of which 'Epistles' is a review - fails to describe reality because Bulwer has misconceived the artist's role, and elevated language into the rarefied atmosphere of "windy humbugg... *[*that*]* won't bear the commanest test of comman sence" (p. 324): "People, when their mothers reckonize them, don't howl about the suckumambient air, and paws to think of the happy leaves a rustling - at least, one mistrusts them if they do" (p. 325).

Thackeray's insistence on "comman sence" and the necessity of dealing with common life in language that distorts "the sentiment of reality" as little as possible, is of the same type as that of other parodists of popular fiction and romantic writing generally, and represents both a protest against the misreading of escapist novels, and an assertion of the worth of realist representations and the value of the artist-"craftsman"[38] (rather than the artist-"genius"). Of particular significance in reinforcing these attitudes was Bulwer's experiment with the Newgate novel which was copied with even greater success by Ainsworth in Rookwood (1834) and Jack Sheppard (1839), and by Dickens in Oliver Twist (1837-8). Thackeray's reaction to Eugene Aram has already been noted; and Fraser's responded to the enormous popularity of the novel by publishing 'Elizabeth Brownrigge' (August and September 1832), a two-part prose parody that took as its 'heroine' the sordid apprentice-murderer who had already figured in The Anti-Jacobin's parody of Southey as a means of deflating the poet's description of regicide as a noble act. The image of"Brownrigge" *[sic]* serves a similar purpose in the Fraser's parody in relation to Bulwer's scholar-criminal; for although the parodic heroine speaks perfect Bulwerese, the language does not cover the facts of the case.(the beating to death of two children, and an ignoble flight from justice), and Bulwer's

representation of crime is discredited as idealized and involving a failure of moral perception in its persistent recourse to "fine writing" rather than - in Thackeray's terms - "telling the truth" about murder. Thackeray was almost certainly not the author of the parody,[39] but it nevertheless occasioned his first significant attempt at fiction in 'Catherine', and provoked him into writing a series of articles and reviews condemning the "sham low" of Dickens and the 'absurdity' and 'immorality' of Jack Sheppard, and demanding that the criminal be "displayed as he really is in action, and in principle".[40]

'Catherine' was conceived as a parody that would expose the Newgate school by pursuing the same strategy as 'Elizabeth Brownrigge', setting a palpable fiction at odds with intransigent facts (the physical rather than the philosophical aspects of murder, for example) which suggests that this is what roguery is "really" like, and thus establishes Thackeray's claim to be "telling the truth" about criminals. He chose Catherine Hayes for his parodic heroine - another infamous murderer who killed her husband and dismembered his corpse, and was summed-up thus by Thackeray in his ballad of the same name:

> A heart more atrociously foul
> Never beat under anyone's stays:
> And eager for blood as a ghoul
> Was Catherine the wife of John Hayes.[41]

'Catherine' (1839-40) is the prototype of the novel without a hero, and Thackeray's declared aim was to describe "real downright scoundrels, leading scoundrelly lives ...*[who]* don't quote Plato, like Eugene Aram; or live like gentlemen... or prate eternally about το καλον ... or die white-washed saints, like poor Biss Dadsy, in Oliver Twist".[42] The 'Catherine' "cathartic" (p. 184) was designed to draw the reader's attention to the difference between fashionable novelists' accounts of villains and "real ... scoundrels" by emphasising the failure of Bulwerese, or the fictions of Sheppard and Dickens, to describe what is actually going-on in the story; and like earlier parodists, Thackeray obtrudes

undigestible slices of low material into the fabric of a narrative that should be all idealized fantasy, setting the professions of the characters and the assumed (Bulwerian) narrative voice at odds with what we know to be happening. So when Thackeray "proposes" a style that is a cross between Bulwer and Gore to describe the reunion of the now middle-aged and sluttish Catherine and her elderly, impotent lover it is evident that the description is ludicrously wide of the mark:

> The count advanced towards the maiden. They both were mute for a while; and only the beating of her heart interrupted that thrilling and passionate silence. Ah, what years of buried joys and fears, hopes and disappointments, arose from their graves in the far past, and in those brief moments flitted before the united ones! ... Thus it is ever - for these blessed recollections the soul always has a place; and while crime perishes and sorrow is forgotten, the beautiful alone is eternal. (p. 141)

The "reality" of the story is that Catherine is no "maiden"; the hero and the heroine are not "beautiful"; and their "crime*[s]*"are irredeemably vicious. The inference to be drawn is that Bulwer's fictions, too, are deceptive and must not be mistaken for descriptions of reality.

But Thackeray's exemplary impulse mars 'Catherine' in much the same way as Austen's does Northanger Abbey; and, like Austen, Thackeray was at this stage unable to effect a smooth transition between straightforward parody - as in the extract quoted above - and elaboration of the realistic detail that undermines the idealizations of the models; while his shifting of narrative stances is similarly abrupt. The irruption of the low into the clichéd matter is awkwardly handled and, as already suggested, is based on the rather naive premise that the lower the subject the greater the impression of veracity. So Catherine's high-flying rhetoric à la Bulwer is interrupted by the discovery of her husband's head spiked on the churchyard railings, and her lover falls "grovelling down among the stones, gibbering and writhing in a fit of epilepsy" (p. 174). In his effort to show what crime is "really" like, Thackeray has pushed his case too far in obtruding melodramatically sordid material into a narrative that he has allowed to develop beyond the stage of a simple aesthetic exemplum.

Max's mania cannot be read in the same way as Adeliza's because he, like

Catherine, is awkwardly located as a character - sometimes playing the role of a simple Bulwerian anti-type, and sometimes acting like a rounded character in a realist novel who has been endowed with a believable psychology of criminal motivation. At various points in the narrative, neither he nor Catherine can be dismissed, as Thackeray requires, as the wicked obverse of the idealized Aram; and 'Catherine' switches uncertainly between the a-morality of simple parody (as in 'Epistles') that mocks aesthetic contrivance and is not meant as "a serious statement of feelings about real problems or situations" (Culler), and the sort of narrative which holds the author accountable for the disposal of his creations. Thackeray wrote to his mother that 'Catherine' was a "mistake all through" because he had "conceived a sneaking kindness for his heroine and did not like to make her utterly worthless".[43]

The letter to Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth constitutes Thackeray's recognition that a realistic narrative was emerging from his use of parody but that he had been unable, in 'Catherine', to move smoothly between the two different modes. Yet, however aesthetically flawed it is, 'Catherine' remains a crucial text in a consideration of Thackeray's development as a novelist and of the role played by parody in his work. Throughout the story he is constantly proposing styles in which he could have written his narrative (Chapter VI and Chapter X, for example), and 'Catherine' concludes with hints on how to turn it into a tableau or a theatrical entertainment. These parodies demonstrate Thackeray's interest in the concept of fictiveness and how it is that different styles enforce different readings, but he also uses them antithetically to reject the fictions they represent and to proclaim that he is no "romancer" but pledged to "THE TRUTH" of an "authentic history" (p. 78). In this sense parody is used to bolster Thackeray's claim to be an 'historian'; and he repeated the trick in Vanity Fair at the opening of the crucial 'Vauxhall' chapter, conjuring the Newgate and Silver-fork styles, only to reject them as "romance*[s]*" that are false to "life" and the "homely story"

which he, Austen-like, proclaims is his subject.[44] This represents one aspect of Tillotson's "clearing the ground", where parody is used to "break[...] -through the encrustations of the literary" to assert that Thackeray's representation of life is the true one.

This is an obvious instance of an early use of parody that recurs in Vanity Fair and defines Thackeray as a teller of "authentic histories" (rather than "romances") who rejects popular heroic stereotypes in favour of "homely stor[ies]" and a novel without a hero. But the sub-title of Vanity Fair is itself significant in considering parody in a broader context than that of parodies of specific styles and passages; for Thackeray's work up to, and including, Vanity Fair implies the existence of models (novels with heroes) much more emphatically than Fielding or Austen; even in the obtrusively titled Sense and Sensibility. Thackeray does not, in fact, exhibit the typical progression from a writer of parodies to a writer of independent, realist narratives; but instead, other people's fictions form the basis of his own work, and he constantly alludes to them and evokes popular images that he inverts or otherwise rings the changes on - the noble criminal hero ('The Luck of Barry Lyndon', 1844); the chivalrous knight ('A Legend of the Rhine', 1845; Rebecca and Rowena, 1850); Prince Charming ('Catherine'; 'A Shabby Genteel Story', 1840). So the characters in Vanity Fair may be seen as logical, if more elaborate, extensions of a long process of parodic reference to writers and their work - with Becky bearing fundamentally the same relation to the Newgate heroine as Catherine, while Amelia resembles Adeliza in her sentimental delusions about the real world. Similarly, Dobbin could be said to be prefigured in the unhappy knight in 'Proposals for a Continuation of "Ivanhoe" ' (1846) whose lady has not been worth winning; while George Brandon in 'A Shabby Genteel Story' is the forerunner of George Osborne - and both are anti-types of popular models to which Thackeray alludes in the text and in opposition to which his characters develop. The acknowledged presence of models, then, about which Thackeray can "propose"

a variety of alternative interpretations seems to be fundamental to his satirical-realist aesthetic, where parody both shows 'how it's done' and implies how it ought to be done: abolishing uncongenial fictions by an appeal to 'probability' (the "comman sence" of the "homely story" rather than the "romance") and the language of realism that purports to convey "the sentiment of reality" more adequately than the "romance".

Moreover, if Thackeray rather untypically maintains(from the point of view of 'straightforward' realist novels) a continuous reference to other writers in his work, testing his fictions against theirs, he is also untypical in that the process does not invariably lead to a repud-iation of certain aspects of the models. I have so far discussed the dismissive role of parody and allusiveness as "clearing the ground" and negatively defining Thackeray's own sphere of interest, but even in 'Catherine' one of the responses to the Newgate novel involves endorsing, not the stereotypes, but the archetypes that inform popular fictions; and from among the motives and "authentic" characterizations that Thackeray proposes as alternatives to novelistic cliché, the suggestion emerges that people really do act out fictions and believe themselves to be sentimental heroines or admirably resourceful Newgate characters because they need to possess idealized images of themselves that are flattering reflections thrown out from darker wells of elemental lustful, aggressive, and greedy passions. Popular novelists unwittingly tell the truth when they pick murder and social success as their subjects, disguise it though they may behind a smoke-screen of "fine-writing"; and their fictions offer powerful metaphors of genuine psychological conditions. So Catherine is a parody of the sensitive Sensibility heroine and the simple maiden of the fairy-tale, but, nevertheless, she does love Galgenstein and behaves as if he really were Prince Charming - deluded by the, Thackeray implies, always-distorted vision of Love. Similarly, in the figure of Catherine Thackeray parodies the glamorous and interesting Newgate protagonists, and repudiates the idea of crime as Heroic. But criminality itself is seen as all-pervasive,

and Catherine is in the grip of crude, elemental passions when she murders and tries to effect an entry into what she (again misled by an image) believes to be a glittering society.

A complicated series of references, then, informs the characterization of Catherine, who is at once a parodic antidote to Bulwer and Ainsworth and a life-like character in a novel - whose fundamental psychology involves the compulsive acting-out of rudimentary passions that parody has exposed (and endorsed) as underlying popular novels. The derivation, however, of Thackeray's satirical-realism through parody is relatively easy to trace in this technically unsophisticated piece, and it seems to consist of three familiar movements. To begin with Thackeray proposes a model (the Newgate, the Gothic, the historical and the Silver-fork novels, as well as the frail, fainting heroine of Sensibility novels, are all implied in 'Catherine') which he then undermines by exposing it to typical parodic tests involving probability and the creation of a disparity between a professed fiction and what is 'really' going-on in the story. In this manner he clears the ground of unsatisfactory fictions in order to suggest that his alternative is preferable. But having mocked naive readings that would take Bulwer as life-like, Thackeray then proceeds to reinstate the model in the new context of psychological realism which recognizes the ubiquitousness of criminality in society and the human psyche, for example, as well as the tendency of people to be misled by delusive images, and finds in the Newgate hero an acceptable symbol of Crime and in the success of popular fictions an example of the desire to believe in false images about society and what really motivates people.

Given this simple thesis-antithesis-synthesis structure, Thackeray has created the potential for greatly enlarging his scope as a novelist: from parody of fictions and play with the notion of fictionality (which includes ideas about how novels should be read and the relation of the writer to his narrative and to his audience), to satire on the fictions society disseminates and the capacity of people to be deluded and

manipulated by a variety of images and emotions. The thematic relevance of portions of 'Catherine' to Vanity Fair is, I think, sufficiently obvious and has been discussed elsewhere by Robert Colby.[45] Technically, however, Thackeray's later work may also be seen as a refinement of 'Catherine's' method of repudiating and assimilating original models within the text in order to provide a multiple perspective on the narrative and to suggest that the process of mediating reality through fiction is a complicated one (and not, after all, as simple as calling a hat a hat). In 'Catherine' Thackeray was actually unable to effect smooth transitions back and forth between the three parodic-realist movements; but his later work displays a growing mastery of the technique which found its most satisfactory expression in Vanity Fair.

John Loofbourow has already offered an account of the allusive textures of Thackeray's prose in Vanity Fair and it is not the intention of this study to overlap with his analysis.[46] Instead, I should prefer to stress the significance of Thackeray's parodic method of creating the realist illusion as a form of enforcing increasingly difficult readings on a public unaccustomed to this new style of fiction, and prone, as parodists of Romantic novels pointed out, to surrender too easily to stereotyped images and ways of writing - where readers of a Lever or Gore novel, knowing exactly what to expect, could be guided into a whole set of flabby responses by the mere mention of a particular kind of character or recognition of a familiar mode of narrative. Both the repudiation and partial endorsement of popular novels in Thackeray's parody-realism mesh prevent such an easy acceptance from taking place, and by constantly disrupting the reader's expectations he ensures that 'meanings' are not doled-out in the straightforward manner of Bulwer or Disraeli. Instead the reader has to work hard at constructing a meaning from novels and stories in which, as Loofbourow contends, so much of the plot is incidental[47] and the real Hero could be said to be language.

In 'A Shabby Genteel Story', for example, the Cinderella story is

refunctioned in a satirical context[48] with a Prince Charming who is corrupt and protagonists who inhabit a boarding-house. Yet through the complex use of parody Thackeray is able both to imply what Heroes are really like, and what kind of fate awaits girls like Caroline who believe themselves loved by Princes because society and psychology foster these illusions. Thackeray's management of parody and irony and the manipulation of his own relation to the narrative are more skilfully handled than in 'Catherine', and the transitions between simple repudiating parody and the more complicated endorsing mode are relatively smooth. When Joe Swigby decides to marry and chooses the Ugly Sister who, through a series of trivial and vulgar accidents happens to be sitting nearest to him on a coach-ride, Thackeray parodies moralizing novelists (who would normally address themselves to handsome and high-born subjects) in a mock-apostrophe: "O mighty Fate ... with what small means are thy ends effected! - with what scornful ease and mean instruments does it please thee to govern mankind!"[49] Such rhetoric is out of place in the immediate context of Joe's and Linda's vulgarity - " 'Law, Mr. S!' " (p. 335) - but Thackeray then goes on to compare the chances of Fortune to a stroll down Regent Street which ends, depending purely on which side a person walks, in either poverty and degradation or in love and riches. In contrast to the mock-apostrophe, this analogy actually has a serious application to the characters in the story for they do seem to be the victims of a series of chances over which they have little control. But having made this point, Thackeray then goes on to add the comic rider (to the description of the lucky walk):

> What is the cause of all this good fortune? - a walk on a particular side of Regent Street. And so true and indisputable is this fact, that there's a young... gentleman with whom I am acquainted, that daily paces up and down the above-named street for many hours, fully expecting that such an adventure will happen to him; for which end he keeps a cab in readiness at the corner of Vigo Lane. (p. 334)

Detractors of Thackeray might find in this an example of the instability that they consider a flaw in his work; but in refusing to keep a stable fix on his characters or his own relation to the narrative, Thackeray

achieves a flexibility and complexity that are quite beyond the range of his popular-novel writing contemporaries. In the Swigby passage Thackeray is evolving the idea of realist narratives as necessarily multi-faceted and converging on "the truth" from many different angles: a series of tentative approaches that are specifically designed to repudiate the notion of making binding statements about the reality of the story or enforcing one given reading on the book's audience. Swigby may be a vulgar parody of a gallant lover, invalidating the opening address to "Fate"; but, compared to Brandon, he is also a man of humane virtues about whom it is appropriate to speculate in the Regent Street manner. Yet again, though, it is not the business of the novelist to act as a philosopher;[50] and so Thackeray ends his meditations with an ironic disclaimer which serves as a warning to the naive reader not to take anything he says at face value. He may be right about Regent Street and Fortune, but the comic sting in the tail warns us that the friendly author actually knows no more than we do about "mighty Fate" and is not to be relied on as a source of infallible knowledge about a reality which cannot be simplified into popular clichés. In the compass of this short passage Thackeray is emphasising the difficulty of being accurate about even minor episodes, which turn out to be complicated and generators of virtually limitless reverberations; and what Thackeray is urging is an altogether more complex idea of how novels make statements and build-up the illusions than that offered by conventional romances.

Thackeray manipulates narrative perspective through parody, irony, and his own playful stance relative to the book - refusing to conform to his reader's expectations about what constitutes a novel and deliberately making the process of reading difficult. He draws attention to the book's status as a fiction by his persistent references to other people's novels and by the various narrative postures he assumes; and in doing this, and complicating the reading, he urges the reader to think about how stories are written and read, and the validity of traditional responses to various kinds of narrative. If he is an intrusive narrator it is in the self-

conscious rather than the omniscient mode that draws attention to 'how it's done' by constantly reminding the reader that he is reading a novel that cannot be believed in naively. "There are some terrific chapters coming presently" (p. 60);[51] "The present Number will be very mild. Others - but we will not anticipate those" (p. 96). Vanity Fair is a show put on by the puppet-master especially for his audiences' benefit, but, then again, Thackeray leaves it tantalizingly unclear whether he is the real master or not. At all events, he refuses to conform to the normal standards of chummy reliability of ordinary serial-writers and to provide his audience with an easy, incontrovertable reading. He exploits the convention and is capable of playing the hortatory role quite seriously, or of asserting his omniscience - "novelists have the privilege of knowing everything" (p. 31); but he also claims to be a spectator at the Fair who has no right to moralize and doesn't know what's going on ("Was [Rebecca] guilty or not?" p. 677), and that the characters are real people who are out of his control - Vanity Fair is the "authentic history" of a party Thackeray met in Germany: "It was on this very tour that I, the present writer of a history of which every word is true, had the pleasure to see them first, and to make their acquaintance" (p. 793). Thackeray is playing games with his readers in these ironic claims and counter-claims that create an impression of veracity by their very denial that the novelist is a creator or a transcriber of a simple reality which he hands-over to his readers who may take it as accurate and his position as author for granted.

The destruction of the novel reader's complacency might be said to be one of the aims of Vanity Fair, and Thackeray achieves it by refining the techniques he had already put into practice in 'Catherine' and 'A Shabby Genteel Story', refusing to allow the reader to settle into a single, comfortable attitude towards the narrative. Two girls, one rich and one poor, leave school in search of romance; but, surprisingly in terms of this convention, they are both married early in the serial, and

Thackeray insists that he is not like those novelists who, when their "hero and heroine pass the matrimonial barrier... drop the curtain, as if the drama were over then" (p. 319). His novel will be different and self-proclaimedly unconventional in its refusal to elicit the easy responses of popular happy-ever-after stories, and Thackeray only introduces such themes and figures in order to use them as springboards for his own proposals and to bounce the reader out of his passive acceptance of heroes and heroines. So Thackeray conjures a conventional opening - two girls of differing temperament, physical appearance and class, with "the world before *[them]*" (p. 13) - but then juggles with its familiar elements and muddles them up, so that the 'differentness' of his novel and the difficulty of the reader's task is made immediately evident.

Before either of the girls actually makes an appearance, for example, the reader learns that Amelia is virtuous, popular and loved, and that Rebecca is poor and despised. The fortunes of both will obviously be contrasted and the question seems to be, will both of the girls turn out to be heroines, or only one - and if so, which? The dice seem rather too heavily weighted in Amelia's favour; moreover, from the text and drawings we learn that she is dark and rather strapping, while Becky is a blond Victorian little woman. By one set of conventions Amelia might really be a villainess, or at least a spoiled child of fortune, while Rebecca could escape from the cruelties of school and into a world which will probably be cruel to her again but in which it seems likely she will eventually find security and a happy marriage. But the names appear to be attached to the wrong people in this interpretation, for "Amelia" is decidedly a Heroine's name, while "Rebecca Sharp " is hard-sounding and Jewish - which is unpromising for an English heroine. Then Amelia is introduced and it appears that, after all, she will be the real heroine, because Thackeray makes the typically ironic, Austen-like disclaimer that "she is not a heroine" (p. 7) and qualifies it as true by describing, in tones of mock-lamentation, a "good humour*[ed]*" girl who lacks the aquiline nose and

interesting pallor of heroines in books. However, at this stage, we don't know what to make of the assertion that "the silly little thing would cry over a dead canary bird" (is it simple irony that demands to be seen-through and signifies the author's approval of her tears, or is it a treble bluff - a statement to be taken at face-value?), and the repeated stress on her tearful sensibility is ambiguous.

When Becky appears, the interpretation becomes even more complicated because her self-possession and status as an outsider act as a relief to the saccharine sweetness that surrounds Amelia and threatens to overwhelm the reader. Her dealings with the elder Miss Pinkerton seem wholly admirable - and here she is the agent of Thackeray's satire, which reinforces this interpretation: "Miss Pinkerton did not understand French; she only directed those who did" (p. 9) - and she memorably throws the "Dixonary" out of the carriage window as she leaves, fixing herself much more firmly in the reader's mind than the bland Amelia. At the end of the first chapter the reader is left with a confused impression as to which girl is to be Heroine. It might be that Amelia is the admirable character and Becky an ungrateful adventuress who will repay all kindness with impudence; or it might be a daring novel, on Newgate lines, with an interestingly wicked heroine who competes with traditional virtue. Neither explanation wholly covers what has happened in this opening chapter, and Thackeray has carefully redistributed and confused familiar novelish traits between the two girls precisely so that the identification should be difficult and the novel without a hero be established from the outset as being without a heroine too.

The first chapter indicates that there will be no simple appeals to novel-inspired loyalties; and repeatedly throughout Vanity Fair just as the reader might think he has recognized a particular sort of character or situation, Thackeray subverts it, turning it on its head and restoring it in another form which sometimes differs from and sometimes resembles the original conception - manipulating the narrative skilfully through

the movements of proposal, repudiation, and endorsement suggested above. Thus he creates an impression of complexity, of realism , by discrediting traditional fiction and ways of reading, and proposing his own novel which cannot be read naively. He is not invariably successful and sometimes (especially in the case of Amelia) only imperfectly detaches some aspects of his characters from their original contexts, so that we are asked to admire certain qualities taken straight from convention which have not been tested by parody - an obvious flaw in his later fiction - but, on the whole Vanity Fair represents Thackeray at his most lucid and innovatory, as the fictions of literature and the fictions of society interpenetrate to supply him with a satiric vision of the world as an image in a cracked vanity-glass which throws back the reflection of our own unheroic faces: disreputable actors, manipulating and manipulated in our turn by self-centred delusions and a congenital inability to throw away distorting mirrors and confront the world clear-sightedly.

The link between parody and realism, and the need to prepare the public for this new type of novel, is emphasised by the publication of a series of parodies in Punch which ran concurrently with the opening parts of Vanity Fair and which directed straightforwardly dismissive mockery at Thackeray's main rivals, in order to discredit them and to establish the cameraderie that a successful reading of parody creates between reader and parodist, and so predispose the reader towards his own novel. In these parodies Thackeray was in effect proclaiming that he too could write like Bulwer or Disraeli if he wanted to and win money and fame, but had chosen not to because he found their work wrong-headed and absurd; and they represent an attempt to persuade the reader to his point of view - outmoding his rivals and appealing to the reader's vanity (as Thackeray was ironically aware) by letting him in on a joke perpetrated by the author of the very latest thing in novels. There is no suggestion in the Punch series that there is anything salvable in popular novels, and they perform the task of "clearing the ground" of competition and

preparing the reader for a new mode of fiction.

Vanity Fair was issued in monthly parts between January 1847 and July 1848, while 'Punch's Prize Novelists' (reprinted in 1856 as 'Novels by Eminent Hands') appeared weekly between April and October, 1847. The seven prose parodies, in the tradition of Rejected Addresses, were supposed to have been submitted to the magazine by famous novelists in response to a competition offering a large cash prize, and the 'entrants' included Bulwer Lytton, Disraeli, Catherine Gore, G.P.R. James, Charles Lever, and James Fenimore Cooper.[52] Although Thackeray no longer wrote for Fraser's, the magazine's influence is still evident in his choice of subjects (Cooper excepted) and method of parodying them, and Thackeray ridiculed Bulwer as mercilessly as he had ten years previously in the "Yellowplush" papers, presenting him in the front rank of an undignified scramble to make more money from novel writing by entering Punch's competition.

But if one of the distorting mirrors in Vanity Fair is the desire for wealth and glittering social position, another is language; and the common theme of all the parodies - again exemplified by the luckless Bulwer - is the power of "fine writing" of one sort or another to obscure rather than reveal the nature of reality. Thus the imprecision of Bulwer's language and thought processes are anatomized in the opening scenes of 'George de Barnwell' (April 3-17, 1847) - market-day in the crowded Chepe: an ideal set-piece for a realist but, described in Bulwerese, curiously intangible and unreal:

> 'Twas noonday in Chepe. High Tide in the mighty River City! - its banks wellnigh overflowing with the myriad-waved Stream of Man! The toppling wains, bearing the produce of a thousand marts; the gilded equipage of the Millionary; the humbler, but yet larger vehicle from the green metropolitan suburbs (the Hanging Gardens of our Babylon) ... and the Philosopher, as he regarded the hot strife and struggle of these Candidates in the race for Gold, thought with a sigh of the Truthful and the Beautiful, and walked on, melancholy and serene. (p. 85)

The only sense of crowding that Thackeray allows Bulwer is purely adjectival; and the humanity, activity and squalor of the scene run through

the mesh of an indecorous prose (describing the city in pastoral terms and an "elaborate... style") which wholly fails to convey any sense of the living reality of Chepe. Bulwer, Thackeray implies, cannot characterize his subjects clearly because of the vocabulary he employs, and the failure is a moral as well as an aesthetic one. The Philosopher who watches the world through the eyes of the Beautiful turns his back on the unlovely sight of realpeople, in a dirty and disgraceful part of London, engaged in the struggle to survive and earn some of the gold which Bulwer affects to despise - but for which his heroes commit murder and for which his books are written. The "dulness of his moral sense" derives from an inadequate, misleading vocabulary which allows murder to be committed in the name of the "Ideal" (p. 94): an impermissible disparity between words and things.

'George de Barnwell' is in the same line as 'Elizabeth Brownrigge' and 'Catherine' in its parodic opposition of idealized crime with 'real' murder; and the "absurdity of elevating a murderer for money" into a hero, and the kind of language Bulwer uses which enables him to make this mistake, are suggested by the very title of the parody: when plain George Barnwell perpetrated a sordid murder in real life in the course of robbing his employer's till. Thackeray's aristocratic corruption of the apprentice's name is an implicit comment on Bulwer's failure to come to terms with his subject and to make realistic proposals about criminal natures; and Thackeray's George is impossibly noble and learned - a Greek scholar who works in a grocer's but frequents Buttons' (where he outwits Steele, Addison, Pope, Swift and Bolingbroke) and commits murder in the name of "Science" and "Art" (p. 97). Like Bulwer, he juggles with language and "big words";[53] with the result that talk about the "Truthful" and the "Beautiful" (p. 84) has no effect in restraining him from murdering his uncle, and his reasoning (and, by inference, Bulwer's) is correspondingly sophistical: "Were it Crime, I should feel Remorse. Where there is no Remorse, Crime cannot exist. I am not sorry: therefore, I am innocent.

Is the proposition a fair one?" (p. 97). Obviously it is not; and the parody plainly directs the reader to find Bulwer's scholar-criminals absurd and immoral, and to recognize that what Bulwer is actually talking about (and what devotees of Bulwer admire) is brutal murder - which Bulwer idealizes because, the parody implies, he cannot suggest real motives for his characters.

Bulwer's inadequate and inaccurate descriptions of crime are matched in the 'Prize Novelists' series by other 'fine- writers' who provide "cheap Barmecide entertainments"[54] that are devoured by a credulous and inexperienced public, and whom Thackeray tries to expose as inept, if not exploitative - using parody to alert the reader to the process of fiction by showing how it is that various styles create their different illusions. All the writers parodied in the 'Prize Novelists' series are seen to be misusing novelistic language in one way or another, presenting the reader with delusive fictions and a series of empty heroic postures that tell us nothing about "reality". In Coningsby (1844) Disraeli describes the aristocracy as the source of culture and spiritual virtues that will regenerate the rest of society; but in 'Codlingsby' (24 April; May 15-29) Thackeray suggests that what Disraeli really admires in his heroes are the outward trappings of their supposedly intellectual superiority - the wealth, possessions and power that actually distinguish this group from the rest of humanity. Disraeli, Thackeray implies (following the orthodox Fraser's line, inspired by Carlyle),[55] views the world with a dandy's eye, and the exotic detail with which he invests his novels betrays him as one profoundly interested in material wealth and ostentation. In Coningsby, for example, the hero of the title adopts an attitude of intense admiration for the brilliant Jew Sidonia, who possesses, among other rare and beautiful objects, a wonderful horse given to him by the Pasha of Egypt: "and I would not change her for a statue in pure gold, even carved by Lysippus".[56] Thackeray's Codlingsby (with implications of weakness involved in the change of name) prostrates himself in an agony of hero-

worship before Raphael Mendoza, who owns a canoe with which he out-distances all the Oxford Eights: "a caïque from Tophana ... The Bashee had refused fifty thousand tomauns from Count Bountenieff ... for that little marvel" (p. 102). The emphasis on the cash element reinforces suggestions made throughout the parody that for Disraeli, Coningsby and Sidonia are noble and worthwhile characters to study and emulate, not because they are exceptionally gifted human beings, but because they are rich; and it is the love of "pure gold" rather than Lysippus that really distinguishes the novelist and the class he writes about with such enthusiasm from other people. Moreover, Thackeray's parodic description is further weighted with the suggestion that Disraeli's is a vulgar, shop-boy's day-dream about what constitutes culture and good-breeding: "The carpet was of white velvet ... The walls were hung with cloth of silver, embroidered with gold figures, over which were worked pomegranites *[sic]*, polyanthuses, and passion-flowers, in ruby, ameythist and smaragd" (p. 108). The novelist is placed as one who aspires to the confidence of an aristocrat while retaining the values of the bourgeois; and whoever will redeem society, in Thackeray's "ethic" it will not be Disraeli and the fashionable circles he admired.

The Society novel is further parodied in 'Lords and Liveries' (June 12 -26) in which Thackeray takes Mrs. Gore to task for her frankly escapist love-stories that are based on the supposition that the intrigues of lords are more intruiging than those of commoners. Her archly affected style, with its mass of foreign phrases and polite circumlocutions, in Thackeray's version hides a common-or-garden pleasure in gossip about people who are actually no different from anyone else (so Thackeray's principals take their names from run-down areas of London: "Alured de Pentoville"; "Ameythist Pimlico") and whose lives - parodically re-presented - are a tedious round of aimless conversations and witless posturing. Again Thackeray discounts another form of fictional glamourizing in order to strengthen his own claims to be "telling the truth" about criminality,

dandies and sentiment; and Mrs Gore, rather more good-naturedly than Bulwer and Disraeli, is also dismissed as offering too facile an account of the world and the activities of its inhabitants.

The remaining parodies take as their subject another major theme of popular fiction of the period: the fighting romance, historical and modern. If Bulwer obscured the true nature of his subject by using a vocabulary consisting largely of abstract terms, G.P.R. James and Charles Lever are represented by Thackeray as going to the opposite extreme of saturating their martial yarns with such a profusion of technical terms that the reader's moral sense is eventually blunted into accepting as entertainment stories about murderous attacks and sudden death. So talk about "the arblast, the mangonel, the semi-culverin, and the cuissart of the period" (p. 142) in 'Barbazure' (July 10-24), or "advancing across the two... demi-lunes which flank the counterscarp" (p. 142) in 'Phil Fogarty' (August 7-21), does not obscure the horrific bloodiness of the action in Thackeray's parodies of James and Lever, and the parodic narrators are presented as offering foolishly idealized accounts of heroism that cannot be reconciled with the facts of the story. In 'Barbazure' James's view of the past is seen to be distorted by the nostalgic haze (and love of fine-sounding, sometimes inaccurate detail) through which he views it, and by the repetition of stale formulae that are meant to conjure up a mediaeval atmosphere - the notorious "solitary horseman" or the "two cavaliers" who figure prominently in the opening chapters of many of James's seventy novels.[57] The parody implies that James neither offers authentic history nor accurate descriptions of how people behave, and 'Barbazure' is deliberately anachronistic and over-violent. Similarly, 'Phil Fogarty' by "Harry Rollicker" - Lever wrote under the pseudonym "Harry Lorrequer" - characterizes Lever as blinded by admiration for his supposedly lovable Irish hot-heads, and their swaggering, brawling behaviour in Thackeray's parody masks a merely ignorant brutality. (The parody of Cooper, 'The Stars and Stripes' (25 September and 9 October) reworks the theme by

emphasising the barbarity that lies beneath the surface of the bumptious American's attempts to glorify the warlike deeds of his countrymen.)

In the 'Prize Novelists' series, then, Thackeray made plain his views on the state of contemporary fiction and the taste of that section of the reading public who were content with such vitiated offerings; and the parodies constitute a declaration of intent to avoid popular simplifications about Society, crime, and heroes generally. Interestingly, Thackeray wanted to include a parody of Dickens and a self-parody in the series[58] but Mark Lemon, the editor of Punch, vetoed the proposition on the grounds that it would be bad publicity for Thackeray at this stage in his career to mock the eminent novelist, and might cause a drop in Thackeray's own sales if people thought that he was not being serious about Vanity Fair.[59] Thackeray agreed - although the parody of the Newgate style ("The Night Attack") with which he opened the 'Vauxhall' chapter in Vanity Fair was directed at least partly at Dickens[60] - and the series closed in October 1847.

In the event, 'Punch's Prize Novelists' provided a great amount of publicity for Vanity Fair in the wake of the ill-will that the parodies provoked among some of the novelists parodied and their friends. Dickens was immediately drawn into a public controversy with Thackeray over the Forster affair, which arose when Forster reportedly called Thackeray "as false as hell" after having read the series; and Dickens wrote to Forster, saying that he had told Thackeray's intermediary "that in reference to his Imitations in Punch ... I had a strong opinion of my own; and that is that they did no honour to literature or to literary men, and should be left to very inferior and miserable hands".[61] He later wrote to Thackeray: "I will tell you now candidly that I did not admire the design *(of the parodies)* but I think it a great pity to take advantage of the means our calling gives us with such accursed readiness, of at all depreciating or vulgarizing each other... I thought your power thrown away on the series, however happily executed".[62] Although there was no open

breach with Dickens at this stage, the parodies, as well as the success of Vanity Fair perhaps, were a cause of dissention between the two novelists that subsequently led to their estrangement.

It was inevitable that the parodies should be drawn into the debate about what Thackeray himself called 'The Dignity of Literature',[63] since they were conceived in the cut-and-thrust Fraserian tradition of ridiculing other authors without compassion or regard to previous friendships, and with the definite intent to persuade the public to stop buying their books. They certainly did nothing to dissipate the atmosphere of feuding and ungracious competitiveness that surrounded the profession of commercial novel writing at this time; and although Thackeray might protest that his motives were purely aesthetic and promise his friends that the parodies were "good-natured ... friendly and meek in spirit",[64] it is difficult not to construe them, as well, as a personally motivated attack on people's livelihoods, reputations, and personalities. Lever, who had been friends with Thackeray and defended his controversial Irish Sketch Book (1843) thought so, and terminated their friendship by caricaturing Thackeray as "Elias Howle" in Roland Cashel (1850); while Thackeray is said to have made an "implaccable enemy" of Disraeli who cut him in public but waited until he was dead before including a satirical portrait of him as "St Barbe" in Endymion (1880). Bulwer, rather resignedly, complained about the attacks to which he had been subjected by Fraser's and Punch men for the past twenty years; and G.P.R. James, not noted for his ready wit, is supposed to have remarked that "Thackeray rhymes with quackery".[65] Only Cooper on the other side of the Atlantic and Mrs. Gore, nearing the end of her career and the subject of the least malicious of the parodies, seem to have been unruffled by the series; and the parodies actually created the "great combustion" that Colman and Lloyd had hoped would follow their parodic attacks on Gray.[66]

The controversy surrounding 'Punch's Prize Novelists' is perhaps symptomatic of the power that parody was felt to have at this time in

moulding taste and affecting writers' reputations, as well as indicating how much importance was attached to, and how much excitement was generated by, questions relating to the form and scope of the novel and the role of the novelist. But laying aside personal motives, such as writing for "Bread"[67] and jealousy at the success of others, there seems little doubt that Thackeray was also motivated in his parodies and novels by the desire to register a more disinterested protest against "the debasing of the novelist's currency" that he saw going-on around him in the popular successes of Bulwer, Ainsworth, Lever, Disraeli, Gore and James - (Thackeray's attitude towards Dickens remained ambivalent) - and that he was concerned to establish the novel as a complex, articulate mediator of reality which could offer its readers more than "cheap Barmecide entertainments" (as well as earning its author some "Bread").

His success may be gauged by the sales of Vanity Fair[68] and the immediate effect of the novel and the 'Prize Novelists' series on the purveyors of the popular novels of the period. Dickens's position remained secure with his wider public, although Thackeray's name was often linked with his as a rival,[69] and Vanity Fair might have seemed more intellectually stimulating to a certain section of readers than some of Dickens's novels to date. But the generally hostile reaction of the novelists parodied in 1847 may be taken as an indication that Thackeray's gibes had found their mark; and Lever, Bulwer and James, at least, were all forced to reconsider their work in the light of the parodies and the popularity of Vanity Fair. After reading 'Phil Fogarty' Lever commented that he might as well "shut up shop",[70] and he published no more stirring tales of Irish military life but turned to domestic, "homely" subjects in The Daltons (1850-1852) and The Fortunes of Glencore (1857), abandoning his former swashbuckling style in favour of "the faithful portraiture of character, the close analysis of motives, and correct observation as to some of the manners and modes of thought which mark the age we live in".[71] Bulwer, meanwhile, published a defence of his novels after the appearance of 'George de

Barnwell' - A Word to the Public (1847) - and when he reissued Eugene Aram in 1849 he restructured the story so that his hero was no longer a murderer but only an accessory to the crime. Like Lever he then began writing novels about typical provincial society (The Caxtons, 1850; My Novel, 1853): an indication, perhaps - if Bulwer's instinct for giving the public what it wanted was operative in this case - that the extravagant, elaborately-plotted novel was temporarily out of favour and that a "vogue for realism"[72] was current.

G.P.R. James continued to write his sub-Scott brand of historical romance until his death in 1860 (as Thackeray remarked, in "the only city in Europe where the famous 'Two Cavaliers' cannot by any possibility be seen riding together"-[73] Venice), but he ruefully acknowledged the justice of Thackeray's taunts in The Fate (1851): "We get into a habit of dropping our buckets into that same immeasurable depth of thought, exactly at the same place... Nevertheless, upon my life, if I can help it we will not have in this work the two horsemen and the white horse".[74] Disraeli, for his part, published no novels between Tancred in 1847 and Lothair in 1870; but although 1847 does seem a significant stopping date, it could be argued with some plausibility that his silence was the result of political commitments rather than Thackeray's parody.

It would seem, then, that Thackeray's attempts to acclimatize the public to the realist novel without a hero were successful, and that his efforts to counteract "trumpery... feeble" writing that "encouraged bad taste in the public" by parodying it and proposing his own novel were well-received. However, the extent of his success in relation to a mass readership should not be exaggerated, for at no time did the sales of Vanity Fair exceed Dickens's, Bulwer's, Lever's or Ainsworth's best-sellers,[75] and in the long run Thackeray's aim of accustoming "the public" to difficult readings remained unfulfilled. Lever's and Bulwer's experiments with realism were less successful (in terms of sales) than their earlier novels, and they were ultimately revenged on Thackeray by the advent of

W.H. Smith's 'Yellowbacks', Routledge's Railway Library, and other cheap editions which sold their pre-1848 works by the hundreds of thousands - earning Bulwer £20,000 in 1853 alone.[76] 'Punch's Prize Novelists' did indeed cause the novelists involved to revaluate their achievements, while Vanity Fair was undoubtedly an outstanding influence in establishing the realist novel in England; but, increasingly, large sections of "the public" turned to the kinds of novels which Fraser's and Thackeray had campaigned against since 1830 but which were becoming most readily available (financially, intellectually, and emotionally speaking) to an ever-expanding reading public, while 'serious' novelists began that process of exploring the form which led to work by James and Conrad at the end of the century that was quite beyond the reach of the common reader.[77] The "fine writing" and "Barmecide entertainments" that Thackeray deplored became the staple of a new popular press, while novelists who were interested in experimentation increasingly found themselves writing for an élite - so that , in terms of the mass, Thackeray's parodic attempt to limit the encroachment of "bad taste" novels was finally unsuccessful, while Vanity Fair itself (for better or worse) may be said to have encouraged the intellectualization of the novel.

On the other hand, references to 'mass readership' should not obscure the fact that Thackeray himself - possibly because he incorporated many of the elements of popular fiction in Vanity Fair (and more obviously in his later, less parodic work) - was popularly read even if he was not as popular as Dickens, and that his use of parodic realism provided new perspectives on the concept of the novel which were welcomed by a large, receptive audience in 1847/8 who were interested in the new novel and who laughed at the 'Prize Novelists' series - even if they were subsequently overtaken in the fifties by a new, much larger generation of naive readers which declared its preference for novels with heroes. 'Punch's Prize Novelists' and Vanity Fair are perhaps best seen as standing at a turning point in English literary culture, when a difficult novel could still be

read popularly (compared, say, with the number of people who read Ulysses), before the novelist's demandsbegan to conflict with the demands of an expanding market, creating what was, in effect, Two Nations of novel readers by the end of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 4. "Bon Gaultier" and the Victorian Poet

In the previous chapter the evolution of Thackeray's realist aesthetic was discussed, and it was proposed that at least part of his achievement in Vanity Fair was based on his responses to the popular literature of the interregnum where Thackeray simultaneously opposed the "debasing of the novelist's currency" (exemplified by the shoddy romanticism of the best-selling Bulwer) and upheld the realist modes of the mid-eighteenth century. In the early 1840s parodic activity in relation to the question of the function of poetry was also renewed, and once again the interregnum and developments arising from it provided a context for evaluating the current state of literature; and although no parodist of the stature of Thackeray emerged to revaluate 'the poem', a similar pattern of parodic attack and exploration was preserved in the work of Theodore Martin and William Edmonstoune Aytoun who together formed the enormously successful "Bon Gaultier" partnership whose parodies were written in the anti-romantic, vulgarizing tradition of William Maginn, in protest against the popular verse (with some glances at the novel, too) of the 1830s and early 1840s. Just as Thackeray parodied Bulwer, Gore and Lever, so Martin and Aytoun parodied, in particular, the successful versifiers of the period in order to further the claims of a serious, 'difficult' poetry that was not romantic in either the broader or specific sense of the word, but which both resisted appeals to the "bad taste" of the public, and upheld the anti-experimental and anti-subjective attitudes towards poetry as a sociable, civil art which had distinguished the parodists of the early Romantics.

But "Bon Gaultier's" parodies differ from verse parodies written earlier in the century in that they were for the most part - like Thackeray's - directed against the manifestly second-rate; and the history of "Bon Gaultier" (with the notable exception of Tennyson) largely consists of a series of encounters with popular minor poets, rather than a campaign against writers whose worth is now taken to be indisputable. "Bon Gaultier's"

main targets were the undistinguished post-Romantics of the interregnum who were patronized by an ever-increasing and relatively unsophisticated audience whose taste ran to exotic and antique ballads (from Lockhart's Spanish Ballads (1823) to Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome of 1842); the sentimental album verse against which Thackeray protested; and a debased Byronic cult which manifested itself in over-written verse romances about the mysterious East and in long, introspective and impassioned poetic dramas by writers like Robert Montgomery and Philip James Bailey, who founded the Spasmodic school. Martin's and Aytoun's parodies expressed dissatisfaction with the state of contemporary poetry as represented by these sub-Romantic genres, and were conceived as an attempt to laugh the public out of its predilliction for this sort of writing and encourage more discriminating reading-habits with respect to what is valuable in poetry. The "Bon Gaultier" papers are important documents in the history of the taste of the period, and they provide an interesting gloss on the mid-century debate concerning questions about the function of the poet and the subject and structure of the poem, at a time when the coming of "the poet of our period" was eagerly awaited[1] and the public were assured - by unscrupulous advertisers or genuinely mistaken critics - that each new poetaster was indeed that expected phenomenon, the Great Poet.[2] It was against this background of confusion, eagerness, and earnest debate about poetry and the modern age that Martin and Aytoun wrote their parodies, which may be seen as supplementing Arnold's 1853 'Preface' and the more sober prose documents of the period relating to the proper form of poetry.[3]

Theodore Martin (1816-1909) was a lawyer by profession whose literary work included translations of Goethe and the Classics, and - in later life - a five volume biography of Prince Albert, for which he was knighted. He wrote essays and reviews for the Edinburgh shilling monthly Tait's Magazine, and in the issue for April 1841 published 'Flowers of Hemp; or, The Newgate Garland'[4] which purported to be a review of an anthology of poems written by an imprisoned admirer of the Newgate novelists before

he was hanged for murder. In the tradition of 'Elizabeth Brownrigge' and 'Catherine' Martin contrasted the noble sentiments and "fine writing" of Newgatism with the sordidness of actual crime in order to discredit the former as entertainment or intelligent description, and the paper scored a modest success with such pieces as "Turpin! thou shouldst be living at this hour" and "I met a cracksman coming down the Strand" (indicating incidentally what were evidently the most popular poems of the early Romantics at this time). Martin signed his contribution "Bon Gaultier",[5] but in the close-knit Edinburgh literary community there was little secret about its authorship and during 1841 Martin became friends with William Aytoun (1813-1865) who had recently abandoned the law in order to write poems, translations, and essays for Blackwood's Magazine, over which he was to assume virtual control after the death of Maginn in 1842.[6] The two Tory Classicists and translators decided to form "a kind of Beaumont-and-Fletcher partnership" to strike "against... the [literary] follies of the day",[7] and under the pen-name "Bon Gaultier" they wrote a series of parodies and burlesque reviews for Tait's (and occasionally Fraser's) between 1841 and 1844,[8] when Aytoun became Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at Edinburgh University and severed his connection with Tait's Magazine.

The "Bon Gaultier" parodies perpetuated the Blackwood's-Fraser's tradition of parody as exemplified in the work of Maginn and the early writings of Thackeray, and Martin and Aytoun were united in their admiration of what Arnold was later to call "plain direct and severe"[9] writing (as opposed to the "ostentatious" which Blackwood's and Fraser's condemned); in their respect for Maginn's wit and ability as a translator; and in their support of the young Thackeray and his attitude towards contemporary literature[10] - and, like Thackeray they began their joint career by criticizing the poetical annuals of the period, in a burlesque 'Review of Unpublished Annuals. The Topaz, for 1842'.[11] The tone of this mock-review is similar to Thackeray's own in its advocacy of "plain sense...

[and] natural feeling" which is to be contrasted "the fantastic, the unnatural, the superhuman" that is said to be the province of the annual writers, who avoid "the vulgar poetry of everyday life" in favour of "the airy realms of agreeable nonsense" (p. 749). In their first collaboration Martin and Aytoun thus placed themselves in the central tradition of parody with its preference for "common sense" and the "homely story" over "genius" and the "romance", and their parodies let the verse of the Keepsake and Friendship's Offering down with the same comically vulgar bump that M. G. Lewis practised in relation to the Gothic ballad and Maginn employed against the early Romantics. 'The Lover's Confession' (p. 751), for example, is that "It is not for thy rosy cheek.../That I do love thee, Mary, dear" but for "Thy money in the three per cent"; or, again, the grossly prosaic is endorsed in the significantly titled 'Poetry versus Prose', where the Heroine asks her mother: "What mean these fancies drear, /That on despair and frenzy border" and receives the prosaic answer "Pshaw! take this dose of salts, my dear. /'Tis just your stomach's out of order!" (p. 752).

In their correction of "bad taste" the "Bon Gaultier" parodies were not, perhaps, themselves conspicuous for good taste, being over-influenced by Maginn's broader manner and the sort of humour popularized by Hood's quasi-parodic Odes and Addresses to Great People (1825);[12] and in comparison to Rejected Addresses Martin's and Aytoun's work is heavy-handed at times and too unvarying in its method of disrupting sentimental, exotic or high-flown texts by introducing a steep form of comic bathos. The technique of 'The Lover's Confession', for example, was repeated in the later paper 'My Wife's Album' (Tait's, January 1844)[13] where all the parodies begin as sentimental poems but end in references to getting drunk, burning the Sunday lunch, being dunned, and toothache; while the myth of crime and redemption is recast with a savagery and bloodthirstiness that goes far beyond Thackeray's in 'Catherine', in 'The Convict and the Australian Lady' which is a tale of murder

and cannibalism. Yet although the parodies are not themselves attractive to the modern reader, they are nonetheless interesting if viewed as part of Martin's and Aytoun's concerted attack on - as Martin phrased it - the "prevailing literary crazes or vitiations of taste" of the period,[14] where the popular humour of the day was brought to bear on the popular poetry in order to make it seem laughable and thus clear the ground of the feeble, "emasculate, missy and fine"[15] verses that currently found favour with the public and to suggest "Bon Gaultier's" own idea of the Victorian poet. The intrinsic merit of many of Martin's and Aytoun's parodies may not be particularly outstanding, but they do provide an unusual perspective on the poetry, (and, to a lesser extent, the novel) of the thirties and early forties and the sorts of demands made on writers by readers, critics, and parodists of the time.

It has already been mentioned that the Newgate novel and ballad, and the poetical annuals were among "Bon Gaultier's" earliest targets - the former because they obscured reality behind clouds of "fine writing"; the latter because they refused to deal with "the vulgar poetry of every-day life" - and types of popular romancing continued to form the basis of Martin's and Aytoun's attacks, as they did Thackeray's. Although "Bon Gaultier's" main targets were contemporary poets, the two parodists anticipated Thackeray's 'Prize Novelists' by some five years in a series of six papers under the title 'Specimens of Modern Romance' (Tait's, 1842-1843),[16] which included parodies of the novels of Bulwer, Disraeli, Cooper and Lever. Thackeray's parodies are better crafted perhaps, but Martin's and Aytoun's make essentially the same points about these popular novelists and use a similar parodic technique to do so, and Thackeray may well have been influenced by the "Bon Gaultier" series. 'Phelim O'Toole, The Light Dragoon', for example, compares favourably with 'Phil Fogarty', and the basic structure of the two parodies is the same - Phelim is a military and amatory swaggerer who fights the French generals drunk and single-handed, but, as in 'Phil Fogarty', his blarney

and high spirits do not mask the stupid bloodthirstiness of his actions which cannot be idealized in the parody. Again, in the Bulwer parodies ('La Bella Beatrice' and 'The Convivium at Gorbellius Caesar's') the romance of an exotic or antique background is set at odds with the main action which is brutal and vulgar; while 'Monkey Island; a Yankee Yarn', like 'The Stars and Stripes', implies that Cooper's tall-talking about the adventurousness of his countrymen masks their barbarity and state of uncivility. But whether 'Specimens of Modern Romance' directly influenced Thackeray or not, the parodies undoubtedly supported that section of critical opinion during the period which was hostile to the popular novelists and advocated a less sensational approach to the novel as a serious form, and so indirectly prepared the ground for the realist novel and Vanity Fair.

But, as already noted, Martin and Aytoun were not principally interested in the popular novel and most of the "Bon Gaultier" papers were directed against the poetry of the day - although they preserved the same broadly anti-romantic stance in relation to poets as they did to novelists and similarly required that poetry deal with "everyday life" in a language that did not distort or embellish its subject. Martin and Aytoun carried on their campaign against the romanticising of crime and the tall-talking of Cooper in a series of anti- American parodies written in the wake of Dickens's visit to America, whose unfavourable reports they had already embellished in 'Duggins's Impressions of America' (Tait's, May 1842).[17] In 'A Night at Peleg Longfellow's' (Fraser's, August 1843) "Bon Gaultier" meets, among others, Longfellow, Cooper, Bryant, N.P. Willis and Mrs Sigourney who regale him with their own murderous versions of Lays of Ancient Rome: 'The Lay of Mr. Colt'; 'The Death of Jabez Dollar'; 'The Alabama Duel'. The parodies are partly directed against Macaulay's glamourizing of battles in the guise of adventure and antiquity; but their main emphasis is on the myths of the Wild West and the Unspoiled Paradise that were being propagated by Cooper and Longfellow, and the

parodies are - repellently - insistent about eye-gouging (in 'The Death of Jabez Dollar') and the precise details of John Colt's macabre crime.[18] As in their Newgate and Lever parodies, Martin and Aytoun oppose the idealized romanticizing of violence with crude 'reality' in order to show the reader that he is either very gullible if he believes that this kind of poetry describes heroic action, or else very debased for admiring work that deals with murder of one sort or another.

Martin and Aytoun traced this strain of "sentimental ruffianism" to Byron, especially in Lara and The Corsair[19] - which they also held to have fathered a school of exotic balladry about the Near East that deluded the public just as much as the more criminal versions of Byronism in that it presented an ideal world of love and mystery which existed only in the minds of album versifiers and did not describe the East at all, but only pandered to the idle daydreaming of a lazy and credulous public. Such, at least, was the argument of 'The Poets of the Day' (Tait's, April 1842), a mock-review of an anthology supposedly edited by "David Twaddell" which consisted of a collection of pseudo-Oriental ballads; and the verse parody 'An Eastern Serenade' is a meaningless jumble of minarets, musnuds, and Muezzins: "Oh wake thee, my dearest! the muftis are still, /And the Tschocodars sleep on the Franguestan hill" (p. 240).[20] Both the 'review' and the parodies complain about too-easily elicited responses to poetical jargon that actually refers to nothing"tangible"but is designed only to "transport" the reader into a world of improbable fictions and to "stimulate the imagination in proportion as *[it]* perplex*[es]* the understanding".[21] It is another case of romantic "fine writing", and once more "Bon Gaultier's" parodies predate Thackeray's in a similar vein - 'The Ghazul, or Oriental Love-Song' did not appear in Punch until 5 June 1847.[22]

The humour of these parodies is fairly crude and ineffective for a modern reader, but they represent an appeal to the readers of the period not to be beguiled by popular poetry or to accept without question the

word of critics and advertisers about the sort of poetry that is worth reading. By making people laugh at what they had hitherto perhaps admired, Martin and Aytoun were encouraging an elementary alertness in the reading public during a time when ill-founded and contradictory critical guidelines were offered to the reader by "men" - Aytoun contended - "who, in the present deluge of cheap literature, have been let loose upon the public as critics",[23] and when "the opinion of the great body of the reading public is very materially influenced by those who assume a right to criticize" (Macaulay).[24] Martin and Aytoun were aware of the vulnerability of the unsophisticated reader in this respect, and in their paper 'Puffs and Poetry' (Tait's, October 1843)[25] they explicitly made the connection between criticism, advertising, poets' sales, and the formation of public taste, in a series of vulgarly comic parodies (reminiscent of Warreniana)[26] that praised metal-polish in the metre of Tennyson's 'Morte d'Arthur', for example, or Pears's soap in the form of a drawing-room ballad. The humour is unsubtle, but what the paper actually implies beneath all this jocoseness is that there must be a limit to public credulity with respect to what they will accept as reasonable, satisfactory poetry (otherwise Pears's soap will be sold to the reader as a poetic commodity), and that puffing can never be a substitute for reasoned criticism for it will try an palm-off the shoddiest material on the gullible public.

'Lays of the Would-Be Laureates' (Tait's, May 1843) makes a similar point in connection with the practice of 'poet-hunting' that sprang up during the 1830s, which further encouraged puffing and added to the uncertainty and confusion with which the average reader of the time might be expected to approach poetry. The paper was written in the tradition of competition parodies, with particular reference to the Laureate parody as popularized by Probationary Odes; but beyond this, Martin and Aytoun emphasise the arbitrariness and lack of critical principle involved in selecting the contemporary Poet - and the poets of the day (including

Tennyson, Bulwer, Wordsworth, Macaulay and Montgomery) simply fight for the vacant wreath which a superannuated Wordsworth wins more or less by accident. The moral of the paper is that none of the poets is unquestionably worthy, and that unwary readers must exercise careful judgement in their choice of reading-material in the absence of unbiased, reliable critics. (As if to illustrate "Bon Gaultier's" point about the poverty of contemporary criticism, when the parody of Wordsworth ('Non sine Dis animosus') was reprinted it was taken to be a genuine sonnet by the poet).[27]

The "Bon Gaultier" parodies, then, were very much concerned with the state of contemporary poetry and the taste of the reading public; and although Martin and Aytoun refused to poet-hunt themselves, it is evident that their papers imply certain ideas about what constitutes good poetry and the role of the poet in the Victorian period, if only because they repudiate several current notions about poets and poetry. "Bon Gaultier's" poet, for example, has little to do with feeble sentiment (album verse) or with subjects drawn from the extremities of society (crime and violence, or tales of other lands and other times). He does not encourage his public to be "transported", and is not a romantic idealizer but prefers "the vulgar poetry of everyday life" - which means that his language will not be high-flown or exotic, and that he will eschew the "emasculate, missy, and fine". This partly explains Martin's and Aytoun's campaign against the young Tennyson, whose 'St. Agnes' Eve' was first published in the Keepsake; and "Bon Gaultier" parodied Tennyson several times between 1841 and 1844, beginning with the 'Topaz' review which associated the poet with the album versifiers and took as its theme poems like the awkwardly coy 'Lilian' (1830) with its compound epithets and "-eth" endings to verbs; and "Caroline" in the 'Topaz' predictably turns out to be a little minx who sticks pins in the poet in order to wake him up (that is, bring him back down to the "vulgar" earth). According to "Bon Gaultier", early Tennyson luxuriates in the semi-oriental, Latin

sensuousness that they found reprehensible in imitators of Byron and Moore, and he is to be associated with the school of "Johnny Keats" (p. 750) and Leigh Hunt, against whom (in the tradition of Blackwood's) Martin and Aytoun still preserved a tone of jeering intolerance.[28] The later paper, 'Lays of the Would-Be Laureates', makes this point more explicitly, and an image of Tennyson as a typical Cockney, lolling on the ground in an open-necked shirt among daisies and hyacinths, is evoked - the epitome of languid, hedonist man.

However, "Bon Gaultier's" criticism of Tennyson went beyond parodying his supposed "emasculate" Cockneyism. If, as they asserted, the poet is to deal with "everyday life", it follows that he must not be concerned with abnormal emotional states, and that he must not encourage his readers to live in a self-centred world of ideal fictions, nor must he live in one himself if he is to perform his task of communicating freely and articulately with his public about their common experiences. But Tennyson's repudiation of 'The Lotus Eaters' and 'The Palace of Art' philosophy was manifestly not unqualified, and moreover - to Martin and Aytoun - he appeared to be endorsing another offshoot of Byronism in 'The May Queen' and 'Locksley Hall', where the introspective Hero is described by the introspective Poet with the implication that both parties suffer more deeply and feel more intensely (and therefore differently) than most people about their experiences. Just as earlier parodists of the Romantics mocked the anti-social, "moody and misanthropic" sentiments of the Hero who divorced himself from "common life" and the "commonplace" activities of his kind, so "Bon Gaultier" turned the plight of the heroine of 'The May Queen' and the speaker in 'Locksley Hall' into farce by, typically, confronting them with prosaic experience - suggesting that in their pursuit of "the Romance" (Martin's and Aytoun's terminology)[29] Tennyson and his characters have lost touch with the real life that overwhelms them in the parodies, and have nothing of permanent value to offer the majority of the literate community.

The parodies were published some seven months after Tennyson's 1842 volume, in 'Cracknels for Christmas' (Tait's, December 1842).[30] The Queen of the May appears transformed as 'The Biter Bit': a thwarted little flirt who, Shamela-like, tried to engineer a rich marriage but unlike her eighteenth century counterpart, failed and lost both lovers: "He said I kept him off and on, in hopes of highergame, /And it may be that I did, mother, - but who hasn't done the same?" The Heroine flounders in a world of unpalatable facts and is eventually confounded by the philosophy of "Victuals and Drink" in the same manner as Peacock's Scythrop and Maginn's Christabel, for "Bon Gaultier's" May Queen also rejects death as the logical end to such intensity and takes to her bed in a fit of pique, uttering the lines that apparently became a Victorian catch-phrase for debunking romantic sentiment:[31] "And if you would do pleasure to your poor despairing child, /Draw me a pot of beer, mother, and, mother, draw it mild!" (p. 800)

'The Jilted Gent', as the title indicates, similarly vulgarizes and domesticates the impassioned monologuist of 'Locksley Hall', scaling-down his desertion by Amy into a comic tale of a lower middle-class girl who marries an Indian nabob and turns yellow from eating too many curries, while the Kipps-like speaker's desire is to escape to Africa, where: "the passions, cramped no longer, shall have space to breathe, my cousin! /I will take some savage woman - nay, I'll take at least a dozen". The hero in 'The Jilted Gent' is an immature ranter who finally decides to stay at home and advertise for a wife:

> "WANTED. By a bard, in wedlock, some young interesting woman:
> Looks are not so much an object, if the shiners be forthcoming.
>
> "Hymen's chains the advertiser vows shall be but silken fetters.
> Please address to A.T., Chelsea. N.B. You must pay the letters."
>
> (p. 802)

Tennyson's "heir of all the ages", anticipating European economic and political supremacy, is in "Bon Gaultier's" version spiritually and

financially mean enough to demand that "You must pay the letters"; and Martin and Aytoun are quite acute in their analysis of the supposedly spiritual uplift at the end of the original poem, which is actually a flight into money-getting, Imperialist activity.

In fact, the parodies of Tennyson and the comments that accompany them in 'Cracknels for Christmas' are among the most interesting of the "Bon Gaultier" collaborations in that, as well as repudiating the Romantic and Miss-ish Tennyson, Martin and Aytoun - perhaps surprisingly - also rejected Victorian Tennyson's piety and social optimism; and in the 'review' of 'The Jilted Gent' the parodists ironically applauded the supposed nobility of Tennyson's hero's decision to stay in England and prefer the "Christian child" above the "grey barbarian" - "The triumph of the poem is in the high-toned sentiment of civilization and moral duty" which dismisses the whole of the non-English world as "squalid savages" (p. 802). ("Bon Gaultier's" 'Tennyson' gives himself away irrevocably when he remarks that he "hold*[s]* the grey barbarian lower than the Christian cad".) This sort of Christian Jingoism was evidently an impermissible element in Martin's and Aytoun's concept of the poet - quite as much as Cockneyism or orientalism - and it is in the light of these parodies that Martin's much later assertion, discussed in Part I of this study, that he and Aytoun only parodied the poets they "loved" must be assessed. Actually it seems that as far as "Bon Gaultier" was concerned, Tennyson combined in his work the worst elements of sentimentality, "fine-writing", introspection and bloodthirstiness which formed the substance of most of Martin's and Aytoun's parodies between 1841 and 1844.

Ultimately, however, "Bon Gaultier" awarded the dubious distinction of representative of all that was wrong with modern poetry to Robert Montgomery, hailed in his time as a second, Christianized Byron.[32] His enormously long poems - The Omnipresence of the Deity (1828); Satan, a Poem (1830); Woman: The Angel of Life (1833); and Luther (1842) - combined religious sentiment and Byronic brooding in a way that the early Victorians

evidently found congenial, for The Omnipresence of the Deity ran through eight editions in as many months and was compared by some critics to Paradise Lost.[33] Partly in the enfeebled tradition of the didactic poem (as parodied by The Anti-Jacobin) Montgomery speculated on nothing less than the Meaning of Life, which he presented as the genius-poet's true theme; and he ranged indiscriminately through history and eternity in pursuit of his consoling, sentimental version of Christianity in which Satan is a wronged, noble figure, set apart - like the Poet - from the rest of mankind: the possessor of unique insights and emotions. Moreover, Montgomery chose an extraordinarily florid, Miltonic-Keatsian style of impassioned monologue, overloaded with metaphors, in which to express himself; and that many of his images were senseless ("And thou, vast Ocean, on whose awful face/Time's iron feet can print no ruin-trace")[34] seemingly went unremarked by the thousands of people who bought his books and were presumably as intoxicated as the self-educated poet with the rhetoric and vague Christian sentiment of the poems.

Montgomery's work perhaps represents the quintessence of "fine-writing" in a period noted for an enthusiastic and undisciplined espousal of avowedly 'literary' language which was contingent on the emergence of a new audience that apparently liked its books to be as bookish as possible. Not surprisingly, one of Thackeray's first reviews was directed against the poet and his indiscriminate use of "big words", and he reprinted the last fourteen lines of Woman: The Angel of Life backwards as a conclusion to the review to show that they made as much sense read that way as any other.[35] In view of the concept of the poem and the poet expressed in their previous parodies, the grounds of Martin's and Aytoun's objections to Montgomery should be sufficiently obvious, and their criticisms of the poet do resemble Thackeray's, Macaulay's, and Maginn's.[36] In the first place, to well-educated Tories Montgomery was obviously a badly-educated parvenu (he was the bastard of a clown called Gomery and added the "Mont" to his name to make it sound

aristocratic) who could be seen as a species of latter-day Cockney; and whatever his circumstances, it was, to say the least, presumptuous of him to undertake the explication of the Universe and the workings of God - an offence which was compounded in the eyes of his critics by his extreme youth and his quasi-Romantic insistence on the unique and superior insight of the Poet in such matters (an espousal of "the fantastic, the unnatural, the superhuman" which Martin and Aytoun had already condemned in their 'Topaz' paper that had endorsed the opposite values of "plain sense...*[and]* natural feeling", p. 749). Secondly, Montgomery was self-consciously Byronic: an influence that "Bon Gaultier" had deplored in other contemporary poets; but, more than this, in his portrait in the front of Satan, Montgomery had been made-up and posed to resemble the elder poet as part of a publicity drive to sell his books - and Martin and Aytoun were only following the lead of Macaulay's article 'Mr. Robert Montgomery's Poems and the Modern Practice of Puffing'[37] when they wrote their paper equating advertising and literature, 'Puffs and Poetry', for the case of Montgomery exemplified the power of the pundits and the vulnerability of the public at this period to this type of marketing.

But most obviously, for the two parodists, Montgomery was a fine - writer who generated an atmosphere of spurious excitement with his high-flown language, but failed to come to terms with the reality of his subject (which was, in any case, impermissibly in "the airy realms" of speculation, 'Topaz', p. 749). Some of Byron's reviewers had criticized the poet for a lack of structure in Childe Harold that was felt to be consequent upon the poet's being his own hero, and for his use of brilliantly descriptive passages which seemed unlinked to the poem as a whole.[38] But Montgomery carried the process much further and, in Arnold's later terminology, his attempts to "solve the Universe"[39] were almost entirely unstructured and consisted of "bursts of fine writing *[my italics]* ... with a shower of isolated thoughts and images"[40] - products, Martin and Aytoun contended (in the same vein as Austen and Peacock) of the shapeless

emotional monologue rather than measured, reasoned discourse; and they parodied these traits in 'Montgomery. A Poem' (Tait's, May 1843) and 'The Death of Space',[41] where the 'poet' proclaims:

> Eternity shall raise her funeral-pile
> In the vast dungeon of the extinguished sky
> And, cloth'd in dim barbaric splendour, smile,
> And murmur shouts of elegaic joy.

"The pious art, /Which thrills through Britain's universal heart" ('Montgomery') is characterized as a jumble of senseless metaphors which tell the reader nothing except that the poet is a plagiarist and an egotist: "I, who in shade portentous Dante threw; /I who have done what Milton dared not do" ('Montgomery'). He is an "ostentatious" writer deeply interested in "the state of *[*his*]* own mind",[42] and as such, his aesthetic runs counter to most of "Bon Gaultier's" critical tenets. Montgomery is the product, in fact, of the sort of "bad taste" that would rather have its "rhetorical" than its "poetic sense" gratified,[43] and which responds to easy appeals to sentiment rather than to structured thought. (Religious sentiment is no more acceptable in this context than any other sort, and Martin and Aytoun mocked Montgomery's particular brand just as they mocked Tennyson's.) Like all the "Bon Gaultier" parodies, 'Montgomery' and 'The Death of Space' urge a more critical reading of poetry on an inexperienced public - one that avoids idealization, rhetorical flourishes, and "superhuman" themes, and is, instead, concerned with what Clough was to call "the obvious rather than the rare facts of human nature... the actual, palpable things with which our everyday life is concerned".[44]

Clough's article is one of the documents related to Arnold's 1853 'Preface', and the "Bon Gaultier" ballads, in turn, may be seen as anticipating Arnold's position in the fifties, for many of the implications of Martin's and Aytoun's parodies of "fine writing", formlessness, and the introspective hero-poet were given critical substance by the 'Preface' and subsequent essays on Wordsworth, Keats, Byron and Shelley, for example, where Arnold insists that "poetry... must not lose itself in parts and

episodes and ornamental work, but must press forward to the whole", and that the poet is no mere idle singer producing "exquisite bits and images"[45] to titillate a lazy audience, but a man engaged with "life".[46] This is not to say that Arnold was directly influenced by Martin's and Aytoun's work - for it is difficult to imagine the poet finding anything amusing in the "Bon Gaultier" papers - but rather that the two parodists contributed to that more general mid-century climate of interest in poetry and criticism which provided the context for much of Arnold's criticism, and prepared readers to consider an idea of the poem as something other than a collection of 'beauties', an escapist entertainment, or a means of providing vague spiritual uplift, but rather a response to language and experience whose exuberance must be controlled if 'poetry' rather than 'rhetoric' is to be the result.

How far the "Bon Gaultier" parodies actually succeeded in influencing public taste remains debatable for although Montgomery, for example, fell out of favour, poets like Felicia Hemans and Jean Ingelow continued to be widely read, while Tennyson became the spokesman-poet of the Victorian age. But in terms of sales the "Bon Gaultier" parodies were unquestionably very successful, and in 1845 Martin and Aytoun decided to publish a selection of parodic verses taken from the "Bon Gaultier" papers. The first edition of The Book of Ballads "edited by Bon Gaultier" contained thirty-nine parodies and proved so popular that as more editions were demanded (thirteen in England and as many pirated versions in America between 1845 and 1877)[47] more parodies were added until the number totalled fifty-six in 1903, the last edition to be published in Martin's lifetime. As essentially comic parodies, The Book of Ballads could be read for its comic 'content' alone, which possibly explains its continued popularity; and Martin was able to claim in 1903 that he had heard 'The Jilted Gent' (which was reprinted as 'The Lay of the Lovelorn') "quoted through the years... almost as often as the original poem!"[48]

From a critical point of view, however, the "Bon Gaultier" volume -

despite an attempt to make the ballad its principal target - is a less satisfying group of parodies than Rejected Addresses since it lacks the coherent unifying principle of the earlier volume (and relies on an uncongenial type of comic bathos to make its models seem inauthentic), while the unity of the original articles has been lost, as have the prose parodies, in the interest of bringing Martin's and Aytoun's work before a wider audience. But, as suggested, the attraction of the "Bon Gaultier" ballads and papers today lies in their value as documents relating to the attempt to establish an idea of the poem, the poet, and the importance of criticism during a period when critical tenets had to be reformulated in the light of what Macaulay described as the new, unaristocratic "patronage... *[of]* the public";[49] and it was against this background that Martin and Aytoun wrote their parodies, to serve "a purpose higher than mere amusement" and to strike at the "follies" of contemporary verse.[50]

If the success of the "Bon Gaultier" volume remains imponderable in this respect, one further parody that developed out of the partnership should perhaps be mentioned at this point for its very evident triumph in conquering the "bad taste" of the public and discrediting a literary school that championed the episodic, Montgomery-like, "bits and images" approach to poetry. This was the parody that probably had a more immediate effect on its contemporaries than anything written by Arnold, Clough, or Kingsley on the subject of unity and the strong central subject - Firmilian by William Aytoun, which was held at the time to have laughed the Spasmodic school out of existence.[51] I do not propose to discuss the parody at length in this study since Mark Weinstein has already provided a detailed account of this neglected text and its relevance to the Spasmodic school in his book W.E. Aytoun and the Spasmodic Controversy (1968) which expands Jerome Buckley's important description of the Spasmodics and their influence on contemporary poets and critics in The Victorian Temper (1952).[52] I should, however, like briefly to consider Firmilian both as an extension of the earlier "Bon Gaultier" work and as the single most successful anti-

romantic parody to be written in the nineteenth century, which - in the Austen-Thackerayan tradition - directed ridicule at popular romantic literature in order to assert the value of representations of "everyday life".

In his post- "Bon Gaultier" work for Blackwood's Aytoun began to elaborate some of the ideas about the function of the poet and the proper subject and style of the modern poem that he and Martin had sketched-out in their parodies; and, again anticipating Arnold, several of his pre-1853 articles attack the kind of poetry where "aptitude of handling is considered a greater accomplishment than unity or strength of design",[53] and echoes of earlier and contemporary realists may be heard in his demands that the poet must "establish that degree of probability which gives life and animation to the poem", or - again - that he must follow "the principles of common sense".[54] But although discredited by the 1840s, Montgomery had fostered a taste for the kind of poetry that appealed to those "souls... *[who]* yearn towards some vaster region than the world which surrounds them" and who objected to "stunt*[ing]* the growth of the imagination by never suffering it to rise beyond the calm level of reason and common sense";[55] and the Spasmodic school of poets with their intellectual, Byronic-Faustian-Bulwerian heroes, and their impassioned style of rhetoric (which followed Bailey's injunction to "work... all things into thy work")[56] found a receptive audience among readers who shared Horne's predilliction for 'imaginative' verse rather than Martin's and Aytoun's taste for "plain sense" and "unity".

Like Montgomery, the Spasmodic poets - in particular Bailey, Alexander Smith and Sydney Dobell - enjoyed a period of spectacular success, and Festus (1839), A Life-Drama (1853) and Balder (1853) were acclaimed by some critics as epics of the Victorian age and their authors as heralds of a race of new Elizabethans.[57] The man who was largely responsible for bringing the Spasmodic poets before the public was the Scottish Whig reviewer George Gilfillan, pre-eminently a poet-hunter, who had once

advertised: "Wanted a tutor to the rising age".[58] His essays on Dobell and Smith were written in a style almost as turbulent and enthusiastic as the poets' own; and, conspicuously lacking a critical vocabulary, he outrageously puffed his protégés, foretelling the imminent discovery of "the poet of our period": "Surely some great poetic orb must be nearing the verge of the horizon!... we would advise the star-gazing critics to watch this cluster well ... lest in it there should appear ... some star brighter than his fellows, forming the central sun to a great system, and a star of hope, promise, and prophecy to the coming age".[59] It has been said that Gilfillan's influence as a critic during the 1840s was second only to Carlyle's,[60] but to Aytoun - whose essays and reviews over a similar period stressed the responsibility of the critic in serving "the common interest of mankind" while preserving a "rigid impartiality ... *[of]* judgment" towards the text and its author -[61] Gilfillan was entirely deplorable in his heated advocacy of the Montgomery-like poetry of introspection and 'apt handling', and his use of an imprecise, emotive vocabulary that was designed to win-over the public without recourse to reasoned argument.

From Aytoun's point of view, then, the Spasmodic poets and their critic Gilfillan united most of the elements in modern verse that the "Bon Gaultier" papers had rejected through parody - the poet-hero who pursues intense experience regardless of his social responsibilities, and presumptuously takes it on himself to communicate to the reader his speculations on the nature of God;[62] the puffing and lack of critical responsibility surrounding this activity; and the public's naive preference for "brilliant things" rather than the "total impression" in poetry.[63] When Dobell published Balder at the end of 1853 - a poem in which the hero in his quest for the new experience he needs in order to complete his master-work murders his daughter and drives his wife insane - Aytoun decided to parody it, and in May 1854 Blackwood's Magazine carried what purported to be a review, with copious extracts, of Firmilian: A Tragedy

"by T. Percy Jones". It was so popular that Aytoun expanded the 'extracts' into a full-length parody and issued Firmilian as a volume (omitting the review text) in July, which was, in its turn, completely sold-out.[64] Several critics - confirming Aytoun's opinion of their ineptitude - took the review and the subsequent volume seriously,[65] and part of Firmilian's initial success may have been due to the enthusiasm of readers who thought that they were buying a genuine Spasmodic drama; but the joke soon caught-on, and a second edition of Firmilian was printed within the month.

In the parody Firmilian is a poet-hero who is unable to continue working on his (significantly titled) poem Cain because he lacks experience of murder. Accordingly he murders three school-friends, his best friend Haverillo, and blows-up a cathedral and its entire congregation. He also causes a certain "Graduate" to be put to death (the Graduate's speech is actually a section of Ruskin's 1853 Lectures on Architecture and Painting turned into blank verse); and when Firmilian pushes Haverillo off - the again not fortuitously named - St. Simeon Stylites's column, his friend's body crushes to death one "Apollodorus" (Gilfillan's pen-name): a critic who is gazing at the sky in anticipation of the coming of a poet. Discovering like George de Barnwell that he feels no remorse for his actions, Firmilian decides to take Love as his next poetic theme - a subject in which he, in common with other Spasmodic heroes, is well-versed. Unfortunately his three mistresses, Mariana, Lilian and Indiana (from Tennyson's and George Sand's heroines) refuse to live in "frank communion" (p. 348) with him and betray him to the Inquisition. A chorus of "Ignes Fatui" pursue him to a quarry where he once deliberately misdirected an old blind beggar to his death for daring to interrupt his "stupendous thought" (p. 352), and Firmilian himself falls and is killed.

The parody exploits what Thackeray called in Pendennis the "contrast between practice and poetry, between grand versified aspirations and every-day life" (Chapter XXIV), and"T. Percy Jones's "fine-writing cannot disguise his hero's base motives. Aytoun has pursued the simple strategy

of setting profession and practice at odds in order to demonstrate how far Spasmody is from reality , because although Firmilian habitually uses the most ornate language his story is actually one of brutal egotism. The 'review' text reinforces this reading, and the extracts are interspersed with a critical commentary that upbraids Jones for asserting "the rights of genius... *[*to disregard*]* every social relation, every mundane tie, which can interfere with the bard's development". "Poets", Aytoun claims in Thackerayan terms, "are like all other ... artisans, valuable according to the quality of the article which they produce" (p. 498), and the Spasmodic poets fail on this count because they produce inferior poetry which lacks "plot" and is "profane... prurient... *[*and*]* unintelligible" (p. 499), and because "they contrive, by blazing away whole rounds of metaphor, to mask their absolute poverty of thought" (p. 504). Both the mock-review and the parody make it plain that Spasmody wherever it occurs - in the writings of rapturous critics (Gilfillan, Ruskin, and Carlyle - the latter is burned at the stake in the parody); in the Elizabethan dramatists themselves;[66] in the works of Byron, Goethe, and Tennyson, as well as the accredited Spasmodics - is to be condemned, and that the rational and coherent "poetry of everyday life" is to be preferred above the "divine afflatus ... of extraordinary genius" that manipulates language and morality until they "mean nothing" (p. 504).

Firmilian, as well as representing the logical extension of Aytoun's "Bon Gaultier" work, is also in the line of anti-romantic parody, whose proponents - notably Austen, Edgeworth, Peacock and Thackeray - habitually made the distinction between "genius" and "common sense" and professed to value the latter over the former; and Martin glossed the parody in familiar terms when he remarked that it was the product of Aytoun's consciously "ignoring the fetters of nature and common sense, and dashing headlong on Pegasus through the wilderness of fancy".[67] Firmilian evidently found an audience that was receptive to the idea of "mak*[*ing*]* the triumph of the realistic school ... as complete in Poetry as in Art",[68]

and it is one of the few nineteenth century parodies that seems to have been wholly successful in its aims and succeeded in ridiculing the object of its mockery out of public favour. After the publication of Firmilian, as Buckley expresses it, "it became more and more difficult to approach with proper gravity any future work [of the Spasmodic poets]", and Tennyson and the Brownings were condemned for Spasmodic tendencies in their post-1854 work.[69] The Spasmodic poets proper were unable to find publishers, and Aytoun had to help Smith financially to save his family from penury; Gilfillan's reputation was ruined;[70] and the popularity of Firmilian encouraged other parodists to add their contributions to the anti-Spasmodic movement and so strengthen public and critical opinion against the Spasmodics.[71]

In this context Firmilian might be thought of as representing the triumph of the Arnoldian position with respect to the function and form of poetry, and the parody was undoubtedly an influential text that embodied a reforming mood of the period. But one further aspect of Aytoun's (and Martin's) work should perhaps be emphasised in conclusion, for while Firmilian and the earlier "Bon Gaultier" parodies were undertaken to counter "bad taste" and further the claims of a well-structured, less rhetorical poetry, and as such expressed perfectly sincere anti-romantic sentiments that had particular relevance to the vitiated sub-Romantic genres of the time, their concept of the poem and the poet also contained an element of philistinism that is completely alien to Arnold and other critics who also advocated the "particular, precise, and firm" and avoidance of "allegor[ies] of the state of one's own mind" in poetry.[72] Martin's and Aytoun's hostility to "genius", in particular, was expressed in very much the same terms as the less perceptive parodists of the early Romantics, and their anti-romanticism generally resembles Maginn's rather than Peacock's, for example. Although they did not actually press their thesis about the relation of "common sense" to poetry to its logical extreme, their work does provide an opening for the sort of response that in relation to the

novel might naively insist that the book is fraudulent if it does not deal with low life (the opinion of the immature Thackeray), but in relation to the poem might reject all poetic activity as having no bearing on reality : as unreasonable, or laughable, or only fit for women's albums. The "Bon Gaultier" parodies (including Firmilian) were written to encourage readers to develop a discriminating taste with regard to poetry, but it seems as if the critical mascularity they demanded was misinterpreted by a section of the public who increasingly found any sort of poetry irrelevant or effete (a view which was given some credence by Martin and Aytoun when they accused Tennyson of being "unmanly" in their mock-review of 'The Jilted Gent', p. 801); and from supporting classical ideals of poetry as a sociable and civilized art and the poem as a well-constructed artifact, other parodists after the mid-century tended to deepen this strain of implicit philistinism and reject any poetry that did not conform to narrowly conceived notions of the poem as 'manly' (Arnoldian "action" interpreted at its basest level) and 'sensible'.

Such was not Martin's and Aytoun's intention, but although their parodies were conceived as reformist, enlivening texts, and partially succeeded as such, in the long run - with their rather bald insistence on "common sense" and hostility to "the airy realms" of the "imagination" and "fancy" - they perhaps encouraged a form of extremism among people who found modern poetry amusingly trite or pretentious, which hardened into a mistrust and under-valuation of poetry as such. This was particularly evident in the parodic reaction to the so-called last Romantics, where the popularity of the "Bon Gaultier" papers ensured that parody would be employed as a weapon in the colourful interchanges between Philistines and Aesthetes and provide the parodic link between the first generation of Romantics and their descendents.

Chapter 5. Philistines and Aesthetes

Throughout the nineteenth century parody made a twinfold appeal to writers and readers with its persistent demands that the writer must address the majority of people (who are concerned with their "everyday" lives and not with esoteric modes of feeling and being) while at the same time strongly enjoining that majority to exercise more discrimination in their reading habits and attempt 'difficult' as opposed to 'popular' readings. Predictably, parody was essentially an anti-romantic mode: in the first place, because Romantic poets and novelists were manifestly not writing in the conservative eighteenth century tradition of public discourse but in a personal, subjective mode that could be thought of as undermining Augustan ideals of decorum and civility and encouraging anti-social, isolationist and divisive tendencies in the arts and society; and secondly, because in the hands of popular writers the romantic style became a sensational, emotional one which encouraged flaccid and stereo-typed responses among its readers and (some parodists argued) a muddle-headed confusion of art with life, or a preference for escapist literature above the "common earth" and the "sympathy for concrete human things" demanded by Henry Taylor and Carlyle.[1] Parody, therefore, inclined to press the claims of literary realism as being more life-like (and less deceptive) than fictions which might mislead the public, and as the form of writing most likely to ensure that the writer would become a stable centre to the society which he undertook to describe - speaking the "plain" language of the "homely story" rather than the "ostentatious" rhetoric of the "romance".

Parodists, as described so far in this study, achieved their effects with varying degrees of subtlety, skill, and grace, pursuing intelligently reformist goals with respect to the meretricious appeals of popular "epidemical Phrenzies", as well as working with debased ideas of realism that led to mockery of romantic literature in general because it did not conform to unsophisticated notions of common sense . Ultimately, however,

irrespective of the degrees of refinement displayed by the nineteenth century parodists, their attempts to further the establishment of a literate community worthy of the writer who ought to be at its heart failed, as artists later in the century increasingly pursued their own interests in defiance of a public who did not keep pace with their work. But parody played a significant role in relation to the growing estrangement between the artist and society in the second half of the nineteenth century, and in the burst of parodic activity which characterized the end of the century as it had its beginning, parody performed complex literary and social functions which - it could be argued - helped to mould the temper of the whole period.

In this chapter I propose to consider the part played by parody in the three phases into which late-Romanticism is usually divided: the Pre-Raphaelite, the Aesthetic, and the Decadent. These divisions, and perhaps the notion of a 'Romanticism' embracing half a century, impose a radically simplified pattern on what was, after all, a mesh of activity that does not lend itself to clear-cut divisions and rather arbitrary categorizing; but the area to be covered is so large and manifold that the adoption of a sort of schema on the lines indicated above seems to be a justifiable aid in the process of ordering such a quantity of parodic (and other) material, as long as the customary reservations about trends , movements , and schools are borne in mind; and the chapter, accordingly, is arranged with regard to the chronology of the three phases: that is, from the late fifties and early sixties (when Morris began publishing) to the early seventies; from the years immediately preceding Wilde's début to his departure for America at the end of 1881; and from the beginning of the nineties to Wilde's trial in April 1895 and the closure of the Savoy in December 1896.

The remarkable popularity of parody after 1850 may be attributed to the recurrence of similar factors as those which helped shape the popular vogue for parody at the beginning of the century; for while

Thackeray, and Martin and Aytoun found themselves mocking sub-Romantic genres in the 1830s and 1840s, later parodists were able to address themselves once again to a vital, large-scale Romantic movement which attracted an enormous amount of attention (though it did not, of course, preclude the sort of "bad taste" that Thackeray parodied as one of its secondary characteristics). In the work of the late Romantics parodists recognized familiar targets - the youthful, introspective poet who makes high, exclusive, and almost religious claims for his work; the exaltation of the poet-hero, and the creation of Heroes and Heroines who stand apart from common humanity; the willingness of writers and artists to experiment with their various mediums; and the espousal of a philosophy which seemingly has little to do with ideas of a "moral aesthetic"[2] but rather encourages the reader to value beguiling fictions above realistic representations and sets a premium on the individual's response to a text. Moreover, the tendency - more marked in the latter-day Romantics - of young writers to put their art into practice in their lives (in Wildeian terms to devote their "genius" to this even at the price of failure to produce works of art)[3] gave added impulse to parody, which traditionally opposed the confusion of art with reality (exemplified in the confounding of figures like Cherry Wilkinson or Scythrop Glowry, for example); and parody in the second half of the century might be thought of as deepening its vein of habitual anti-romanticism when it mocked Heroes, Heroines, Poets, and styles of discourse by contrasting them to the demands made by "everyday" life.

The lateRomantics were ideal subjects for parodists, and the parody of the period - in common with the parodies discussed in previous chapters - reflects the age's reservations about, and opposition to, these writers. But compared to earlier parodic movements, late Victorian parody is an altogether more complex phenomenon because what is being parodied is not just a body of work - for, as Wilde implied, the professions of the last Romantics generally outstripped their actual achievements - but a

"temperament"[4] which was itself (in part) a parodically derived image, intended to mock middle-class values and complacent faith in representational, realist art.[5] In one sense parody had been too successful in its support of a realist aesthetic, and some writers of the period felt increasingly fettered by the taste of a public that endorsed not only 'good' realist novels, but in a degenerate and much more pervasive form, favoured the true-life stories in Tit-Bits, or the unwitting photo-realism of Frith and Landseer, or shared Maginn's chirpy faith that anyone could write poetry if they wanted to;[6] and when youthful writers and painters, Shelley- or Byron-like, acted out their art in their lives, they were not naively confusing fact with fiction or merely dramatizing themselves as earlier Romantic parodists might have thought, but deliberately mocking a set of middle-class attitudes towards art that accepted all the 'realist' virtues of commonsense, homeliness, and craftsmanship, and denied the "genius" that Wilde outrageously declared to be his sole possession.[7] If Wilde deliberately exaggerated the Romantic point of view, it was in calculated mockery of convention: and, in this respect at least, the late Romantics may be seen as enacting a large-scale literary and cultural parody - doing precisely what was not expected of the literary man of the period, in order to shake the public out of its lazy responses to art (and the late Romantics here performed a similar function as some earlier parodists in mocking stale readings and poor reading habits).

There were at least two distinct impulses, then, in the parody of the period: the straightforwardly anti-Romantic, which protested that certain writers and artists were divorcing themselves from the public and were trying to make literature into an esoteric, personal transaction that bore tangentially, if at all, on contemporary society; and what came to be known as the "Aesthetic",[8] which held the contrary view that society was dull and inimical to art and that is was the duty of the artist to show the public that art was not a commodity like any other - to demonstrate that it was artificial, in fact, by mocking in his person and his

work the whole tone of the period which was supposedly dedicated to the "triumph of the professional man"[9] with his taste for durable, unambiguous objects. However, the Aesthetic impulse to parody was strengthened and made more complex by the tendency of the late Romantics - more pronounced in the last decades of the century - to parody themselves as part of their wider 'parody' of the concept of the artist as a responsible spokesman: for in order to be taken seriously they could not avow their aims and be serious in the way of conventional writers, and their poses themselves are parodically exaggerated - parodies of parodies, drawing attention to artificiality and the sense of form, mask, and the act of making-up that dominated the later phases of the movement (and the connection between Aestheticism, aesthetics, and parody seems to have been made at a fundamental level at this time).[10]

A final subtlety in the use of parody by both the late Romantics and those who mocked them should be stressed at this point: for while the Aesthetes and Decadents, especially, were engaged in mocking the Philistine middle-class, the middle-class itself was not a passive springboard for parody as Bulwer had been for Thackeray, but was actively instrumental in creating an image of these writers and artists that its members wished to believe in and, possibly, to ridicule in their turn. The public wanted Wilde to have walked down Piccadilly with a lily in his hand,[11] and the young poet was identified with an image that was only partly of his own making when he adopted his Prince Rupert costume and the lily as his emblems. Philistine parodists helped create Aesthetic poses; and most notably in the case of Punch, a complicated symbiotic relationship existed between artists and parodists, and it is impossible to say whether du Maurier, for example, was imitating Wilde and his followers or whether they were acting-out the roles already assigned to them by the Punch staff, for the images of Punch Romantics and real-life Romantics were so thoroughly infused with parody and poseurishness as to be virtually indistinguishable. This had the interesting corollary that in a period of

vituperative prose attacks on Rossetti, for instance, or Swinburne, parody was (on the whole) unexpectedly tolerant of its models; and after the Wilde scandal broke, parodists stopped writing as it became evident that the images which they had helped to create had been falsified by the intrusion of a base reality - an old parodic trick, but one which many parodists had been unwilling to play on their subjects in an age of palpable fictions and self-conscious artifice in which parody was so thoroughly at home.

This is to anticipate rather; but it is important to establish at the outset a sense of the complexities of parody in so large a compass as the period under consideration - when parody was both anti-Romantic and a Romantic mockery of the middle-classes, and when writers parodied their own poses, aided by a Philistine public who created Aesthetic images that were frequently adopted by their supposed opponents . It is for this reason that the last decades of the nineteenth century are perhaps more accurately described as an "age of parody" than the first, for so many writers and readers at this time seem to have been implicated in the manufacture of mocking images - from straightforwardly derisive caricatures, to complex poses that simultaneously compelled and denied belief as aesthetic and moral statements about the world. On all levels, much of the literature and general culture of the period was suffused with parody, and the range of parodic activity in the last decades of the nineteenth century is altogether more extensive than anything hitherto described, so that any account of the whole period is bound to seem partial and relatively cursory in relation to the material that presents itself: and it is with this reservation in mind that I propose to devote the rest of this chapter to a description of some of the more interesting parodies, and parodic attitudes, of the late Romantics.

As - primarily - a movement in the visual arts, Pre-Raphaelitism remained virtually unparodied until Morris and Rossetti began publishing, and until (as was the case with the early Romantic poets) a popular parody

made Rossetti and his circle available to other parodists by creating a character for the Pre-Raphaelites that lent itself readily to imitation. What the Smiths had accomplished in relation to Wordsworth, Coleridge and Byron, George du Maurier and F.C. Burnand did for the Pre-Raphaelites in a five-part parody written by Burnand and illustrated by du Maurier - 'A Legend of Camelot', which appeared in Punch between 3-31 March, 1866.[12] Ignoring the Pre-Raphaelite claim to reinstate the concept of "truth to nature" in art,[13] du Maurier and Burnand stressed that side of the group's work that tended towards archaism, symbolism, and the sensuousness for which earlier parodists had upbraided Keats and the youthful Tennyson; and 'A Legend of Camelot' characterized the Pre-Raphaelites as a species of the nineteenth century parodist's favourite model - the Romantic eccentric who practises an ideal art (congenial to daydreaming; divorced from ordinary society), which flouts convention and claims the privileges of a sect.

In Burnand's verse parody the mediaeval dream-world of Morris's The Defence of Guinevere (1858) and Tennyson's Idylls of the King (1859-85) is rudely disrupted by the introduction of mundane features into the subject matter - King Arthur's knights are the victims of Jewish money-lenders; the heroine's profusion of hair is cut-off and sold - and by the exaggeration of stylistic elements, especially the use of archaisms and the burden/refrain. The parody invokes an image of the Pre-Raphaelites as a group of writers and artists who inhabit a make-believe world of knights and ladies who possess abnormal qualities of spirituality and sensuousness combined: and a picture of the archetypal Aesthete begins to emerge from the parody's insistence on an intensely mannered vocabulary and style of behaviour, particularly as it relates to the transformation of Byronic ennuyé into fin-de-siecle lassitude: "They speak not, but their weary eyes/ And wan white eyelids drop and rise, /O Miserie!" This image is reinforced by du Maurier's cartoons which skilfully exaggerate the features of the thick-throated, heavy-haired Rossettian woman, while displaying the other

inhabitants of Camelot in the "attitudes" that W.S. Gilbert was later to characterize as "Early English" -[14] chins forward and rapt expressions for the women; the men's limbs twisted, one hand on hip, the other gesticulating or resting limply on the chest; and groups leaning weakly against each other, looking soulfully into the middle-distance.

Du Maurier and Burnand were both parodying some of the visible elements of Pre-Raphaelitism, and inventing a mode of discourse and manner of behaviour that could be identified by its contemporaries as 'Pre-Raphaelite' even though it did not necessarily correspond to genuine features of the work or the persons in question - and the final result is in the nature of a joke-metaphor: standing for how the Rossetti circle might act if they translated the more arcane elements of their fictions into real-life. No reader of Punch was probably so naive as to believe that Burnand's and du Maurier's picture of the Pre-Raphaelites contained more than a few grains of truth, but they relished the joke; and the comic image of Pre-Raphaelitism was evidently a compelling and attractive one, for after 1866 an enormous number of parodies were written that featured curiously posed, loosely draped, pale females and tired young men speaking in self-consciously antique accents: and Punch took the lead in parodying Rossetti and his associates, and rapidly established itself as the main organ for disseminating parodies of the late Romantics (as Blackwood's had been for the first generation) to an audience that cherished this image of 'the artist'.

It would be impossible within the compass of this study to detail the many parodies of the Rossetti circle that date from this period,[15] and it is enough to note that most characterized the Pre-Raphaelites as du Maurier and Burnand had done - elaborating the image of the Rossettian woman; evolving a vocabulary and iconography that were supposed to typify the movement ; and generally consolidating the idea of the Pre-Raphaelite writer as a rather effete and luxuriant spinner of idealized word-pictures who was easily confounded by vulgar reality. The parodies all professed to show the reader 'how it's done', and to make the Pre-Raphaelite

achievement less strange and the reader more familiar with its techniques by exposing artifice to common sense in the form of the comic-prosaic: so W.H. Mallock, for example, in his first published work Every Man His Own Poet (1872), offered a "recipe book" of parodies and instructions to the reader on how to concoct a variety of poems, and the recipe 'How to make a Modern Pre-Raphaelite Poem' included among its "ingredients" long-necked, loose-haired "damosels dressed in nightgowns ... holding lilies" and a "burden ... a few jingling words inserted without variation between stanzas". The recipe concluded in the familiar accents of the nineteenth century parodist: "This sort of composition must be attempted only in a perfectly vacant atmosphere, so that no grains of common sense may injure the work whilst in progress".[16]

Perhaps the definitive parody of the Rossetti-Morris school of poetry, however, was C.S. Calverly's 'Ballad' which appeared in his most popular volume of parodies, Fly Leaves (1872).[17] Calverly transformed the soulful Pre-Raphaelite woman into a sturdy, athletic farmer's daughter; and by substituting a mundane catch-phrase for the musical incantation of Morris's burden: "Two red roses across the moon", he underlined – rather more emphatically than Burnand had done - the actual meaninglessness of such refrains, which are seen as pieces of rhetorical "fine writing". In 'Ballad', the melodic refrain becomes, predictably, a list of recipe-book "Victuals":

> The farmer's daughter hath ripe red lips;
> (Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
> If you try to approach her, away she skips
> Over tables and chairs with apparent ease.
>
> The farmer's daughter hath soft brown hair;
> (Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
> And I met with a ballad, I can't say where,
> Which wholly consisted of lines like these.

These parodies are representative of that section of public opinion in the seventies that tended to confuse several trends in the arts of the time, and arrived at a composite picture of 'the artist' which enabled Whistler's name, for example, to be linked with Rossetti's under the title

of what Punch called "going in for Art" (7 July 1877, p. 305). In its non-comic aspect this tendency is particularly noticeable in Robert Buchanan's notorious article 'The Fleshly School of Poetry' (October 1871),[18] where Rossetti, Swinburne, Morris, and Baudelaire are felt to share a coherent aesthetic of sensuality that is a "hideous portent" (p. 2) of the state of degeneracy into which their work is said to be plunging the nation. Buchanan's hostility was echoed in few parodies of the period, but it is worth noticing that his image of Rossetti was endorsed by some parodists: most vehemently by Henry Duff Traill, a Tory journalist and lawyer who wrote many parodies satirizing the "new" poetry from the early 1870s to his death in 1900.[19] Traill's 'Sister Helen' mocks the props that had come to be associated with Pre-Raphaelite writers after the publication of Rossetti's Poems in 1870 - the archaic vocabulary, the burden, the spiritual sensual woman; but Rossetti and his followers are unpleasantly characterized in a post-script to the parody (in the style of Rossetti's sonnet 'A Superscription') as conceited, underbred amateurs who are warned: "It-will-wash-no-more. Awakeneth/ Slowly but sure awakening it has, /The common-sense of man".[20]

Traill also linked Rossetti's name with Swinburne's, Whistler's, and Burne-Jones's in 'The God and the Damosel' (1879),[21] a burlesque review incorporating a cartoon and a parodic sonnet, which implied that these men had formed themselves into a league to undermine national morality - and that Rossetti never exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery, or that Burne-Jones's women are not Swinburneian are distinctions that the parodist does not make as he characterizes and condemns an immoral new "school ... *[of]* modern poets" and artists.[22] Rossetti objected to this sort of indiscriminate simplification which led to his work being criticized on the same grounds as Swinburne's, and among the documents relating to the fleshly controversy is a parody written by Rossetti which he intended to accompany his letter to the Athenaeum on 'The Stealthy School of Criticism' (16 December 1871) but which he was forced to suppress for fear

of libel.[23] 'The Brothers', in the metre of Tennyson's 'The Sisters', is a straightforward piece of rhymed denunciation, accusing Buchanan of incompetence, cowardice (he concealed his identity under the pen-name "Thomas Maitland"), and jealousy - "Here are some poets and they sell, / Therefore revenge becomes me well" -[24] and its harshly satiric tone is in marked contrast to the schoolboyish good-humour of the limericks, squibs and other parodies written by Rossetti which he was accustomed to exchange with Swinburne.[25]

But however much Rossetti might protest about image-mongering, the misunderstanding of his work fostered by the fleshly debate, and the confusions that arose from splitting society into those who 'went in for Art' and those who didn't, it was inevitable in the circumstances that the names of his friends and associates, and Swinburne's particularly, would be linked with his own and help perpetuate the image of a school with common aims long after the original, short-lived Brotherhood had, properly speaking, ceased to exist. Swinburne implicitly repudiated the connection in a parody that criticized his friends for many of the failings attributed to them by their critics - notably the poor technique of some of their paintings and the mannered sensuousness of Rossetti's sonnets: "Her bosom is an oven of myrrh, to bake/Love's white warm shewbread to a browner cake ... /The legs are absolutely abominable" -[26] but he did not publish the parody until 1880, and then only anonymously (see below); and, unlike Rossetti, he seems to have enjoyed his 1871 notoriety and his exchanges with Buchanan and the libel action in which they culminated.[27]

Of all the writers publically associated with the Pre-Raphaelite circle (including Rossetti himself) Swinburne was the most widely parodied;[28] and once again, parodists built-up two conflicting images of the poet, with the balance decidedly in favour of tolerant amusement rather than the hysterical moral indignation that characterized many hostile prose reviews of the period.[29] The parodies and flytings associated with Buchanan, of course, stressed (as Traill did) the poet's immorality :

and the cruellest parody of Swinburne as a fleshly poet was Mortimer Collins's caricature of him as the deformed hysteric "Reginald Sywnfen" in Two Plunges for a Pearl (1871), which Rossetti described as an "elaborately spiteful outrage".[30] Collins was a friend of Buchanan's who later published The British Birds (1872), a feeble verse satire on modern society in the style of Aristophanes, directed mainly against positivism with some incidental parody of Rossetti and Swinburne; but this type of parody was not popular, and after Punch's initial outburst in November 1866 - giving the poet "royal license to change his name to what is evidently its true form - SWINE-BORN" -[31] most parodists characterized Swinburne as an enfant terrible, adopting Eliot's position that had the poet "known anything about Vice or Sin, he would not have had so much fun out of it".[32] Swinburne was indulged as a young man who wrote about exotic vices for their shock-value, and his rapacious women, especially, were seen as more highly-spiced versions of Pre-Raphaelite heroines: both products of idle daydreaming. If Swinburne was criticized by parodists in the controversial stages of his career, it was more likely to be for the excessive fluency that Funny Folks mocked in 'Lofty Lines' ("As the bicyclist rides his bicycle /Let me on my metre be born")[33] than for his supposed immorality.

The predatory woman and Swinburne's masochistic sexuality, in fact, became a standing joke among middle-class magazine parodists especially, and Walter Parke (to take a representative case) found Swinburne's poems in praise of "the foam, and the fangs, and the flowers" laughably naive - the posture of an innocent schoolboy who yearns for:

> ... the days of sweet vices,
> The glory of goddess and Greek!
> (For all that most naughty and nice is
> Most purely and surely antique).[34]

Most parodists of the period discounted Swinburne's claim to intense, Baudelaireian experience; and the poet's raptures over Dolores and Faustine were seen as amusingly unsophisticated rather than vicious: thus nullifying any threat that Swinburne may have posed to susceptible readers by refusing

to take his poetic statements seriously. Richard Le Gallienne, for example, reduced Swinburne's appetite to everyday proportions when he addressed 'A Melton Mowbray Pork Pie' - "Strange pie that is almost a passion, /O passion immoral for pie!";[35] although the most amusing deflationary parody of this kind is Arthur Clement Hilton's undergraduate piece, 'Octopus', which derives its success from the parodist's initial perception of a certain congruity between Swinburne's clinging, blood-sucking ladies and their marine counterparts:

> Is thy home European or Asian,
> O mystical monster marine?
> Part molluscus and partly crustacean
> Betwixt and between.[36]

Parodists, then, endorsed an image of the poet as a harmless pretender to 'naughtiness' which seemed to be borne-out by the dulness and respectability of his later work and his retreat to Putney; and it is from this persepctive that Owen Seaman wrote his famous summation of the poet's career, 'A Song of Renunciation',[37] which turns Swinburne's sweepingly defiant rejection of "virtue" into the primly-rhymed assertion that it is not "nearly so nice" as "vice":

> In the days of my season of salad,
> When the dawn was as dew on my cheek,
> And for French I was bred on the ballad,
> For Greek on the writers of Greek, -
> Then I sang of the rose that is ruddy,
> Of 'pleasure that winces and stings',
> Of white women and wine that is bloody,
> And similar things.

Ironically the parodists were wrong about the extent of Swinburne's personal acquaintance with "vice", but their analysis of the naivety and relative superficiality that distinguishes Swinburne's work from Baudelaire's seems fundamentally correct; and in this sense his parodists were accurate in their suggestion that Swinburne posed little threat to English "morals and manners".

Most parodies of Swinburne encouraged an attitude of tolerant amusement towards the <u>enfant terrible</u> who became an English institution - making a joke, which the public enjoyed, out of what sententious prose reviewers

thought opprobrious. The parodies made Swinburne seem a safe poet; and again, parody played an important and complex part in acclimatizing the public to eccentric writing by showing 'how it's done', and creating an acceptable and familiar character for the poet. Swinburne himself, moreover, contributed to the parodic activity surrounding his work as part of his self-conscious role of shocker of Victorian society, for not only did his poetry deliberately flout convention, but he was also the author of a series of parodies directed against the respectable poets of the day, as well as the originator of a spate of practical jokes, hoaxes, and coarser versions of the Victorian penchant for punning, limericks, and word-games.[38] Like many young writers his earliest work included experiments with parody, and his parody of the Spasmodic school (a rather weak imitation of Firmilian) - 'The Monomaniac's Tragedy' - was published in 1858.[39] Its particular targets were Cain, Festus, Balder, and E.B. Browning's A Drama of Exile; and the parody represents the young poet's attempt to exorcise the influence of these poets (whom he had, at one stage, intensely admired) and the beginning of a familiar process of defining his own aesthetic by rejecting possible models.

Later, his Spectator hoaxes of 1862 - pastiches of Sade and Baudelaire purportedly written by "Félicien Clossu" and "Ernest Couët" - and the parodies of Hugo 'La Soeur de la Reine' and 'La Fille du Policeman' (which depict Queen Victoria as a latter-day Messalina whose principal lovers are Russell and Wordsworth - who seduces her with "sa chanson erotique de Betty Foy"),[40] confirmed Swinburne in his role of jester to middle-class convention; and he strengthened this image in a series of parodies written between 1859 and 1880, which he published under the title Heptalogia; or, The Seven Against Sense (1880).[41] These mocked such Victorian favourites as Coventry Patmore, "Owen Meredith" (Bulwer Lytton's son), the later Tennyson, and the Brownings, as well as including the parody of Rossetti mentioned above, and one of Swinburne himself. The parodies both cocked a snook at conventionally admired poets (and emphasised

Swinburne's difference from them), and expressed one aspect of Swinburne's abiding interest in the form of poetry - where he parodically dismantled various styles in order to take their measure and place his own work in relation to others'.

Swinburne was an archetypal Aesthete-parodist - overturning traditions in his work and person; urging innovatory readings on an unwilling and sceptical public (as the parodists of the 1830s and 1840s had done in relation to the popular poets of their day); and writing parodies himself that comically anatomize a variety of forms. The skill of the parodies in Heptalogia is only fully apparent if they are read in their entirety, and they are too long to be quoted in this study; but the parody of Browning's 'James Lee's Wife' - 'John Jones' - is a particularly ingenious ravelling of the complicated and intricate textures of the original, while 'The Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell' parodies the vague metaphysics of Tennyson's 'The Higher Pantheism': "God, whom we see not, is: and God, who is not, we see: /Fiddle, we know, is diddle: diddle, we take it, is dee".[42]

Most interesting, however, are Swinburne's self-parodies, where the poet draws attention to his own techniques, disarming criticism by preempting his critics: a wily testimony - which only encourages belief in his work as a poet - that he has not actually lost himself in a world of art, but is willing to show how he achieves his effects; and that he is amiable enough to pen a joke at his own expense and admit that his achievement is imperfect. Such, at least, is the thrust of the Heptalogia parody 'Nepheledia' in which Swinburne mocks his long-lined odes and over-careless fluency in composition that often subordinates sense to sound. In contrast, though, to this relatively mild self-judgement is the parody 'Poeta Loquitur' - a piece of explicit self-criticism written in the metre of 'By the North Sea' which was intended to fill the place in Heptalogia eventually occupied by 'Nepheledia', but which remained unpublished until 1925.[43] Some of the early Romantic poets had written self-parodies in

order to express dissatisfaction or embarrassment with their work, but none conveyed a sense of disenchantment so strongly as Swinburne who passes a judgement on himself in this parody that is quite as severe as any made by his critics. He charges himself with a paucity of subject matter; technical inexpertise; a silly desire to shock; and characterizes himself as:"A party pretentiously pensive, /With a muse that deserves to be skinned". This, rather than Seaman's parody, deserves the title 'A Song of Renunciation', for it was written when Swinburne realized that his best work had been done; and one of the reasons it was suppressed seems likely to have been that 'Poeta Loquitur' parodied the only really accomplished lyric in Songs of the Springtide and Studies in Song (which were issued at the same time as Heptalogia) and that the poet's reputation could ill-sustain so blunt an attack as that made by this bitter self-parody.

When Swinburne published Heptalogia he had actually become a respectable poet himself, and the Pre-Raphaelite phase of late Romanticism had given way to the Wildeian-Aesthetic. "Vernon Lee's" neglected parodic novel Miss Brown (1884)[44] looked back on the period and attempted to sum it up in an ultimately tragic story that involves the thinly disguised figures of Rossetti, Siddall, Morris, Swinburne, and Adah Menken - among others - who act out their fantasies, in the tradition of Romantic-novel parody, in an effort to try and elude unpalatable realities. In this account Swinburne appears as the kindly "Cosmo Chough" who writes poetry about women who "sucked out their lovers' hearts" but lives harmlessly in Canonbury, "altogether unacquainted with ... beautiful baneful ladies" (II, p. 24); and the same readers who were prepared to accept this safely defused image of Swinburne as a posturing but fundamentally innocent member of society were also receptive to the newer image of Wilde in the late 1870s and early 1880s as an outrageous poseur who enjoyed an almost mythic existence and a merely bookish acquaintance with "vice".

Wilde - more so than Swinburne - embodied in his person what 'going in for Art' meant to the average member of the middle-classes; and as suggested, the image was partly of his own and partly of their making. He was a

self-conscious monument to the artistic "temperament" of the period, which was in turn the outcome of indiscriminate borrowings from Arnold, Ruskin and Pater which, in the 1870s, lacked the focal point that Wilde ultimately supplied.[45] Before Wilde appeared on the scene, W.H. Mallock had attempted to analyse the mood of the period in his Peacockian satire The New Republic (1877)[46] in which pseudonymous representations of Victorian culture (notably Arnold, Pater, Ruskin, Jowett, and Huxley) foregather in a country house to discuss the state of English society. Mallock's contention is that Romantic modes of perception are inimical to the health of the nation; and the novel is based on the premise that exclusivity among thinkers and artists is both a symptom and a cause of social decay - where overvaluing art or Arnoldian "Culture", especially, as experiences peculiar to a few cultivated individuals produces the hedonistic, godless society which tolerates both Jowett's all-embracing liberalism and Clifford's militant atheism, and encourages people to believe that all values are relative because based on the individual's experience. Pater, as "Mr. Rose", is held particularly responsible for disseminating this sort of relativism in his insistence that objects and events are uniquely apprehended by each individual "temperament" ("What effect does it really produce on me?");[47] and Mallock parodies Pater's Gioconda description in Mr. Rose's ideal of beauty as a sterile, "weary", and "self-conscious" figure who converts all experience into a subject for aesthetic contemplation and is content to sit among the ruins of a civilization (p. 279).

The New Republic was written in the conservative, anti-Romantic tradition of deep mistrust of unconventionality, subjectivity, and non-representational art, though its analysis of the trends in contemporary culture that had supposedly combined to produce the "spiritual darkness" (p. 98) of the later Victorian age is much more acute and intelligent than Buchanan's in a similar vein or Nordau's Degeneration (1895), and Mallock was flexible enough to be able to view some aspects of his models with a certain amount of good-humour: in the only competent parody of

Arnold's poetry written in the nineteenth century, for example;[48] or in one of the few parodies of Ruskin's increasingly crotchety definitions of what counts as 'good' art - "There were, indeed, only two pictures in the whole collection that were not entirely abominable; and these were, one of them three boulders in the island of Sark, the other a study of pebbles on the beach at Ilfracombe" (pp. 43-4).[49] But on the whole,Mallock's analysis of the age's spiritual self-indulgence was a gloomy one, and the book concludes with "Mr. Herbert"/Ruskin's lament for the Death of God: "I can pray no longer. You have taken my God away from me" (p. 359). Yet as was the case with parody of the Pre-Raphaelites, most other parodists were inclined to take a less solemn view of the influence of the philosophy of "art for the sake of art; beauty for the sake of beauty; love for the sake of love; life for the sake of life" (p. 263), and followed Punch's lead in splitting society into "Aesthetes" and "Philistines": brilliantly accoutred characters in a mock-battle that - to begin with at least - was lightheartedly joined by both parties.

In 'A Legend of Camelot' du Maurier and Burnand had created an image of the Pre-Raphaelites as a group of people with a set of distinct mannerisms, a vocabulary peculiar to themselves, and a contemplative interest in ideal art. The Heroine was characterized by her flowing hair and garments, her pale, attenuated limbs, and a curious mixture of intensity and lassitude; while the Hero-knights of Camelot were tired and "wan", incapable of action, and much given to staring into space. Between 1877 and 1883, du Maurier (with Burnand collaborating on the captions and writing parodies independently) began to elaborate this image into a composite picture of the "Aesthetic" artist, until Punch possessed a complete dramatis personae of characters who 'went in for Art' - the Cimabue Browns and their friends Maudle, Postlethwaite, and Prigsby; Mrs. Vamp; Bellamy Brown - who behaved and spoke distinctively; were surrounded by an idiosyncratic décor; and were invariably worsted by "the Colonel", "Jack Beamish", and a series of nameless "Philistines", usually hardworking

fathers.

The N E D (1888) complained about "recent" misuses of the word "aesthetic" to describe people who adopted "a sentimental archaism as an ideal of beauty",[50] and Punch certainly made regular use of the term from 1877 onwards to describe a set of attitudes that were "affected, strained, and queer" and which had been adopted in defiance of the healthy "Nature" championed by the "Philistines" (14 July 1877, p.9). A typical interchange - 'Athlete and Aesthete" (19 March 1881, p. 122) - involves "Jack Beamish" and a "limp eel" Mediaevalist called "Tristram Moldwarp", who loses the pretty, sensible heroine to the sporty, unintellectual Jack; and most Aesthetic encounters in Punch ended in this way. Those who "go in for Art" are confounded by those who go in for Sport; and whereas the fast-living, hard-drinking Blackwood's/Fraser's fraternity invoked "Victuals and Drink" as antidotes to Romantic claims for art, the later, sporting generation of Punch writers[51] urged hard physical activity as an effective counter to Aesthetic poseurishness and introspection (as symbolized by an unhealthy interest in interior decoration and styles of dress that proclaimed the professor to be one of the "elect"[52] rather than one of the team).

Again, it is impossible within the confines of this study to discuss the Punch parodies and cartoons in detail - although the most significant of these will be found listed under the appropriate footnotes;[53] but, in general terms, the evolution and attributes of the Punch Aesthete and his Philistine counterpart are plain enough. Tennyson's 'Palace of Art' provided a convenient starting-point (and Tennyson's early "aesthetic"[54] predilictions were recalled by the parodists in this context); and two Punch parodies of the same name (7-14 July 1877, and 15 February 1879) characterized "Aesthetes" as people peculiarly concerned with artifice - in language, dress, and design - rather than with "Nature". They are said to live in particular kinds of interiors that are symbolic of their wish to avoid contact with the crude outside world: the fittings include uncomfortable Morris-style furniture; much Chinoiserie, in the form of

lacquered caskets, bronze figures, and a profusion of willow-patterned plates; the whole decorated in shades of green and yellow, with the dado prominent and peacock feathers, sunflowers, and bulrushes greatly in evidence. Further, the inhabitants of these interiors are patrons of the Grosvenor Gallery:[55] the men are like Tristram Moldwarp and are inclined to contort their limbs and gesticulate; while the women are gaunt, uncorseted, and intense - a species of Heroine as 'Two Ideals' pointed out (13 September 1879, p. 120), who has supplanted the sensitive, swooning woman of album verse in popular favour. Typically she is "satiate of all delight beneath the sun" (ibid.); and in a parody of Waller, 'The Aesthete to the Rose' (1 October 1881, p. 154) aspiring female Aesthetes are told: "How little of Art's praise they share, /Who are not sallow, sick, and spare!"

Both male and female Aesthetes in these and in other Punch parodies and cartoons are also distinguished by their manner of speaking and the vocabulary they employ, which derives from Ruskin's description of the "blessed and precious" in art[56] and Whistler's use of terms from other art forms to describe his work: so "Bellamy Brown" in du Maurier's 'Artistic Amenetie.' (26 July 1879, p. 35) enthuses over a painting as: "Quite a Poem! Distinctly precious, blessed, subtile, significant and supreme!" while "Mrs. Vamp" hymns her teapot as "the finished fictile incarnation of the Utter ... A Thing to love ... to yearn intimately into" (14 May 1881, p 221).[57] None of Punch's Aesthetes work for a living, since this would bring them into contact with the non-elect - who literally do not speak the same language; and Punch's whole attitude to the late Romantics is summed-up in du Maurier's cartoon 'À Fortiori', where a "Young Genius" (who resembles Rossetti) is asked by his "Philistine Father": "Why the Dickens don't you paint something like Frith's 'Derby Day' - something everybody can understand, and somebody buy?" The life-divorced, egotistical genius replies: "Everybody understand, indeed! Art is for the Few, Father, and the higher in Art ... the fewer the Few. The highest Art of all is for One. That Art is mine. That One is Myself!" (31 May 1879, p. 249).

Punch clearly endorsed the Derby Day image of art as the craftsmanlike skill Aytoun claimed it to be, written for Thackeray's "Bread", which was - in turn - supplied by the audience for whom the artist was spokesman. Punch's Philistines are, accordingly, all against esoteric transactions in literature and art, and studiously avoid adopting the mannerisms of an elect. Instead they are team men - athletes and soldiers - who tend to "hook it" inarticulately when confronted by a Poet or an Artist ('Nincompoopiana', 14 February 1880, p. 66). If Punch's Aesthetes are all self-conscious pose, its Philistines are all uncomplicated action and "Natural" intuition ('From the Philistine Point of View', 18 October 1879, p. 169), and they represent the healthy obverse of the "wan" ladies and "weird" lovers of Punch's summation of the Aesthetic temperament: 'A Match. (Matched)', which, in the style of Swinburne, anatomizes Aesthetic culture as the superficial product of the adoption of particular sets of emblems and ways of speaking.[58]

Punch's image of the Aesthetic way of life is a caricature that exaggerates and compresses a variety of elements from the arts and society in the seventies to produce the composite figures of the Aesthete and the Philistine, just as the earlier appellation 'Pre-Raphaelite' had served to describe a whole range of literary and artistic activities; and, again, the Punch parodists and cartoonists were simultaneously reflecting and creating an image of the age by popularizing the convenient division of contemporary culture into two easily identifiable "Camps".[59] If late Romantics wanted to adopt a pose that would express their defiance of the middle-class and its admiration of the sturdy bourgeois values of Frith, they need only look to Punch for an indication of what methods were best calculated to annoy Philistines - for under Burnand's editorship after 1880, Punch had made the "Philistine's point of view" abundantly plain and provided targets to aim at as well as a whole set of possible "Aesthetic" responses to those targets. Conversely, admirers of Frith found their position neatly defined and supplied with a series of memorable catch-

phrases in the pages of the magazine; and it was Punch's boast - anticipating Whistler's and Wilde's claim that "Life imitates Art" -[60] that the entire Aesthetic movement and the commotion surrounding it was the creation of Punch contributors, who had supplied the seventies with imitable images of 'the artist' and his followers, which were subsequently acted out in real life: "I don't believe there are any such people" says Mrs. Grig to Mrs. Vamp (14 May 1881, p. 22); while du Maurier's cartoon 'Frustrated Social Ambition' represents Maudle weeping on Postlethwaite's shoulder after discovering that "they only exist in Mr. Punch's vivid imagination".[61]

The Punch writers and artists were comically overstating their case; but there is an element of truth in their claim, for du Maurier's cartoon is fundamentally accurate in its implication that Aestheticism in the 1870s and 1880s was essentially a flamboyant public pose behind which there was only a weak impulse towards producing works of art, and that 'Aesthetes' were more concerned with cultivating a temperament and a particular life-style in which the adoption of roles and images (anticipating the dandiacal poses and philosophy of masks of the nineties) played a significant part. Punch did create an acceptable image of Aestheticism, both for those readers who wanted to believe that artists behaved in the ways described by the magazine and encouraged them to do so, and for those writers who were prepared to gratify this desire and deliberately place themselves in a shocking relation to the middle-class by carrying the Aesthetic image to preposterous extremes - parodying a parody, in fact: but in a way that seems to have been enjoyed by Aesthetes and Philistines alike, so that a complicated series of parodic references informs the whole notion of Aestheticism in the seventies and early eighties.

What is clear is that Punch provided Wilde with a serviceable image that he could adopt and adapt when he made his social début at the end of 1879, and that he took his early cue from Punch's ideal of Aestheticism which involved comically outrageous anti-Philistine "attitudes". But as Wilde became fashionable that process of interchange between himself

and Punch, already referred to, began to take place; and throughout 1880, first Maudle, the Postlethwaite (and sometimes Prigsby) came to physically resemble Wilde, and in 1881 parodies and cartoons of Wilde appeared virtually every week in the magazine. Just as Whistler used to send his wittiest telegrams to the World,[62] so Wilde ensured that his bon mots penetrated Punch circles, where they would be refined and reprinted as captions for du Maurier's cartoons; and by 1881 the archetypal male Aesthete in Punch was recognizably Wildeian: the cartoon 'The Six-Mark Tea-Pot' (30 October 1880, p. 194), for example, illustrates the remark Wilde was supposed to have made about the china in his rooms at Oxford, as the long-haired, chubby "Aesthetic Bridegroom" remarks: "It is quite consummate, is it not?" and receives the reply: "Oh, Algernon, let us live up to it!" Or again, the apocryphal story about the poet sitting up all night with a lily reappears as 'An Aesthetic Midday Meal' (17 July 1880, p. 23), where du Maurier represents Postlethwaite ordering a meal in a restaurant, which consists of a lily in a glass which he gazes at rapturously in a contorted Aesthetic attitude; while the prestigious Christmas Day edition of Punch in the same year repeated the joke in a long account of how Postlethwaite was discovered halfway up a mountain "with a lily in his hand" having fainted after passionately smelling an Eidelweiss: "A tear rolled down the perfect cheek of MAUDLE (for his cheek is almost as consummate as mine); pressing me against his bosom he said, 'Distinctly so!' " (pp. 293-4).

Wilde, then, exploited an extant set of emblems, a style of speaking, and a manner of comportment that were supposedly the visible tokens of electness and what it meant to be Aesthetic; but in his hands the image became more stylish and potent, and presented his parodists with more material to embellish. He became the type of Pre-Raphaelite, Swinburneian, Paterian artist in whose person all contemporary 'arty' trends might be located - a personification of the mood of the period, as Beerbohm ironically remarked: "Beauty had existed long before 1880. It was Mr. Oscar

Wilde who managed her _début_".[63] But as far as parodists were concerned, Wilde's image was overwhelmingly an attractive one; and the publication of his _Poems_ in June 1881 did not result in charges of "immorality" such as those made by the Oxford Union,[64] but was simply the occasion for more jokes about Wilde's vocabulary, the poverty of his written achievement, and his tendency to imitate Rossetti and Swinburne.[65] _Punch's_ attitude was indulgent and may be summed-up by the caption for Linley Sambourne's cartoon of Wilde leaning from the heart of a sunflower: "...The poet is WILDE, /But his poetry's tame".[66] As was the case with Swinburne, Wilde's parodists did not believe that his "vices" were anything more than a calculated, purely cerebral desire to shock; and so, although the effeminacy of the Aesthetic man is repeatedly stressed in _Punch_ ("How consummately lovely your son is")[67] and Postlethwaite's 'poetry' abounds in references to Greece, Narcissus, Sappho, and Hyacinthus, it is seen as exemplifying no more than the dandyism of a D'Orsay (to whom Herbert Beerbohm Tree compared Wilde in one of his _Punch_ parodies of Wilde's American press interviews),[68] or an attitude struck in defiance of hearty Philistia.

One outcome of adopting the labels Aesthete and Philistine seems to have been that the protagonists became insulated from disruptive enquiries by virtue of the codes of conduct invoked by mention of these names - so that the be 'Aesthetic' involved a certain pattern of behaviour (and no other) that had become quite rigidly defined by 1881, and which did not involve real knowledge of "vice" - or the production of original works of art. The late Romantics were thus made safe for a generation of readers: but it was ultimately a false security, for evidence given at the Wilde trial disproved the comic stereotype, and the fact that the public had been encouraged by Wilde and his parodists to treat the matter as a cultural joke only exacerbated hostility and a sense of having been deceived when the Wilde image was confronted with, and disabled by, "real life".

Moreover, parody which fostered middle-class illusions simultaneously prepared the ground for the renunciation of "Art" attendant on Wilde's

trial, because although the parodists of the period displayed a certain acuteness in mocking Wilde for plagiarism,[69] one of the legacies of 1881 - the heyday of Wildeian parody - was a deepening strain of philistinism as the word is commonly understood. The distinction between mocking the cult of art and mocking the idea of art itself was not always well preserved, and Philistines as well as Aesthetes struck extreme poses at this time. As Beerbohm's manipulation of role-playing and the idea of the mask in The Happy Hypocrite (1897) implies, people became like the poses they assume; and the polarization of thought enforced by the division of society into "two ... Camps" encouraged the sort of extremism embodied in a parody of Rossetti (1882): "Art is to me no intellectual fad ... /You don't catch me o'er culture going mad. / (The rarest of letters are £. s. d.!)".[70] The tendency of anti-romantic parody to elevate the vulgar as the only reality and to mistrust evident artifice became extremely pronounced towards the end of the century, and the seeds of the antagonism towards 'going in for Art' that sprang up and bore such "poisonous" fruit at the time of the Wilde trial[71] had, in this sense, been well-sown by Punch parodies and cartoons and by the enormous success of theatrical burlesques like James Albery's Where's the Cat? (1880-81); Burnand's expansion of his Punch work: The Colonel (1881 - both plays featured Beerbohm Tree in the Wildeian role);[72] and the embodiment of the Philistine ideal of Aesthetic behaviour, Patience (1881), which was encored eight times on the first night and played to full houses in London for over a year before touring the provinces, America, and Australia.[73]

But in 1881 Gilbert's analysis of "Art" as an affected indulgence that had little value in "every-day" life[74] was not altogether inaccurate with respect to Wilde's actual achievement to this date, and 'Wilde' in 1881 and 1882 was little more than a publicity stunt whose absence from England led to the collapse of Aestheticism - as Punch announced in one of its last Aesthetic parodies, 'Sage Green. By a Fading-out Aesthete' (31 March, 1883, p. 156); and while Wilde was in America and before he

began to produce a substantial body of work in the late 1880s, parodic activity conspicuously diminished, only reviving when the Old French metres adopted by Dobson, Lang and Swinburne began to enjoy a popular vogue - and the extreme artifice of the forms was the subject of a series of parodies in Punch ('The Muse in Manacles' - 1887), and a gloomy prediction by H.D. Traill that such writing heralded 'The Doom of the Muses' (1888).[75] The French metrists, however, with a Swinburneian awareness of form, proved their own best parodists, and Dobson wrote comic triolets for Hood's Comic Annual; Lang's Ballades in Blue China (1880) included several parodies; while Gleeson White (whose collection of Ballades and Rondeaus (1887) had occasioned Punch's parodies) wrote a complaint that "ballade-mongering is killing".[76]

So, as typified by the French metrists, Aestheticism and parody converged in the late 1880s to form one element of that "point of view" that characterized the Decadence:[77] a mood of Aesthetic extremism that was partly a legacy of the polarity encouraged by the Aesthete/Philistine division of the 1870s; and partly the product of Whistler's and Wilde's dogmatizing of Pater, whose valid protest against anecdotalism and the ascendancy of the moral judgement in aesthetic matters in less tentative hands provided the sanction for a "new Hedonism"[78] which elevated 'form' and the cultivated individual's perceptions as the sole criteria for judging art. The last Romantics deliberately widened the rift between the artist and society as they turned from the materialism and Imperialism of the late Victorian years to the cultivation of 'experience for its own sake',[79] in order that they might realize the ideals of "the elect to whom beautiful things mean only Beauty"[80] and celebrate art as a delightful falsehood that could not become corrupted by its proximity to an ugly, crude reality. Thus they repudiated and mocked conventional ideas of the artist's role in society, and self-consciously performed a type of cultural parody on a large scale; while, at the same time, their extreme subjective individualism, their rejection of "commonplace" life,[81] and their youthful

claims to shocking experience made Decadent writers and artists themselves ideal targets for parodists.

While the Decadents were attacked in some circles as degenerate followers of Houysmans and Gautier whose manifesto proclaiming the necessity for "spiritual and moral perversity" was regarded as autobiographical and inciting to vice,[82] the opinion of parodists of the period was divided; and although they increasingly laid darker emphases on certain aspects of their models than had hitherto been noticeable in late Romantic parody, many parodists afforded the same tolerance to the Decadents as they had to Swinburne and the young Wilde, and treated the idea of the 'Decadence' - like 'Aestheticism' - as a joke: a sham movement that derived its energy solely from the act of defying the status quo, and, to this extent, could be thought of as being defined and safely contained (if not actually created) by middle-class convention. To such parodists the Decadents were young men whose claim to intense Dorian Gray-like experience masked inexperience and a Swinburneian pretence to 'naughtiness' of which they were wholly innocent. Such was the premise of George Slythe Street's popular short parodic novel The Autobiography of a Boy (1894),[83] whose hero aspires to be regarded as "a man to whom no chaste woman should be allowed to speak" (p. xi). "Tubby" has a mild line in Wildeian repartee - "I shall never forget the horror of the moment when I knew that Juliet loved me" (p. 3):- and has written a "Ballad of Shameful Kisses" (p. 31); but his knowledge of "curious unpictured sins"[84] is purely academic, and - in Punch fashion - he is finally trounced by a band of athletes. The heroine speaks for her creator and in the tradition of nineteenth century parody when she remarks: "If you would do some honest work and acquire an elementary sense of humour, you would be quite a nice boy" (pp. 6-7).

Street was a friend of Beerbohm's and a member of the avant-garde Bodley Head group, and his book was mocked-up to look like a piece of genuine Bodley belles-lettrist press and was published by Lane and Matthews. Other writers associated with the Decadence also endorsed this image of

boyish pride in "sins" actually uncommitted and made a joke out of their supposed degeneracy. Lionel Johnson mocked the Decadent obsession with evil and death in the Pageant (1896),[85] in 'Incurable' - a short prose piece interspersed with parodic verse, about a young poet who determines to kill himself because his latest work has received poor reviews. He quotes from his poems: "Sometimes in very joy of shame, /Our flesh becomes one living flame ... " and appends the comment, "It's a lie, of course" (p. 312). The poet-hero finally decides not to kill himself because the water is too cold, and goes home to write a poem about it instead - proving that he is, indeed, incurable . John Davidson, whose 'The Ballad of a Nun' linked him publically with the Decadent movement,[86] also parodied their much-professed taste for morbid perversions in Earl Lavender (1895), a fantastic account of a secret flagellant society whose true reason for existence is to bring aspiring Decadents like "Sir Harry Emblem" back to reality by exposing their taste for exotic settings and fantastic cults as absurd and immature. Like The Autobiography of a Boy, Davidson's novel was a hoax played on the reader who - misled by the Beardsley frontispiece of a woman scourging an almost naked man - might have bought the book expecting some titillating passages of Decadent purple prose: and in this it resembles another eccentric, partly parodic novel of the period, Baron Verdigris (1894) by Jocelyn Quilp, which also had a frontispiece by Beardsley and related the story of a Decadent Bluebeard who turns out to have committed no crimes at all. Like the parodies discussed above, Baron Verdigris repudiates the Decadent claim to intense and immoral experience, stressing that it is an artistic pose adopted as a condition of enabling Pater's "exquisite passion" to be realized in the face of experience's "awful brevity".[87]

As far as Wilde was concerned, by the 1890s he had become something of an English institution whose advocacy of the "strange" in Dorian Gray and 'The Truth of Masks',[88] for example, was seen as representing no more than a facet of his paradoxical wit that remained untranslated into action;

and between 1891 and 1895 (that is to say, when his essays and plays were being published and performed) Punch was once more packed with parodies of Wilde that reinforced this image - many of which were written by his friend Ada Leverson.[89] She parodied The Sphinx as 'The Minx. - A Poem in Prose', and The Importance of Being Earnest in 'The Advisability of Not Being Brought up in a Handbag. A Trivial Tragedy for Wonderful People': "To be really modern one should have no soul. To be really mediaeval one should have no cigarettes".[90] 'The Blue Gardenia', meanwhile, parodied Wilde's conversation essays between brilliant young men, concluding with a reference to his new emblem - the green carnation.[91] The significance of the dyed carnation evidently escaped Punch parodists who jocosely referred to the cult as an extension of Aesthetic interest in lilies as symbols of spiritual electness, even though the Punch Decadents who adopted it also adopted what now seems a blatantly camp manner of talking: "It's too horrid of you to leave us to play by ourselves. We've all got so cross and fractious we've come in here to be petted".[92] So 'The Decadent Guys. A Colour Study in Green Carnations' refers to a certain "mystic emblem ... *[with]* no meaning whatever - the Magenta Cauliflower"; and the guys are stuffed dummies waiting to be burned on Guy Fawkes night - "Are you going to blow up tonight? You are so brilliant when you blow up". Even though "Lord Raggie" and his friend's "votaries" are "beautiful pink boys", the reference is an innocent one, understood as part of the Aesthetic pose designed to irritate Philistines.[93]

However, that the pose - like the mask - however lightly assumed and buffered with comedy, might harden into compulsiveness and a distortion of the subject was a possibility entertained by some parodists and Decadents: and Johnson's 'Incurable' is an ambiguous piece, for although his hero can laugh at himself and wittily analyse his precarious state, he is finally unable to laugh-off his 'Decadence', which has become an entrapping fiction with a life of its own (he is incurable, in a potentially worrying sense). Decadent poses, Johnson implies, cannot be easily dismissed and made safe

as jokes, because even if - or, perhaps, because - they begin as attitudes struck in defiance of convention, they eventually gain a purchase on reality.

The power of fictions to invade real life and harm it is a traditional theme of parody, and the destructive effect of certain poses on the poseur and the society inhabits was stressed in a sombre vein by John Davidson in his semi-parodic novels The North Wall (1885) and Baptist Lake (1894) - the story of an irredeemably vicious Wildeian young man who lives only to dress well and make witty conversation, and whose boyishness (in contrast to Tubby's) does not hide inexperience but a ruthless dedication to self. The best-selling The Green Carnation (1894) by Robert Hichens also made a similar point, and hinted fairly broadly that certain of Wilde's attitudes were not empty affectations and that the green carnation had a quite definite meaning. Hichens had met Lord Alfred Douglas in Egypt, and in his novel "Lord Reginald Hastings" is addressed by his older friend "Esmé Amarinth" with all the extravagance that Wilde was accustomed to lavish on Douglas in his letters.[94] A homosexual relationship is indicated, although Hichens's main theme is the corrupting selfishness of a life devoted solely to pleasurable sensations and epigrams. The parody imitates Wilde's wittiness and style of impudent paradox with considerable panache and skill, but Hichens makes plain the ultimately wearying nature of such discourse, for Hastings and Amarinth are isolated in a petrified world of verbal brilliance that represents the triumph of "style" over "sincerity",[95] while the "passionate pulsating opportunities" (p. 106) hymned by Amarinth are shown to be no more than a not particularly aesthetic interest in choirboys.

Doubts about the harmlessness of Decadent poses and the ability, or desire, of their practitioners to discard them were also evident in Punch's response, not to Wilde, but to The Yellow Book (April 1894 -May 1897), which also provided the mid-nineties with an image of Decadence and seemed to symbolize the mood of the period as Wilde had in the early eighties. Punch reduplicated the du Maurier-Burnand partnership in E.T. Reed and Owen

Seaman (under Burnand's editorship); and in 1894 and 1895, particularly, scarcely an issue passed without reference to "Daubney/Daubaway Weirdsley" or "Mortarthurio Whiskersley" and "Max Mereboom".[96] Yet a difference in tone between these Decadent parodies and their Aesthetic predecessors is apparent, and the extravagance of the last Romantics (- from whom Punch could except Wilde, since he was conspicuously absent from The Yellow Book -) was increasingly countered by an intolerance that is more reminiscent of H.D. Traill than of Punch hitherto. The magazine by no means aspired to the level of invective of some of The Yellow Book's critics,[97] and Reed's brilliant full-page cartoon 'Britannia à la Beardsley' featured prominently in the Christmas Number and Almanack for 1895 ; but Seaman's parodies, on the whole, were more acerbic than Burnand's in a similar vein. 'Ars Postera', for example (in the metre of Tennyson's 'Lady Clara Vere de Vere') upbraided "Aubrey Beer de Beers" for painting "spotted ghouls" rather than "clean women ... au naturel", while 'Lileth Libifera' referred to "wanton ape*[s]*" and "yellow-bellied toads" as Beardsley's aesthetic ideals.[98] More memorably, 'A Ballad of a Bun' transformed Davidson's notorious couplet (spoken by the nun after she has taken her first lover) - " 'I am sister to the mountains now, /And sister to the sun and moon' " - into a blessing pronounced by a Decadent on a New lady novelist: " 'You are sister to the microbe now, /And second cousin to the worm!' "[99] and these parodies are in keeping with the mood of the anonymous Punch writers who invoked the shade of Buchanan in a stanza which proclaimed that: "Morbid fleshliness is the mark /Of the modern (sham) Art-lover", and abused Beardsley in a parody titled 'Ugly'.[100]

Beerbohm's mocking undergraduate essay 'A Defence of Cosmetics' which appeared in the first issue of The Yellow Book was also censured as a particularly offensive championing of the Aesthetic doctrine of the primacy of art over nature by a young man whose dandiacal self-possession was itself thought to be unnatural, and Punch parodists slanged him in a similar manner as Beardsley in such pieces as 'Ars Cosmetica' - "How doth the

little busy bore /Improve on Nature's dower" - and ' A Phalse Note on George the Fourth'.[101] But Beerbohm's self-assured urbanity and the variety of ironic stances that he adopted even in his earliest work baffled his parodists; and the writer and caricaturist who announced his retirement at the age of twenty-four in terms that themselves mocked the period's spirit of restlessness and slender achievement - "I shall write no more. Already I feel myself to be a trifle outmoded. I belong to the Beardsley period. Younger men with months of activity before them ... have pressed forward since then" -[102] proved resistent to parody. Beerbohm, more than Swinburne or Wilde, represents the perfection of the Aesthete-parodist type, for he achieved perfect control of the Aesthetic pose by mocking it and limiting his personal investment in it; and he went on to become the most skilled parodist of the early twentieth century.[103]

It is evident, however, that most writers and artists associated with the Decadence lacked Beerbohm's saving - though perhaps rather bloodless - sense of irony, and the case of Wilde represents one extreme example of the manipulative power of parodic and other images implied by Johnson in 'Incurable'. Wilde began his career as the confident plagiarist of Aestheticism who skilfully adapted an extant model of the artist and moulded it to suit his own personality; but even as he acted-out his increasingly shocking, antithetical relation to society and derived satisfaction from the treble bluff of knowing that he actually was what he appeared to be (and was 'parodying' conventional morality with a vengeance), he seems at the same time to have been manipulated and constrained by his own image, whose derivation from 'shockingness' necessarily entailed the pursuit of outrageous extremes so that eventually he became the committed victim of an inflexible pose that did not lend itself readily to modification. The potent effect of the public image on Wilde himself may be gauged not only by pieces of his own writing which read like a Punch parody of Aestheticism,[104] but by his reckless behaviour (when he acted as if he had, indeed, earned the immunity of the austere dandy[105] or Punch's innocent poseur) and the sense of paralysing inevitability that, according to his

own testimony and borne-out by his actions, overshadowed the pre-trial months.[106]

Although not perhaps the Christ-like scapegoat to which - with no perceptible increase in "humility" - he compared himself,[107] Wilde did incarnate in his person the familiar aesthetic and moral exemplum relating to the power of fictions to affect and infect real life; and with the public acting-out of the traditionally parodic confrontation between art and reality, the "age of parody" came to an end at the Wilde trial in a litter of fractured images that had proved unable, finally, to sustain the pressure of intrusive events. The community of unambiguous "common sense" was aggressively reasserted in an atmosphere of almost ritual purgation (although, not unnaturally, his contemporaries denied their complicity in the act of creating images of the artist and, with famous self-righteousness, stressed only their gullibility in being deceived by them); and the fate so long predicted by previous generations of anti-Romantic parodists finally overtook Wilde, whose trial (in this sense) may be seen as the culmination of a century's mistrust of the Romantic artist, with Wilde as the symbol of ethical, social, and artistic unconventionality and revolt laid low by the traditional good sense of the majority.

The events of 1895 seemed to prove earlier parodists right and the later generation who had been involved in disseminating Aesthetic fictions, wrong. Now that the nature of artifice's unnaturalness had been defined, and it became evident that Decadent poses hid real vices and poignant autobiographies, parodists were virtually silenced and the Decadence petered out, leaving behind a disabling legacy of suspicion of art as a supremely distorting "attitude". Wilde's name was not mentioned again in Punch; and as if to make up for its previous indulgence, post-trial references to Decadents and the Bodley Head group, especially, flatly condemned their work as "erotic", "Satantic", and "immoral"; and when Seaman published a collection of his anti-Decadent parodies as The Battle of the Bays in 1896, it was enormously popular.[108] Looking back on the

period in his mock-detective story The Man Who Was Thursday (1908), G.K. Chesterton characterized it as a time of spiritual decay, when the "blasphemy of pessimism" was in danger of corrupting the world.[109] Richard Le Gallienne, an Aesthetic camp-follower, was less harsh in his parodic novel The Life Romantic (1901),[110] but his hero "Pagan Wasteneys" is nevertheless made to give up his search for rare, intense experience with the "One Woman" (p. 8) of his dreams and settle for a life of tangible domestic content.

The last word on the nineties, however, belongs to Max Beerbohm and his creation "Enoch Soames" -[111] an absurd, pitiful Decadent poet in whose existence no one believes. Beerbohm purports to be the biographer of a man who struggles to achieve some kind of permanence (or reality) by bequeathing a substantial body of work to posterity, but whose poetry is ludicrously bad - giving Beerbohm ample scope for parody - and who discovers, on being projected into the twentieth century, that he is irredeemably condemned as a minor poet and creation of Beerbohm's imagination. The Devil - a suave, theatrical bounder - claims Soames as his own, and Beerbohm is left alone at the end of an otherwise autobiographical account of London in the nineties, protesting that Soames really did exist but because of a future critic's error 'Enoch Soames' will always be held to be a fabrication and not a "history". In this teasing, parable-like fashion Beerbohm expresses both his reservations about, and his sympathy for, the Decadents and their future assessors - for Soames is, indeed, little more than an embodiment of the mood of the period and a sterile imitation of a poet, and yet in the context of the story he makes real claims on the imagination. (Similarly, the Devil of the Decadence may only be a pasteboard pantomime figure, but he does succeed in taking Soames's soul from him.) The problem of determining the truth of images which are insubstantial but nevertheless make a potent claim on reality is a complex one as Beerbohm presents it, and the Soames generation in his account cannot simply be dismissed as underachieving poseurs or filed-

away as 'tragic' - even though Decadent poses were all the reality many possessed and were ultimately and actually their downfall.

As one of the stories in Seven Men, 'Enoch Soames' in many respects anticipates post-modernist experiments with fictionality, although Beerbohm's exploration of making-up is equally a legacy of his Aesthetic-Decadent involvement. But by 1919, when Seven Men was published, Beerbohm's was a lone voice of Aestheticism crying out from the wilderness of a self-imposed exile in Italy against Kipling ("The Apocalyptic Bounder"), William Watson, and Bennett,[112] for the "age of parody" was over and the literary climate was inhospitable to a large-scale parodic movement. Later parodies reflect the esotericism of literature as it became divorced from the mass ; and the final decades of the century represent, perhaps, the last occasion when a large section of society found their literary culture available, interesting, and important enough to parody it - for, above all, the parodies of the nineteenth century reflect the population's familiarity with literature and literary men. A popular Romantic movement encouraged its parodic anti-type at the beginning of the century, and the pattern was repeated at the close: with the difference that by the turn of the century 'literature's' spread in society had been curtailed by the mass media, while parody's repeated stress on the realist aesthetic had combined with the effects of the Wilde trial and England's growing Imperial commitment to create a "temperament" that was profoundly un- aesthetic in its hostility towards literature that did not involve "intent verisimilar representations",[113] and inimical to popular parodic movements.

Postscript

In his Survey of Burlesque and Parody in English (1931), George Kitchin - urging the significance of a mode whose worth was not generally recognized by English critics at this time - wrote that parody presented the modern reader with "an unrivalled index to contemporary taste"; [1] and certainly, insofar as we are interested in nineteenth century literature, the parody of the period represents an invaluable source of contemporary opinion relating to the work of many Victorian poets and novelists. In this study I have chosen to concentrate on those aspects of contemporary taste concerned with the impact of the Romantic movement on the nineteenth century and the sub-Romantic genres of the mid-century at the expense of constructing a more comprehensive "index" to the period, and in conclusion I should like to consider briefly some elements of nineteenth century parody which have only been mentioned in passing in the course of this study, but without which any account of the century's parody would be incomplete.

Parody has been characterized so far as predominantly conservative, classical (neo-Augustan), and realist in its sympathies - mocking literary eccentricity because forms of extravagance generally lend themselves to bathetic practical joking; proclaiming affinity with eighteenth century poetics because traditional sanctions are not easily dissipated and because parody, in part, derives from a domestication and refinement of the Classical burlesque modes for a more numerous generation of native readers; and upholding the aesthetic of realism as appropriate to the age: in contrast to modernist and post-modernist consciousness, as an epistemologically and linguistically viable method of representing reality, colonizing familiar experience, and invoking the "common sense" of the "homely story" in the interests of an integrated society that would prefer to ignore the claims of unruly Romantic individualism. The parodic reception of the writers discussed in Chapters 1 to 5 of this study reflects these preoccupations, where parody both opposed and instigated

innovation and change - articulating the reservations of those concerned to preserve the stability and status quo of the literary community in the face of the challenge presented by the early Romantics; urging progressive readings on an audience felt to be slack and uncritical in its reception of forms of popular literature that were characterized by an unquestioning acceptance of stale conventions and were manifestly un-anxious, in Bloomian terms, about "influence";[2] and acting out the ambivalence of parody (as 'beside' and 'against') in the images of the artist promoted towards the end of the century, that both satisfied the public's desire to believe in such images while providing one of the sanctions for the sort of philistinism that eventually disrupted the balance of par(a-ode and effectively depopularized the mode (so that Joyce and Eliot appear as inheritors of a parodic legacy that they refunctioned esoterically for the twentieth century).

But this account of parody may be further augmented by referring to two major sources that furnished the period with a quantity of parodic material - that is, the comic and periodical press, and the two universities, Oxford and Cambridge. The description is by no means finalized even so - the parodic reception of major poets like Browning is an obvious omission, as is the parodists' attempt after Thackeray's 'Prize Novelists' series to imitate novels as successfully as they did poems; while the popularity of American parodists in England remains similarly neglected -[3] but, taken together with the material already discussed in this study, a fairly comprehensive picture of nineteenth century parody emerges with the inclusion of comic and university parody in the survey.

In the first case, Victorian comic magazines, in particular, are a remarkably fertile source of those kinds of parody that were characterized as 'public' and comic in the first part of this study; and while they do not for the most part exploit parody's literary-critical potential, they testify to the verbal inventiveness of the age and to the currency of certain writers (preeminently poets) who could be adopted as models

by parodists in the full assurance that their pleasantries would be recognized by a wide audience - as the Classical burlesques of previous centuries had been by a more select public. In this sense, such parodies might be said to represent the extension and vulgarization of pre-Augustan and Augustan burlesque modes, so that parody's Classical bias is still preserved even though it is modified in the light of specifically Victorian humour, where many thousands of parodies written in the spirit of "wit without bawdry" [4] were published in the comic magazines of the period, commenting on current events - from politics, to fashion and the weather - and cracking "Bad Cheese" jokes about sea-sickness and servants:[5] implying both a homage to fame as well as a covert, not wholly articulate protest against their models (which were generally the most sentimental and high-flown popular verses) in a style reminiscent of the young Thackeray or the "Bon Gaultier" partnership.

These parodies were the work of professional journalists like Shirley Brooks who wrote over six hundred comic verses and parodies for Punch in the intervals of his serious work as Parliamentary correspondent and contributor of the comic leader-serial; [6] or Tom Hood Jnr who edited and contributed extensively to Fun and Tom Hood's Comic Annual, as well as writing comic-parodic novels and verse parodies in the style of his more eminent father. Such pieces were intended as ephemera and, indeed, proved no hardier than some of the magazines in which they appeared - papers like the Comic Times, Merry Folks, Zoz, Puck, and Pastime, with lifespans seldom exceeding a few months. But during the sixties and seventies, especially, as quickly as comic magazines folded, new ones sprang up to take their place; [7] while the sturdy weeklies Punch (1841-), Judy (1877-1907), Fun (1861-1901), and Figaro (1870-98) provided outlets for amateurs like the self-styled "London Hermit" Walter Parke, or "Cuthbert Bede" - in reality, Rev. Edward Bradley - as well as for seasoned journalists like Thackeray's antagonist Edmund Yates who edited the World (which ran regular parody competitions), the Train, and the

Comic Times (which printed Lewis Carroll's early parodies), and collaborated with Robert Brough and Frank Smedley in writing verse and prose parodies; Henry Sambrooke Leigh, whose Carols of Cockayne was popular in 1874; and the parodists on the Punch staff: R.C. Lehmann, who published a new series of Prize Novels in 1892; F.C. Burnand, author of many parodic novels and theatrical burlesques; Owen Seaman, whose prose parodies, collected as Borrowed Plumes (1902), helped popularize the short prose parody and make the novel available as a subject for parodists; and St. John Hankin, whose parodies of the major poets of the nineteenth century were reprinted as Lost Masterpieces in 1904. Other parodists included the prolific Barry Pain, who wrote a cycle of parodies describing 'The Poets at Tea' (1888) as well as several parodic novels and brief prose parodies; while Sir Frederick Pollock confirmed the lawyer's prediliction for parody that dates back to the first cycle of English parodies - Sir John Davies's The Gullinge Sonnets (1594) - in Leading Cases Done Into English (1876): seventeen parodies originally published in the St. James Gazette that used the metre of popular poets to describe famous law-suits. Most ambitiously, Archibald Stodard-Walker collected his parodies as The Moxford Book of English Verse (1913), which was mocked-up to resemble the Oxford Book, and parodied poets from Chaucer to Yeats.[8]

The impression given by these parodies is one of immense good-humour coupled with a great facility for imitation and complete familiarity with the models, which enables the parodies to be dashed-off at top speed and digested by the reader with little effort - from a complaint that the House of Lords sat for fifteen minutes one night and failed to transact any business: "Peers, idle Peers, I know not what they do"; to Edward Bradley's parodic analysis of Tennyson's predicament in the prefatory verses of In Memorium:

> We seek to know, and, knowing, seek;
> We seek, we know, and every sense
> Is trembling with the great intense,
> And vibrating to what we speak ...

A something comes from out the gloom -
I know it not, nor seek to know -
I only see it swell and grow,
And more than this would not presume. [9]

There were few subjects that escaped the parodists in comic, and other magazines and newspapers at this time, and the ubiquity and popularity of parody as a form of Victorian humour is attested by Walter Hamilton's mammoth collection of Parodies (1884-89), which began as an informal series of pamphlets containing parodies selected from the contemporary press, but ended as a six volumed edition. This sort of parodic activity reached its peak in the seventies and eighties and waned only at the end of the century as the circulation of comic papers dropped; as the joke wore thin; and as great modern writers were read by fewer and fewer patrons of Punch, to take the most obvious example. But at their height of popularity these parodists could be certain of commanding an audience that would experience no difficulty in recognizing models and would enjoy the hitherto rather privileged pleasure of seeing their expectations of a particular piece of work comically overthrown or applied to another 'content': and these parodies represent, perhaps, the ultimate democratization of the mock-heroic in the age of the book.

The other great sources of Victorian parody were the two universities, where parody's classical, conservative bias was more evident and generally more elegantly displayed than in comic magazine parodies; and a tradition of parody grew up in the nineteenth century centred on the universities, though principally on Cambridge, where Thackeray had first published. Most undergraduate parody of the period - typified by College Rhymes (1860-74), The Shotover Papers (23 February 1874 - 9 February 1875), or "A.Merion's" (C.S.Butler's) privately printed Odd Echoes from Oxford (1872) - employed the typical strategy of borrowing a famous metre to describe the pleasures and problems of student life (chiefly smoking and exams) - "Fear no more the voice of the don, /Nor thy oft-cut tutor's rages" -[10] and in this it differed little from the sort of parody published in comic magazines.

But out of the rank and file of university parodists some notable figures emerged - conspicuously W.H. Mallock and "Lewis Carroll" from Oxford; while Cambridge not only educated many nineteenth century parodists (latterly Traill, Seaman, and J.C. Squire - whose best work falls outside the compass of this study), but also provided livings for the most versatile of its parodists, C.S. Calverly and J.K. Stephen.

The writing of parody and light verse seems to have been a popular recreation among the staff and students engaged in a system of learning which Leslie Stephen described in 1865 as being conducive to "mental gymnastics"; [11] and the transition from translating a poet, to imitating him, and hence to parody, was evidently an easy one (Frere, Maginn, and "Horace" Smith, for example, were all skilled Classical scholars), and Calverly's biographer describes the parodist as a "pseudo-translator".[12] As a form of in-joke to be shared by the initiated, parody was particularly suited to the university environment with its small, youthful population and absence of a programme of formal literary criticism at this time (for which parody possibly acted as a substitute); and many hundreds of parodies were written in Oxford and Cambridge throughout the nineteenth century, and particularly in the 1870s when Calverly and Carroll were publishing, and student magazines were filled with parodies.

The less strenuous atmosphere of Cambridge, untroubled by the Oxford Movement, [13] seems to have been particularly conducive to the production of parody and light verse, ranging from the sort of undergraduate pieces described above, to the gentle whimsy of Praed and the elegant wit of Calverly. Arthur Clement Hilton (1851-77) was the most accomplished Cambridge undergraduate parodist of the period, and in 1872 his magazine The Light Green scored a popular success [14] with its parodies of Swinburne (referred to in Chapter 5 of this study); Lewis Carroll, Tennyson, and Bret Harte - addressed to the subject of exams; and Christina Rossetti's nursery volume Sing Song:

Poor little thrush
Found dead in a bush!
When did he die?
He is rather high.
Bury him deep,
He won't keep.
Bury him well,
Or he'll smell.

In the same year that The Light Green was published, Charles Stuart Calverly (1831-84) brought out his most successful volume of parody and light verse - Fly Leaves - as a sequel to Verses and Translations (1862). His parody of Rossetti has already been mentioned in connection with the Pre-Raphaelites, and most of his parodies are distinguished by a similar formal grace : where rapture is elegantly betrayed by the parodist's flair for understatement; and both Calverly's technical discipline and his choice of romantic - sentimental models as subjects for parody ultimately derive from the Classical training and competence evident in the 1862 Translations. Large gestures in language and emotion are alien to his aesthetic; and in a mood than resembles Thackeray's some fifteen years earlier he may be found mocking Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy (1838-76) as a handbook for social climbers - the sort of people who admire, among other things, Bulwer Lytton: a man who cannot "realize the Ideal" but prefers instead to "idealize the Real". [15] Calverly thus placed himself in the central tradition of parody whose bias throughout the century was emphatically against 'idealizing the Real'; and his most atractive parodies follow Thackeray and Martin and Aytoun in mocking album verse and "fine writing": 'Lovers, and a Reflection' parodies Jean Ingelow's coyly sentimental poem 'Divided', while 'The Cock and the Bull' is a brilliant parody of the involuted syntax and grammatical obsessiveness of The Ring and the Book - "You see this pebble-stone? It's a thing I bought/Of a bit of a chit of a boy i' the mid o' the day". [16]

Later in the century, James Kenneth Stephen (1859-92) - tutor at King's and first cousin to Virginia Woolf - perpetuated the urbane Cambridge tradition of light verse and parody in the volume of parodies

and humorous poems taken from his earlier contributions to various periodicals and newspapers: Lapsus Calami (1891), which went through five editions in its first year.[17] Mention has already been made of his parody of Wordsowrth; other parodies included Kipling and Haggard (for their stridency and Heroic Jingoism), and Browning - in the comic 'The Last Ride Together. (From Her Point of View)'; and 'Of R.B.', an analysis of the poet's use of the continuously divisible sentence which effectively negates the air of communicative bonhomie of some of his lyrics:

> Birthdays? yes, in a general way;
> For the most if not for the best of men:
> You were born (I suppose) on a certain day:
> So was I: or perhaps in the night: what then?

(It might also be remarked that of all the university writers whose sedentary lives were proverbial, Stephen enjoyed the dubious distinction of a lurid autobiography, for he died in a lunatic assylum as Lapsus Calami went through its fifth edition in 1892. The effects of his bouts of mania on Woolf (who was ten when he died) have been the subject of speculation, though most sensationally and improbably he has recently been canvassed as yet another candidate for the role of Jack the Ripper.)[18]

Returning, however, to the sphere of less spectacular institutionalized environments, it is evident that Cambridge's sister university did not develop a distinctive tradition (outside the undergraduate sphere) of light verse and parody, and there is no Oxonian equivalent of C.S. Calverly, for example. Instead, parody in Oxford is represented by the earnest Mallock whose parodies were conceived as reformist weapons in the battle against the spiritual and social evils supposedly precipitated by late Romanticism, and the teasing donnishness of Carroll's subversive wit; and Oxford's achievement lies in a more intellectual and less jovial direction than the parodies described above. Mallock's work has already been discussed earlier in this study, and it seems appropriate to conclude with a brief consideration of Lewis Carroll, who was arguably the most thoroughgoing contemporary parodist of Victorian -

and human - conventions, and whose nominalist parodic-nonsense vision is especially congenial to twentieth century readers.

It has become something of a critical commponplace that the "Alice" books are concerned with the 'meaning of meaning' [19] and that Carroll is not only interested in the nature of aesthetic discourse (where he uses parody to test our assumptions about the status of literary language) but also in the nature of discourse itself and how it is that words make meaning. His nonsense, in these terms, may be seen as nothing less than a large-scale parody of the loose and inexpert way in which we normally go about our sense-making activities; and the "Alice" books (1865 and 1871) and The Hunting of the Snark (1876) systematically undermine complacent expectations about time, space, and identity [20] by parodically and sportively disrupting the conventional patterning of symbols and experience: the relationship between words and things. Carroll describes the discomfiture of the symbol-manipulating, solepsistic self as Alice's hold on the conventions that govern her world is progressively weakened in the course of her two voyages, and the comforting pieties of the Victorian nursery (and, indeed, of Victorian consciousness) are taken from her, leaving her defenceless in "the Antipathies" (Wonderland, p. 17).[21] She is allowed no stable centre of being as an inhabitant of a new world where the existence of personal emotion and thought does not bear on the struggle of " who is to be master" (Through the Looking-Glass, p. 196) of the meaning-giving symbols that at any given moment define her 'Alice-ness' - which, as a consequence, has become intensely problematic and strange. She cannot make the Romantic declaration "I have felt" because her sensibilities are no longer a measure of who she is in a landscape where the self is a temporary configuation: an impermanent construct loosely bounded by the conventions governing our perception of space, time, and language; and Alice is haunted by sudden changes of shape, loss of name, and the fear that she might go out like a candle.

Carroll's use of parody reflects his nominalist vision of reality; and one of the measures of Alice's alienation as a language-user is her inability to respond adequately to the poetry of the nonsense world, where her attempts to be moved by poems, to make rational remarks about them, or even to recite them correctly, are invariably foiled as parody and nonsense supervene to emphasise that the status of her knowledge and feelings is profoundly uncertain. The parodies imply that there is no comfort, measure of selfhood, or certainty to be found in poetry - the mode in which language is commonly held to be ordered most thoughtfully and to act most strongly on us; and the quest for the Victorian hero-writer-sage as a symbol of a wider authority proves abortive in the "Alice" books and The Hunting. It was a role that Carroll refused to play himself (and may be said, in a loose sense, to have 'parodied') when he addressed his books to children and made a little girl his heroine; and it was a role that he rejected for the poet in parodies of the consoling fictions of the sentimental and pious verse of the age: where this sort of writing stands as a model for sense-making activities generally, as well as exemplifying the ennobling and inspiriting effect that language organized as Poetry might be thought to produce on the reader (but which it conspicuously fails to do in Alice's case). Wordsworth's and Southey's proferred solace, in particular, is held to have no more than a local, personal significance that certainly cannot be erected into a "stay secure" or a "Comfort[]" for the guidance and consolation of others; and the "moral[s]" (Wonderland, p. 88) of poems like 'Resolution and Independence', 'The Old Man's Comforts', 'Against Idleness and Mischief', 'The Sluggard', and 'Speak Gently', for example,[22] are turned on their heads - quite literally in Carroll's parodic version of Southey's wise old man.

In the post-Darwinian era of the "Alice" books the absence of a guide and mentor is poignantly contingent on a world whose "stay[s]

secure" may be no more than the arbitrary signification on a pack of playing cards; and the codes of the nursery governess and the adult world that is so free with its advice to Alice are entirely unfitted to provide her with an answer to her question: "But what am I to do?" (Wonderland, p. 59). Carroll's parodies underscore this failure in their mockery of conventionally uplifting, moralistic verse and the inflexible education that Alice has received which cannot be adapted to her changed circumstances; and as generic parody of quest-sagas, The Hunting of the Snark only intensifies this mood of loss and abandonment to a chartless, chaotic voyage which marks the defeat of intuitive Heroic optimism in a world where name and being may be inexplicably lost, and where - in contrast to 'Childe Roland', for example - nothing remains to be affirmed.

Carroll's parody and nonsense take the radical form of questioning some of the fundamental assumptions which underlie our negotiations with the world, not the least of which is our use of language - which we manipulate in a manner whose arbitrariness is exposed by the more rigorous logic of nonsense and the analytical transformations of parody, and which manipulates us in our turn. It seems fitting to end the study with Lewis Carroll and his account of Everyman - Alice's transactions with a reality in which symbol and object are so awkwardly related, for Carroll articulates the wider concern of all parodists with problems relating to the function of language as typified by its specialized use in literary texts. Nineteenth century parody does "furnish us with a history of contemporary taste", [23] and the popularity of the mode at this time is the unique product of a fertile age trying to assess the nature of its literary achievement through a form of critical play. But more than this, the nineteenth century also provides us with a paradigm of the role that parody may play in any period or culture as an act of acclimatization, assimilation, and assessment of language and literature, and an exploration of fictionality - both as a literary concept and as a philosophical

attempt to bridge the "gulf between meaning and naming". [24] Through the mocking imitations of parody the disruptive effects of new texts are nullified and works are perceived as no longer strange, since they can be copied and laughed at; while -- conversely - traditional forms and usages may be tested, revaluated, and perhaps outmoded by parodies that draw attention to artifice and the conventions governing our perception of a particular form or style. But in its broadest application, parody focusses attention on the process of using language, and - as far as the literary parody is concerned - may be said to constitute part of a continuous, meditative self-questioning on the nature of aesthetic discourse that literature has performed on itself for many years: a form of internalized dialogue where literature considers its own literariness; and it is as a unique critical self-regulator that parody survives and distinguishes itself from related and possibly less incisive modes, and for which the twentieth century is profoundly indebted to the nineteenth.

NOTES

NOTES

PART I : Theory and Usage of Literary Parody

1. See, for example, Robert Alter, Partial Magic (Berkeley, 1975); Malcolm Bradbury, The Novel Today (London, 1977); Robert Scholes, The Fabulators (New York, 1967).

2. Victor Shklovsky on parody as the basis of novelistic form; see Harry Levin, 'What is Realism?' Contexts of Criticism, Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature, 22 (Cambridge, Mass., 1957). pp. 67-75 (p. 71).

3. Christopher Stone's Parody (London, 1915) appeared in this series.

4. Henryk Markiewicz quotes from several early continental sources in 'On the Definitions of Literary Parody', To Honor Roman Jacobson, 3 vols (The Hague and Paris, 1967), II, 1264-72. See also Paul Lehman's seminal Die parodie im Mittelalter (Munich, 1923); and Octave Delapierre, La parodie chez le Grecs, chez les Romans, et chez les modernes (Paris, 1870).

5. Quoted by Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending (London, 1967), p. 34.

6. The use of parody in Lodge's novel is discussed by Robert Burden in 'The Novel Interrogates Itself: Parody as Self-Consciousness in Contemporary English Fiction', The Contemporary English Novel, edited by Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, 18 (London, 1979), pp. 133-55 (pp. 138-43).

7. The Frogs, translated by David Barrett (Penguin, 1964), p. 156.

8. Agatha Christie, Lord Edgware Dies (London, 1968), p. 90. First published in 1933.

9. Alter, p. ix.

10. Quoted by Kinglsey Amis, 'Introduction', The New Oxford Book of Light Verse (London, 1978), pp. v-xxii (pp. xiv-xv).

11. Malcolm Bradbury makes this point in 'The Fiction of Pastiche: The Comic Mode of Angus Wilson', Possibilities (London, 1973), pp. 211-30.

12. Alter, p. ix.

13. ibid., p. 23.

14. Bradbury uses the terms interchangeably throughout his essay on Wilson; see above, note 11.

15. Wayne C. Booth, A Rhetoric of Irony (Chicago, 1974), p. ix.

16. Poetics, translated by W. Hamilton Fyfe, Loeb Library (London, 1953); XII, line 7.

17. Quoted by Markiewicz, p. 1265. "Common" is understood from the context in which the phrase occurs.

18. ibid., p. 1265.

19. See Isaac D'Israeli, 'Parody', Curiosities of Literature, edited by Benjamin D'Israeli, fourteenth edition, 3 vols (London, 1849), II, 504-11 (pp. 507-8) Originally published in six vols, 1791-1834.

20. See Markiewicz, p. 1265.

21. Despite the abundance of what many modern critics would regard as parodic activity in the Middle Ages, the term was not revived until the middle of the sixteenth century; see Sander Gilman, The Parodic Sermon in European Perspective (Weisbaden, 1974), pp. 31-50.

22. See Markiewicz, p. 1264.

23. John Florio, A Worlde of Wordes (London, 1598). The definition was repeated in the second edition of the dictionary, Queen Anna's New World of Words, 1611 (Menston, 1968).

24. Ben Jonson, Every Man In His Humour (Folio, 1616), V.5.26-7. Ben Jonson, edited by C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, 11 vols (Oxford, 1925-52), III. The 1601 Quarto (the only authority for the play acted in 1598) quotes the opening lines of Daniel's sonnet verbatim at V.3.284, with no mention of "parodie". The OED would, therefore, seem to be incorrect in assigning 1598 as the date of the first recorded usage of "parody" in English deriving from this play, since only the 1616 Folio makes reference to it.

25. Samuel Daniel, Sonnets to Delia (1592). The Complete Works, edited by Alexander Grossart, 5 vols (London, 1885), I, 37.

26. Randle Cotgrave, A Dictionary of French and English Tongues, 1611 (Menston, 1968).

27. Thomas Blount, Glossographia, fifth edition (London, 1681); Glossographia Anglicana Nova (London, 1707); id. (London, 1719).

28. John Dryden, 'Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire' (1693). Essays, edited by W.P. Ker, 2 vols (New York, 1961), II, 52.

29. John Ozell's dedication to Le Lutrin (1708); quoted by Richmond P. Bond, English Burlesque Poetry, 1700-1750 (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), p. 37.

30. ibid., p. 4.

31. Alexander Pope's terminology from Peri Bathous (1727); edited by Edna L. Steeves (New York, 1952), p. 44 and p. 51.

32. Quoted by Bond, p. 37.

33. Pope, The Rape of the Lock (1714), edited by Geoffrey Tillotson, The Twickenham Edition, third edition, 11 vols (London and New Haven, 1954-69), II, 199. Pope added this remark in 1736; see note to V.7 (p. 199).

34. See V.C. Clinton-Baddeley, The Burlesque Tradition in the English Theatre after 1660 (London, 1952).

35. Quoted by D'Israeli, pp. 510-11.

36. Samuel Johnson, Dictionary (London, 1756); William Kenrick A New Dictionary of the English Language (London, 1773); Thomas Sheridan, A Complete Dictionary of the English Language (London, 1797).

37. Samuel Johnson, 'Life of John Philips', Lives of the English Poets, edited by G. Birkbeck Hill, 3 vols (Oxford, 1905), I, 312-27 (p. 317). First published 1777-81.

38. John Philips, 'The Splendid Shilling', (1701). The Poems, edited by M.G. Lloyd Thomas, Percy Society Reprints, 10 (Oxford, 1927).

39. See below, Part II, b.

40. See Bond's 'Register of Burlesque Poems'. pp. 237-453.

41. Reprinted in Joseph Andrews and Shamela, edited by Martin Battestin (London, 1965), pp. 7-12 (p. 8).

42. Richard Owen Cambridge, 'Preface', The Scribleriad (1751). Works of the English Poets, edited by Alexander Chalmers, 21 vols (London, 1810), XVIII, 246-50. (p. 246).

43. James Beattie, 'Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition', Essays (Edinburgh and London, 1776), pp. 321-486 (p. 394). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

44. Joseph Craddock; quoted in Poems of Samuel Johnson, edited D. Nichol Smith and E.L. McAdam (Oxford, 1974), p. 185. The editors also quote Boswell's account of how Johnson 'improved' the stanza that Boswell first heard from Garrick.

45. William Wordsworth, 'Preface', Lyrical Ballads, second edition (1800). Lyrical Ballads, edited by R.L. Brett and A.R. Jones (London, 1963), pp. 235-66 (p. 263). All quotations in the text refer to pp. 263-4 of this edition.

46. See below, Part III, Ch. 2.

47. John Croker, 'Rejected Addresses', Quarterly Review, 8 (Sept. 1812), pp. 172-81. Pagination in the text refers to this volume.

48. Croker, 'Poetical Vagaries', ibid., pp. 144-9 (p. 144).

49. Francis Jeffrey, '...Rejected Addresses'. Edinburgh Review, 20 (Nov. 1812), pp. 434-51 (p. 435). Pagination in the text refers to this volume.

50. See below, Part II, b.

51. The three parodies for which Hone was tried, together with a detailed account and substantial transcripts of the trials will be found in William Tegg's The Three Trials of William Hone, 1817 (London, 1876).

52. William Maginn in a burlesque review 'John Gilpin and Mazeppa', Blackwood's Magazine, 5 (July 1819), pp. 434-9 (p. 434).

53. James and Horatio ("Horace") Smith, 'Preface', Rejected Addresses, eighteenth edition (London, 1833), pp. vii-xxxi (p. xii). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

54. Coleridge complained to Southey about the parodies on behalf of himself and Wordsworth; see below, Part III, Ch. 2.

55. Theodore Martin, Memoir of William Edmonstoune Aytoun (Edinburgh and London, 1867), pp. 63-4. Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

56. See below, Part III, Ch. 4.

57. Owen Seaman (1910); quoted by H.M. Paull, Literary Ethics (London, 1928), p. 136.

58. Arthur Quiller-Couch, 'On the Gentle Art', as a foreword to Parodies and Imitations Old and New, edited by J.A. Stanley Adam and Bernard C. White (London, 1912), pp. v-xvi (p. vi).

59. Walter Hamilton, 'The Art of Parody', Saturday Review, 14 Feb. 1885, p. 203.

60. ibid., p. 203.

61. Late nineteenth century essays include anonymous leader articles in the Globe, 17 Nov. 1880 and the Family Herald, 28 July 1888; an essay by Brander Matthews in the Galaxy, May 1874; and an anonymous review of Delapierre's La parodie, Athenaeum, 1 July 1871. See Archibald Bolling Shepperson, The Novel in Motley (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), p. 283.

62. Carolyn Wells, 'Introduction', A Parody Anthology (New York, 1904), pp. ix - xxx (p. xxx).

63. Dwight Macdonald, 'Preface', Parodies: An Anthology (London, 1961), pp. xi-xvi (p. xiii).

64. Joe Lee Davis, 'Criticism and Parody', Thought, Fordham University Quarterly, 26 (1951), pp. 180-205 (p. 181).

65. J.G. Riewald, 'Parody as Criticism', Neophilologus,50 (1966), pp. 125-48 (p. 130).

66. See Adam and White (above, note 58); Walter Jerrold and R.M. Leonard (eds.), A Century of Parody and Imitation (London, 1913); J.C. Squire (ed.), Apes and Parrots (London, 1928); Arthur Symons (ed.), A Book of Parodies (London, 1909); and Wells (above, note 62). Also Barbara Richardson, Parody, English Association Pamphlets, 92 (London, 1935), and Stone, Parody.

67. Wells, p. xxv.

68. Paull, p. 134.

69. E.V. Knox, quoted by Richardson, p. 24; Macdonald, p. xiii; George Kitchin Burlesque and Parody in English (Edinburgh and London, 1931), p. ix.

70. Owen Seaman, quoted by Jerrold and Leonard, p. v; W.H. Auden, 'The Poet and the City', The Dyer's Hand (New York, 1962), pp. 72-89 (p. 77).

71. Richardson, p. 6.

72. Riewald, 'Parody as Criticism'. Pagination in the text refers to this volume (see above, note 65).

73. But see Margaret A. Rose's important recent study, Parody//Metafiction (London, 1979). Her study is particularly illuminating on the subject of the intra-literariness of parody, and I have modified some of my comments in Part I, c. in the light of her critique. Rose also makes reference to an issue of the Southern Review (Adelaide) which will appear in 1980 and will be devoted to parody (see her 'Acknowledgements').

74. Roger Fowler, A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms (London, 1973), p. 107.

75. Jorge Luis Borges, quoted by John Sturrock, Paper Tigers (Oxford, 1977), p. 4.

76. Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics (London, 1975), pp. 152-60 (p. 153).

77. Gilbert Highet, The Anatomy of Satire (New Jersey, 1962), pp. 67-147 (p. 92).

78. See David Cecil, Max (London, 1964), pp. 371-5; and John Felsteiner, The Lies of Art: Max Beerbohm's Parody and Caricature (London, 1973), pp. 87-99.

79. Culler, p. 153.

80. G.D. Kiremidjian, 'The Aesthetics of Parody', Journal of Aesthetics, 28 (1969), pp. 231-42 (p. 234).

81. Booth, Irony, p. 8. Pagination in the text refers to this edition. I am indebted to Booth for his comparison and contrast of irony and parody (pp. 123-34, especially). Rose also compares parody with irony, where the former is said to create "two distinct codes" in comparison to the latter's "single code", Parody, p. 51.

82. Voltaire, Candide; quoted by Booth, p. 10.

83. Henry Reed, 'Chard Whitlow', A Map of Verona (London, 1946), p. 28.

84. Max Beerbohm, A Christmas Garland (1912); second edition (London, 1950).

85. Ben Jonson, 'Ode to Himselfe' (1629-31?) The Poems, edited by Bernard H. Newdigate (Oxford, 1936).

86. Owen Felltham, 'Ode', (1631?); Lusoria (London, 1661). Compare with Thomas Randolph's 'parody' praising Jonson: "Ben, doe not leave the stage/ 'Cause 'tis a loathsome age" (1638). The Poems, edited by G. Thorn-Drury (London, 1929).

87. 'The Bather's Dirge', Funny Folks (1879); reprinted in Walter Hamilton, Parodies of the Works of English and American Authors, 6 vols (1884-9), I, 15.

88. Anthony Brode, 'Breakfast with G.M. Hopkins'; reprinted in Macdonald, p. 150.

89. Archibald Stodard-Walker, The Moxford Book of English Verse (London, 1913).

90. George Canning, 'The Elderly Gentleman'; reprinted in Adam and White, p. 14.

91. Ted Pauker, 'A Grouchy Good Night to the Academic Year'; reprinted in Amis, pp. 284-7.

92. Kitchin, p. ix; and W.H. Auden, 'Introduction', The Oxford Book of Light Verse (London, 1938), pp. vii-xx (p. viii).

93. Riewald, quoting Beerbohm; p. 128.

94. Amis, p. viii.

95. ibid., pp. viii-xiii.

96. Florence Milner noted the sources of Carroll's parodies in Bookman, XVII (Sept. 1903) but found that enjoyment of the rhymes was not necessarily

impaired by ignorance of the originals. 'The Poems in Alice in Wonderland', Aspects of Alice, edited by Robert Phillips (London, 1974), pp. 295-302.

97. See Elizabeth Sewell, The Field of Nonsense (London, 1952), p. 17.

98. Kitchin described Suckling as "the first accomplished parodist" (p. 79) but most of Suckling's poems are allusive rather than parodic. See, however, 'A Song to a Lute' which parodies Jonson's "Have you but seen a bright lilly growe" (The Divell is an Asse (1631), II. 6 - The Sad One (1633); IV. 4. 22-31, The Works, 2 vols (Oxford, 1971), II, The Plays edited by L.A. Beaurline.

99. Belloc's own ironic advertisement for his complete verse for children, from which the quotation was taken. Cautionary Verses (London, 1939), p. 94.

100. Both Hecht's and Skirrow's parodies are reprinted in Amis, pp. 314-6.

101. 'Useless Useful Phrases' (1961) is reprinted in Charles Castle's Noël (London, 1974), pp. 241-3; 'Bad Times' reprinted in Amis, pp. 237-9.

102. Beerbohm quoted by Cecil, p. 268; Wilde, Dictionary of Biographical Quotation, edited by Justin Wintle and Richard Kenin (London, 1978), p. 237.

103. Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The Tale of Sir Thopas', The Works, edited by F.N. Robinson, second edition (London, 1957). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text. (Robinson's line-numbering for Fragment VII has been followed throughout.)

104. Sir Orpheo, edited by A.J. Bliss (Oxford, 1966). Auchinleck MS, line 152, characters modernized.

105. George Villiers, 2nd Duke of Buckingham, The Rehearsal (1671), edited by Edward Arber (London, 1868). See pp. 2-20 (p. 17) for accounts of how Lacy was schooled to play Bayes. Arber quotes from the original texts on which parodies in the play were based. The quotation from The Conquest of Granada appears facing p. 43.

106. Borges, 'Partial Magic in the Quixote' (1952). Labyrinths (London, 1970), pp. 228-31 (p. 231).

PART II : Nineteenth Century Background

1. See Gilman, pp. 11-30.

2. See Helen Waddell, The Wandering Scholars (London, 1932).

3. See above, Part I, note 52.

4. Beattie, p. 395.

5. See R.D. Altick, The English Common Reader (Chicago and London, 1957); Amy Cruse, The Victorians and their Reading (Boston, 1936); Marjorie Plant, The English Book Trade (London, 1939).

6. See Altick, Common Reader, p. 387.

7. See Walter Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind (New Haven and London, 1957), pp. 341-8.

8. See Altick, Common Reader, Chs. 4-16.

9. See M.H. Spielmann, 'The Rivals of Punch', National Review, 149 (1895), pp. 654-66; and R.G.G. Price, A History of Punch (London, 1957).

10. Quoted by J.C. Reid, Thomas Hood (London, 1963), p. 65.

11. 'Introductory' to the first issue of Punch, 17 July 1841.

12. Thomas Hood, 'Faithless Sally Brown' (1826). Poetical Works, edited by Walter Jerrold (London, 1906). The title was bestowed on him by Punch according to Ronald Pearsall, Collapse of Stout Party (London, 1975), p. 150.

13. Quoted ibid., pp. 149-58.

14. See Patrick Hughes and Paul Hammond, Upon the Pun (London, 1978).

15. Quoted by Pearsall, p. 155.

16. See R.B. Martin, The Triumph of Wit (Oxford, 1974). Hobbes's comments on laughter will be found in Leviathan (1651), Part I, Ch. 6.

17. William Thackeray, 'Two or Three Theatres at Paris' (1849); quoted by Houghton, p. 358. See also Thackeray's review of Fielding in The Times, 2 Sept. 1840: Works, edited by George Saintsbury, 17 vols (London, 1908), III, 383-93; and below, Part III, Ch. 3.

18. James and "Horace" Smith, 'Preface' (1833), p. xii.

19. Max Beerbohm speaking of uncongenial aspects of nineteenth century humour; quoted by Cecil, p. 181.

20. Thomas Carlyle, Life of John Stirling (1851); quoted by J.H. Buckley, The Victorian Temper (London, 1952), p. 18.

21. From Henry Taylor's preface to Philip van Artevelde (1834) and E.S. Dallas, 'The Gay Science' (1866); quoted by Buckley, p. 25 and p. 147.

22. See Buckley, pp. 18-22.

23. Landseer's disparaging comments on his own work are quoted ibid., p. 130.

24. Charles Dickens, Hard Times (London, 1955), p. 7. First published in 1854.

25. Buckley, p. 23.

26. James Froude, 'Education' (1888); quoted by Houghton, p. 119.

27. Pope, 'Imitations of English Poets' (1701-9), Poems, edited by Norman Ault and John Butt, Twickenham Edition, VI, 41-51.

28. Isaac Hawkins Browne, A Pipe of Tobacco (1736); reprinted in Hamilton, Parodies, VI, 129-31.

29. Hamilton collected over seventy examples, ibid., pp. 129-60.

30. Johnson, 'Life of Ambrose Philips', Lives, III, 312-25 (p. 325).

31. 27 April 1713; reprinted in The Prose Works of Alexander Pope, edited by Norman Ault (Oxford, 1936), pp. 77-106.

32. Ambrose Philips, 'To the Honourable Miss Carteret' (1725). The Poems, edited by Mary G. Segar, Percy Society Reprints, 14 (oxford, 1937).

33. Jonathan Swift, 'A Poem Upon R---r' (1725). The Poems, edited by Harold Williams, 3 vols (Oxford, 1958), III, 1124.

34. See F.T. Wood, 'Introduction', The Poems of Henry Carey (London, 1930), pp. 11-46.

35. Kiremidjian; see above, Part I, note 80.

36. Henry Carey, 'Namby Pamby', Poems, edited by Wood.

37. Swift, 'A Love Song in the Modern Taste', Poems, II, 660-1. Swift also parodied Robert Boyle's Meditations - 'A Meditation on a Broom-stick' (1704?) The Prose Works, edited by Herbert Davies (Oxford, 1939), I, 237-40.

38. For Fielding's authorship of Shamela see Ian Watt, 'Introduction', An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews, Augustan Reprint Society, 57 (1956), pp. 1-11 (pp. 1-2); and Battestin, p. xi. References in the text are to Watt's edition: the phrase "epidemical Phrenzy" occurs in "Parson Oliver's" letter to "Parson Tickletext", p. 4.

39. See Pamela Censured (25 April 1741); Anti-Pamela; or, Feign'd Innocence Detected (1741); and Charles Povey, The Virgin in Eden (1741). Shepperson lists several more contemporary burlesques, pp. 11-18.

40. Pamela Censured, Augustan Reprint Society, 175 (1976), p. 42.

41. Povey, quoted by Shepperson, p. 14.

42. According to Shepperson, p. 9.

43. See below, Part III, Ch. 1.

44. George Bernard Shaw, quoted by Harry Levin, The Gates of Horn (New York, 1963), pp. 47-8.

45. Laurence Sterne, The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy (Oxford, 1926), Bk. IV, Ch. XIII. First published 1760-7.

46. Johnson's comment, reprinted in Christopher Ricks's 'Introduction' to Tristram Shandy, edited by Graham Petrie (Penguin, 1967), p. 8. See also Thackeray's comments in 'Sterne and Goldsmith', Lecture VI, The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century (1853); Works, XIII, 656-690 (p. 670).

47. 'Memoirs of P.P., Clerk to this Parish' contains passages parodying Bishop Burnett's History of My Own Times, while Swift's A Tale of a Tub involves some direct parody of Dryden. In a loose sense, the annotations of "MartinusScriblerus" might be said to parody the pedants of the day, with The Art of Sinking as a parodic writer's-manual.

48. See Shepperson, pp. 80-114.

49. Quoted ibid., p. 70.

50. John Duncombe, 'An Evening Contemplation in a College' (1753); collected by Isaac Reed, The Repository, 4 vols (London 1777-84), II,71-6.

51. 'Elegy on Covent Garden', ibid., pp. 59-64.

52. ibid.

53. In a letter to William Mason, 7 June 1760. Correspondence of Thomas Gray, edited by Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols (Oxford, 1953), II, 672-6 (p. 675). Letter 312.

54. 'Letter to the Editor' reprinted ibid., p. 675.

55. Robert Lloyd reprinted both parodies in his Poems (1762). Poetical Works, edited by Chalmers, XV, 93-4.

56. D'Israeli, p. 505.

57. See Kitchin, p. 130; also R.W. Ketton-Cremar, Thomas Gray (London, 1955), pp. 176-7.

58. Letter to Mason; see above, note 53.

59. The sub-title of a collection of broadsheets and parodies made during the Westminster elections - The Wit of the Day (London, 1784).

60. Both parodies reprinted ibid.

61. Reprinted in The Wreath of Freedom (London, 1832), a collection of Radical songs and parodies dating from 1784, 1819, and 1832.

62. 'Dedication', Criticisms on "The Rolliad", twenty-second edition (London, 1812), p. xviii. First published in 1784.

63. Other contributors included Lord John Townsend, Richard Tickell, Sir Robert Adair, General Richard Fitzpatrick, and Dr. Lawrence.

64. George Ellis and Joseph Richardson, Probationary Odes for the Laureatship *[sic]*, twenty-second edition (London, 1812). First published in 1785.

65. Byron in a letter to Lord Holland, 30 Sept. 1812. Byron's Letters and Journals, edited by Leslie A. Marchand (London, 1973 -), II, 220-1.

66. The Microcosm, 1786 and 1787. See, for example, Canning's parody of Addison's ballad criticism, 'The Knave of Hearts', 12 Feb. 1786, Augustan Reprint Society, 63 (1957), pp. 139-48.

67. For details see Leonard Rice-Oxley, 'Introduction', The Poetry of The Anti-Jacobin, Percy Society Reprints, 8 (Oxford, 1924), pp. xvii-xviii.

68. Gifford satirized The Florence Miscellany (1785) and The Laurel of Liberty (1790) in The Baviad (London, 1794) and The Maeviad (London, 1795).

69. 'Prospectus', The Anti-Jacobin, fourth edition, 2 vols (London, 1799). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

70. The "Friend" was George Tierney, M.P. for Southwark. The parody was popular well into the nineteenth century - see Rice-Oxley, p. ix; and Punch, 6 Feb. 1886, p. 66.

71. Southey omitted 'Inscription' from the 1837 edition of his works, although he retained 'The Widow' and 'The Soldier's Wife'.

72. Erasmus Darwin, 'Introduction', The Botanic Garden (Menston, 1973) p. 2. First published in 1791.

73. Quoted by Rice-Oxley, p. xxv.

74. See Jerrold and Leonard, pp. 402-4; and George Meredith, 'Essay: On the Idea of Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit', Works, Memorial Edition, 27 vols (London, 1910) XXIII, 3-55 (p. 38).

PART III : Nineteenth Century Parodic Texts

Chapter 1. Parody of the Romantic Novel

1. Untitled parody by Theodore Hook; collected by Hamilton, Parodies, V, 77. The most popular political parody of the period was William Hone's Radical The Political House That Jack Built (1819), illustrated by Cruikshank. It was reprinted forty-seven times in one year - see Altick, Common Reader, p. 382.

2. See above, Part I, note 35.

3. Robert Kiely, 'Introduction', The Romantic Novel in England (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), pp. 1-26 (p. 1).

4. For accounts of the Gothic novel see Edith Birkhead, The Tale of Terror (New York, 1963); Montague Summers, The Gothic Quest (London, 1938); Devendra P. Varma, The Gothic Flame (London, 1957).

5. Clara Reeve, The Progress of Romance (1785), edited by Esther M. McGill (New York, 1930), p. 111.

6. Tobias Smollett, 'Preface', The Adventures of Roderick Random (1748), edited by John Moore, 8 vols (London, 1872), II, v-ix (pp. vi-vii).

7. Horace Walpole, quoted by Kiely, pp. 6-7.

8. Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (Pelican, 1972), p. 35.

9. See Kiely, pp. 1-26; and Levin, Gates of Horn, pp. 24-83.

10. See Shepperson, pp. 115-29.

11. See Altick, Common Reader, pp. 61-6; Summers, pp. 83-105; and Q.D. Leavis, Fiction and the Reading Public (London, 1932), pp. 131-7.

12. Love and Freindship *[sic]* was finished on 13 June 1790 and remained in MS form until Chesterton's edition of 1922. The Works, edited by R.W. Chapman, revised edition by B.C. Southam, 6 vols (London,1970-4), VI, 76-109. Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

13. See John Bancroft, The History of Charles Wentworth (1770), for example; or Henry Mackenzie's The Man of Feeling (1771) where a prostitute attributes her condition to reading circulating library novels.

14. Austen, Northanger Abbey, Works, V, 13. Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

15. Eliza Parsons and Sarah Wilkinson between them published well in excess of a hundred Gothic-sentimental romances for the Minerva Press. See Birkhead, pp. 73-80.

16. Letter to Cassandra Austen, 11 Oct. 1813. Letters, edited by R.W. Chapman, second edition (London, 1952), pp. 341-7 (p. 344). Letter 86.

17. 'The Rovers' appeared in the issues of The Anti-Jacobin for June 4th and 11th, 1798. Pagination in the text refers to the fourth edition; see above, Part II, note 69.

18. Austen, Lesley Castle, Works, VI, 110.

19. The poem (1794-97) contained an attack on the Gothic novelists, and Lewis in particular. See Kiely, p. 120.

20. See Clinton-Baddeley, pp. 79-87.

21. 4 June 1798, p. 429. The topical reference is to the Whig M.P. and supporter of Fox, Sir Robert Adair, who was educated at Göttingen. Pitt is said to have written the last verse of the 'Song' - see Jerrold and Leonard, p. 403. The song was imitated throughout the nineteenth century (see, for example, Punch, 7 Oct. 1882, p. 168); and 'The Rovers' was expanded and adapted for the stage in 1811 by George Colman Jnr under the title The Quadrupeds of Quedlinburgh; or, The Rovers of Weimar - see Richard Brinsley Peake, Memoirs of the Colman Family, 2 vols (London, 1841), II, 336-8.

22. The Effusions of Sensibility was written when Lewis was sixteen and remained unpublished until 1839 - see Shepperson, p. 93. Tales of Terror and Wonder (London, 1801) is an amalgamation of Tales of Terror (1799) and Tales of Wonder (1800). One of the most popular ballads of the period was Burger's 'Lenore', which was translated eight times in 1796 (once by Scott) and illustrated by Blake.

23. See Shepperson, pp. 95-8.

24. Maria Edgeworth, 'Angelina; or, L'amie inconnue', Moral Tales (1801). Tales and Novels, The Longford Edition, 10 vols (London, 1893), I, 221-85.

25. Richard Edgeworth, 'Preface', Moral Tales, pp. iii-vi. (p. v).

26. Part of the description on the title-pages of Modern Novel Writing, 2 vols (London, 1796) and Azemia, 2 vols (London, 1797) respectively. Azemia went to a second edition in 1798 and was translated into French in 1808.

27. Azemia contains a parody of Emily St. Aubert's verses 'The Butterfly to his Love' from The Mysteries of Udolpho (Vol. III, Ch. XI) - 'The Forficula Auricularis, or Ear-wigge to her Love', Azemia, p. 43.

28. Thomas Love Peacock, Nightmare Abbey (1818). Works, edited by H.F.B. Brett-Smith and C.E. Jones, The Halliford Edition, 10 vols (London, 1924 -34). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

29. The Heroine went through three English editions between late 1813 and 1815, and was last reprinted in 1927. For its contemporary reputation see Walter Raleigh, 'Introduction', The Heroine (London, 1909), pp. iii-xv (p. x). This is a reprint of the first edition, which Barrett subsequently revised. Pagination in the text refers to the revised second edition, 3 vols (London, 1814).

30. In the first edition of the novel (subsequently omitted) Lady Hysterica's 'history' is inset into the text in the manner of a Radcliffe novel, under the title 'Il Castello di Grimgothico', and signed "Anna Maria Marianne Matilda Pottingen".

31. When Charles Maturin's Melmoth the Wanderer (1820) was published, Gothicism was already outmoded - see Douglas Grant, 'Introduction',

Melmoth the Wanderer (London, 1972), pp. vii-xiv. On the novel of sentiment, Q.D. Leavis quotes Lady Stuart's letter to Walter Scott (4 Sept. 1826) relating how a re-reading of The Man of Feeling (1771) fifty years later reduced her friends to laughter; Reading Public, p. 155.

32. See below, Ch. 3.

33. Shepperson lists a selection of popular titles, pp. 83-84.

Chapter 2. The Romantic Poets and their Parodists

1. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Sonnets attempted in the manner of contemporary writers' (1897); reprinted in Biographia Literaria (1817), edited by J. Shawcross, corrected edition, 2 vols (London, 1973), I, 17-19 (p. 17). Southey thought that the second sonnet, 'To Simplicity', was directed against him - see Jerrold and Leonard, p. 405.

2. Southey reprinted the parodies in Works, 10 vols (London, 1837), II, 117-28. For charges of Della Cruscanism relating to the Romantic poets see below, section e.

3. See Charles Lamb, Works, edited by E.V. Lucas, 6 vols (London, 1912), IV, 123 and 365.

4. See John O. Hayden, The Romantic Reviewers, 1802-1824 (London, 1969), pp. 77-123.

5. See Altick, Common Reader, p. 386. 'Mass' is, of course, a relative term: later in the century (1864) Tennyson sold 40,000 copies of Enoch Arden over a similar period - see Altick, ibid., p. 387.

6. See Byron's letter to Lord Holland; above, Part II, note 61.

7. Byron's opening address, together with his account of Busby's recitation and his own parody, are reprinted in The Poetical Works, edited by Ernest Hartley Coleridge (London, 1905), pp. 256-7. The Smiths' parody of Busby was titled 'Architectural Atoms'.

8. 'Preface', Rejected Addresses (1833), p. viii. All quotations in the text are from this edition - see above, Part I, note 53.

9. For further details and comparison of Rejected Addresses to eighteenth century parodies see below, note 21.

10. See above, Part I, b - with notes 47 and 49.

11. The parodied passage in Southey's poem begins: "Midnight, and yet no eye /Through all the Imperial City closed in sleep".

12. Jeffrey, 'Rejected Addresses', p. 439.

13. Croker, 'Rejected Addresses', p. 177.

14. Byron referred to Wordsworth's "infantine language" in his review of Poems in Two Volumes, Monthly Literary Creations (July 1807); quoted by Barbara Garlitz, 'The Baby's Début: Contemporary Reaction to Wordsworth's Poetry', Boston University Studies in English, 4 (1960), pp. 85-94 (p. 86).

15. Jeffrey, 'Poems in Two Volumes', Edinburgh Review (Oct. 1807); quoted by Hayden, pp. 82-83.

16. Coleridge, 'To Simplicity'; see above, note 1.

17. Byron, 'Poems in Two Volumes'; quoted by Garlitz, p. 86.

18. See above, Part I, b.

19. Coleridge to Southey, 8[9?] Feb. 1813. Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, edited by Earl L. Griggs, 6 vols (Oxford, 1956-71), III, 432-4. Letter 887. Coleridge continued to refer slightingly to Rejected Addresses in his correspondence - see letter to J.H. Green, 14 Jan. 1820, V, 11-13, Letter 1222; and to Charles Lamb, 30 June 1825, V, 472-3, Letter 1472.

20. See the title-page to Accepted Addresses; or, Praemium Poetarum (London, 1813). The author may have been Thomas Tegg who published the volume.

21. See Byron's letter to Lord Holland, 30 Sept. 1812 (above, note 6); also a letter to John Murray 17 Oct. 1812, Letters and Journals, II, 228. Jeffrey compared the volume to "the Antijacobin" in his Edinburgh review of Rejected Addresses, p. 434.

22. See Hamilton, Parodies, III, 95.

23. From the title-page of The Poetic Mirror (London, 1816). For full details see below, note 42.

24. For details of the composition and publication of Paper Money Lyrics see the 'Prefatory Note' to Works, Halliford edition, VII, v; and Bill Read, The Critical Reputation of Thomas Love Peacock (Boston Graduate School Dissertation, 1959. University Microfilms, Michigan), p. 123.

25. There is some doubt about the authorship of Warreniana, but it is listed under Deacon's name in the British Museum Catalogue.

26. See 'Noctes Ambrosianae, IV', Blackwood's Magazine, 12 (July 1822), pp. 100-22 (p. 109).

27. See above, Ch. 1.

28. George Colman Jnr, Poetical Vagaries (London, 1812), pp. 39-40.

29. The Lady of the Lake contained 143 pages of notes compared to 290 of text, and cost £1.11.6d. See Hayden, p. 128.

30. Croker, 'Rejected Addresses', p. 177. Croker reviewed Poetical Vagaries in the same issue of the Quarterly Review (Sept. 1812) and commented on its "indecency", pp. 144-9 (p. 148). He also reviewed Colman's reply - Vagaries Vindicated (1813), a satirical poem - and renewed his charges of "obscenity": Quarterly Review, 11 (July 1813), pp. 346-8 (p. 347). In later life Colman became a notoriously prudish Examiner of Plays; see DNB entry, p. 851.

31. Jokeby (London, 1813). The parody is anonymous, and although Shirley Brooks attributed it to the Smiths this is almost certainly incorrect. See Hamilton, Parodies, III, 94.

32. See Hamilton, ibid.

33. 'Rokeby the Second', Satirist (March 1813); collected by Hamilton, ibid.

34. See the Smiths' 1833 'Preface', pp. xviii-xix. Scott also mentioned Rejected Addresses approvingly in his correspondence - see letter to Miss Smith, 11 Dec. 1812. Letters, edited by H.J. Grierson, 12 vols (London, 1932-7), III, 206-08 (p. 207).

35. Walter Scott, 'Introduction', The Lady of the Lake (1830). Poetical Works, edited by J. Logie Robertson (London, 1904), pp. 274-6 (p. 276).

36. Byron, 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' (fifth edition, 1812). Poetical Works, p. 90, line 258.

37. From 'Luctus on the Death of Sir Daniel Donnelly', Blackwood's Magazine, 7 (May 1820), pp. 186-201 (p. 187). This also includes parodies of Byron, James Scott, and John Wilson; and translations into Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.

38. William Maginn, 'The Rime of the Auncient Waggonere', Blackwood's Magazine, 4 (Feb. 1819), pp. 571-4. See also Maginn's: "A Dandy on a velocipede/I saw in vision sweet", Blackwood's, 9 (May 1821), pp. 135-6.

39. Maginn, 'Christabel, Part Third', Blackwood's Magazine, 5 (July 1819), pp. 286-9. Martin Tupper's Geraldine (1838) was perhaps the most notable serious attempt to finish the poem.

40. This was a common joke of the period, apparently - see Hamilton, Parodies, V, 127.

41. According to Hamilton, ibid.

42. James Hogg, 'Isabelle', The Poetic Mirror (1816). Works of the Ettrick Shepherd, edited by Thomas Thompson, 2 vols (London, 1865), I, 144-83 (pp. 175-7). Quotations in the text are from this edition. Hogg's account of how he came to write The Poetic Mirror will be found in his Memoir of the Author's Life (1832), edited by Douglas S. Mack (Edinburgh and London, 1972), pp. 37-39.

43. See Hamilton, Parodies, V, 107-23.

44. See above, and note 19.

45. Jeffrey's review of Poems in Two Volumes; see above, note 15.

46. D.B. Wyndham Lewis and Charles Lee collected the best examples of Wordsworth's unconscious self-parody in their anthology of bad verse, The Stuffed Owl (London, 1930).

47. See above, note 15.

48. See Hayden, pp. 81-91.

49. Hamilton collected fifty-one examples in Parodies, V, 88-106.

50. ibid., p. 99.

51. Peacock, Melincourt (1817), Works, II, 396-7; and 'Sir Proteus', Works, VI, 281-313 (p. 290).

52. "Sweet nursery phrases" was a remark made by Jeffrey in the Edinburgh Review (Oct. 1815); quoted, together with the comment from the Monthly Magazine, by Garlitz, pp. 87-88.

53. Wordsworth, 'Preface', Peter Bell (1819). Poetical Works, edited by E. de Selincourt, second edition, 5 vols (Oxford, 1952), II, 331.

54. A critic in the Eclectic Review (July 1819) referred to Wordsworth's 'unsportiveness'; quoted by Hayden, pp. 95-96.

55. A quote from A Bold Stroke for a Wife on the title-page of John Hamilton Reynolds's Peter Bell: A Lyrical Ballad (London, 1819). The parody appeared anonymously in April and was bound in the same year with the original Peter Bell and The Waggoner, and a parody of The Waggoner (possibly by Maginn) - Benjamin the Waggoner - under the title Wordsworth Poems. Pagination in the text refers to this volume.

56. Jeffrey speaking of Wordsworth's diction in a review of Southey's Thalaba, Edinburgh Review (Oct. 1802); quoted by Hayden, p. 80.

57. The parody is dated "Ravenna. 22 March 1820", but it was not published in England until 1888. Its discovery is described in Hamilton, Parodies, V, 105 where he reprints it for the first time.

58. See note to Peter Bell the Third (1819). Shelley: Poetical Works, edited by Thomas Hutchinson (London, 1952), p. 346.

59. Maginn, 'Billy Routing', Blackwood's Magazine, 5 (July 1819), p. 434.

60. See Macdonald, Parodies, p. 74. Quotation in the text from this edition, pp. 80-82.

61. Wordsworth, 'The Thorn' (1798). Poetical Works, II, 241.

62. Wordsworth, 'On the Detraction which followed the Publication of a certain Poem' (1820). Poetical Works, III, 11.

63. Maginn, 'The Kail Pot', Blackwood's Magazine, 9 (May 1821), pp. 138-9.

64. Hogg printed three parodies of Wordsworth that purported to be extracts from a long poem called The Recluse: 'The Stranger', 'James Rigg', and 'The Flying Tailor'. Quotation in the text from the 1865 edition of The Poetic Mirror.

65. See Hayden, p. 99.

66. W.S. Landor, 'Malvolio' (1837), Poetical Works, edited by Stephen Wheeler, 3 vols (Oxford, 1937), III, 237; Hartley Coleridge, "He liv'd amidst", Notes and Queries, 19 June 1869, reprinted in Amis, p. 72; James Kenneth Stephen, 'A Sonnet', Lapsus Calami (Cambridge, 1928). First publd.1891.

67. See below, and note 71.

68. Hogg, 'The Guerilla', Poetic Mirror.

69. Peacock gives the precise references in his notes to Ch. XI, pp. 104; 107-9.

70. Swinburne's description; quoted by Jerrold and Leonard, p. 407.

71. 'Remarks on Don Juan', Blackwood's Magazine, 5 (Aug. 1819), pp. 512-18 (p. 512).

72. An anonymous reviewer in the Literary Gazette (1823); quoted by Hayden, p. 157. For 'Don Juan Unread' see Blackwood's Magazine, 6 (Nov. 1819), pp. 194-5.

73. 'The Mad Banker' intermittently between July 1818 and Jan.1820; 'Daniel O'Rourke' intermittently between Aug. 1820 and Nov. 1821; 'Childe Paddy', May 1820, p. 186.

74. Maginn, 'The Galiongee', Blackwood's Magazine, 9 (May 1821), p. 136; 'Stanzas for Music' in 'Noctes Ambrosianae, IV', Blackwood's, 12 (July 1822), pp. 100-14 (p. 113); 'Drouthiness', Blackwood's, 10 (Dec. 1821, Part I), pp. 561-2.

75. 'The First Murder; or, The Rejection of the Offering', Blackwood's Magazine, 10 (Oct. 1821), pp. 321-7.

76. See below, Ch. 4.

77. Even Hamilton managed to collect only three; Parodies, VI, 193-4.

78. W.S. Walker in the Quarterly Review (Oct. 1821); quoted by Hayden, p. 168.

79. For details of the sales of Keats's poems see Edmund Blunden, Keats's Publisher (London, 1936), pp. 41-53 and pp. 70-88.

80. Compare, for example, Lockhart's review of Endymion, 'On the Cockney School of Poetry, IV', Blackwood's Magazine, 3 (Aug. 1818), pp. 519-24, with his remarks on Hunt - 'Cockney School, III', Blackwood's, 3 (July 1818), pp. 453-6; and 'Cockney School, V', Blackwood's, 5 (April 1819), pp. 97-100.

81. Leigh Hunt, 'Preface', The Story of Rimini (1816); quoted by Hayden, pp. 180-81.

82. 'On the Cockney School of Poetry, V', Blackwood's Magazine, 5, pp. 99-100.

83. 'Remarks on Shelley's Adonais', Blackwood's Magazine, 10 (Dec. 1821, Part II), pp. 696-700. Pagination in the text refers to this volume.

Chapter 3. Thackeray: Parody as a Prelude to 'Vanity Fair'

1. See Altick, Common Reader, p. 362 for an account of the popularity of the keepsake annuals. For the contemporary reputation and sales of Ainsworth see George J. Worth's William Harrison Ainsworth (New York, 1972), pp. 18-20; for G.P.R. James see Stewart Ellis's The Solitary Horseman (London, 1927), pp. 57-121; for Charles Lever see Lionel Stevenson's Dr. Quicksilver (London, 1939), pp. 55-71; and for Bulwer Lytton see Michael Sadleir, Bulwer and his Wife: A Panorama (London, 1933), pp. 175-279.

2. For the impact of Vanity Fair as a realist novel see Gordon N. Ray, Thackeray: The Uses of Adversity (London, 1955), pp. 388-400.

3. Q.D. Leavis, p. 159.

4. Walter Scott on the novel; quoted by Levin, Gates of Horn, p. 40.

5. In a review of Disraeli's Sybil (13 May 1845) Thackeray remarked: "Morals and manners we believe to be the novelist's best themes". See Thackeray's Contributions to the Morning Chronicle, edited by G.N. Ray (Urbana, 1955), pp. 77-86 (p. 77).

6. Kathleen Tillotson, Novels of the Eighteen-Forties (Oxford, 1954), p. 226.

7. Levin, 'What is Realism?' p. 71.

8. James Wheatley, Patterns in Thackeray's Fiction (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), p. 8.

9. Quoted by Ray, Thackeray, I, 90-1. See also Jerrold and Leonard, p. 411.

10. 'A Word on the Annuals', Fraser's Magazine, 16 (Dec.1837), pp. 757-63 (p. 757).

11. Unless otherwise specified all quotations from Thackeray's work are taken from Saintsbury's 17 volume edition of 1908, with place and date of original publication preceding the reference to the Works. Pagination in the text refers to Saintsbury. For 'Sorrows of Werther' see Miscellanies (1855), VII, 71.

12. 'Ottilia', Fraser's (Feb. 1843), IV, 297-314 (p. 306).

13. See Ray, Thackeray, I, p. 225.

14. See Lionel Stevenson, The Showman of Vanity Fair (London, 1947), pp. 12-17.

15. Miriam Thrall, Rebellious Fraser's (New York, 1934). Thrall also gives a bibliography of Maginn's writings, pp. 300-06. See also Sadleir, pp. 243-51 and pp. 419-21; R.W. Montague's edition of Maginn's Miscellanies, 2 vols (London, 1885), pp. vii-xix; Margaret Oliphant, William Blackwood and his Sons (Edinburgh and London, 1897), pp. 361-405; and above, Ch. 2.

16. Thrall, p. 69.

17. Maginn, 'Extract from Poems of the Apprehension', Literary Gazette (1820); reprinted in Hamilton, Parodies, V, 97.

18. See, for example, 'Mr Edward Lytton Bulwer's Novels', Fraser's Magazine, I (June 1830), pp. 509-32. 'The Last Lamp of the Alley' is one of seven parodies of Moore - 'Moore-ish Melodies' - collected by Montague in Miscellanies, II, 335-9 (p. 335).

19. The problem of assigning pre-"Yellowplush" work to Thackeray and of establishing when he officially joined the magazine are discussed by Thrall, pp. 55-62.

20. Thackeray, 'Preface', Pendennis (1850); XII, xxxv.

21. See Thrall, p. 61.

22. From a letter to David Masson (1851); quoted by Ray, Thackeray, I, p. 394.

23. See John Carey, Thackeray: Prodigal Genius (London, 1977), pp.150-76.

24. Harry Levin, 'The Example of Cervantes', Society and the Self in the Novel, edited by Mark Schorer, English Institute Essays, 14 (New York, 1956), pp. 3-25 (p.15). This was originally delivered as the opening paper at a conference on Imitation and Parody held at the University of Colombia, 5 Sept. 1955.

25. See John Loofbourow, Thackeray and the Form of Fiction (New Jersey, 1964), pp. 14-50; and below.

26. 'The Professor', Bentley's Miscellany (June 1837),I,119-29.

27. Wheatley, p. 14.

28. 'William Ainsworth and Jack Sheppard', Fraser's Magazine, 21 (Feb. 1840), pp. 227-45 (p.239).

29. 'Epistles to the Literati', Fraser's (Jan.1840), I,315-33 (p.326).

30. See, for example, four reviews written for the Morning Chronicle, 1844-5: Jesse's Life of George Brummell, Esq. (6 May 1844); Disraeli's Coningsby (13 May 1844) and Sybil (13 May 1845); and Mrs. Gore's Sketches of English Character (4 May 1846) - reprinted in Ray's Contributions. See also Thackeray's review of Letitia Landon's Ethel Churchill, 'Our Batch of Novels for Christmas 1837', Fraser's Magazine, 17 (Jan. 1838), pp. 79-103 (pp. 89-92).

31. Quoted by Thrall, p. 67.

32. Quoted by Ray, Thackeray, I, 241.

33. 'Novels for Christmas 1837 ... Bulwer's "Ernest Maltravers" ', Fraser's, 17 (Jan. 1838), pp. 85-89 (p. 85).

34. 'Fielding's Works', The Times (2 Sept. 1840), III, 383-93 (pp. 385-6).

35. Thackeray in a letter to Lady Blessington; quoted by Thrall, p. 70.

36. See letter to Masson, 1851 (above, note 22); and a review of Laman Blanchard's Sketches from Life (1846) where Thackeray speaks of being "content with our status as literary craftsmen, telling the truth as far as may be": 'A Brother of the Press on the History of a Literary Man ...'. Fraser's (March 1846), VI, 548-66 (p. 552).

37. 'Mr. Yellowplush's Ajew', Fraser's (Aug. 1838), I, 300-14 (p. 311).

38. See above, note 36.

39. See Thrall, pp. 62-64. She suggests Maginn or Lockhart as possible authors, although the parody seems toorestrained to be the work of the former.

40. 'Hints for a History of Highwaymen', Fraser's Magazine, 9 (March 1834), pp. 279-87 (p. 286). See also 'Half-A-Crown's Worth of Cheap Knowledge', Fraser's (March 1838), I, 131-51; 'Horae Catnachianae', Fraser's Magazine, 19 (April 1839), pp. 407-24; and Thackeray's review of Jack Sheppard, above, note 28.

41. 'Catherine Hayes', VII, 102.

42. 'Catherine', Fraser's (May 1839 - Feb. 1840), III, 3-187 (p. 46). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

43. Letter to Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth, March 1840. Letters and Private Papers of W.M. Thackeray, edited by G.N. Ray, 4 vols (London, 1945), I, 432-5 (p. 433). Letter 159.

44. Vanity Fair (1864); XI, 60-61. Saintsbury reprints the revised edition from which Thackeray omitted two parodies at the beginning of Chapter VI - "The Night Attack" (of the Newgate novel) and "the genteel rose-water style" (of the fashionable sentimental novel). The original 1847 text, however, is reprinted as an appendix to Saintsbury's edition, pp. 882-4.

45. Robert A. Colby, 'Catherine: Thackeray's Credo', Review of English Studies, N.S., 15 (1964), pp. 381-96.

46. Loofbourow, Chapters I - III, and Chapter V.

47. ibid., pp. 3-13.

48. See Wheatley, p. 45.

49. 'A Shabby Genteel Story', Fraser's (June - Aug., and Oct. 1840), III, 281-381. Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

50. Thackeray emphasised this point in his writings connected with Bulwer Lytton. See also his Morning Chronicle reviews of Sybil (above, note 30), and Lever's St. Patrick's Eve (3 April 1845), Contributions, pp. 70-77.

51. Pagination in the text refers to Saintsbury's edition of Vanity Fair.

52. The remaining 'Prize Novel' was 'Crinoline' (28 Aug. and 4 - 11 Sept. 1847), a "Yellowplush" paper satirizing French novelists who write about England. 'A Plan for a Prize Novel' (Punch, 22 Feb. 1851) was added to the series, which was reprinted in Miscellanies, II, 1856 as 'Novels by Eminent Hands'. All references in the text are to Sainstbury's edition, volume VIII.

53. Thackeray to Lady Blessington; see above, note 35.

54. Thackeray referring to Coningsby in his Morning Chronicle review; see Ray's Contributions, p. 40.

55. See Thrall, p. 69; and Sadleir, pp. 195-7.

56. Benjamin Disraeli; Coningsby, Bradenham Edition, 12 vols (London, 1927), VIII, 127.

57. See Ellis, p. 57 and pp. 253-7.

58. See letter to Albany Fonblanque, 27 Jan. 1847. Letters and Papers, II, 270-71. Letter 374.

59. See Stevenson, pp. 166-7. Thackeray was seldom parodied in the nineteenth century, although Edward Bradley parodied him as "Wm. Breakpeace Thwackaway", Shilling Book of Beauty (London, 1856). Hamilton also mentions two parodies - Parodies, VI, 261.

60. See above, note 44.

61. Letter to John Forster, 9 June 1847. Letters of Charles Dickens, edited by Walter Dexter, 3 vols (London, 1938), II, 28-29. Also see G.N. Ray, Thackeray: The Age of Wisdom (London, 1958), pp. 135-8 for an account of the Forster affair.

62. Letter from Dickens, 9 Jan. 1848. Letters and Private Papers, II, 336-7. Letter 437.

63. The title of Thackeray's article in the Morning Chronicle, 12 Jan. 1850 replying to attacks on Pendennis - Works, X, 583-8. See also Ray, Thackeray, II, 136-8.

64. Letter to Fonblanque; see above, note 58.

65. See Stevenson, pp. 166-7.

66. See above, Part II, b.

67. Thackeray referred to "Bread" as the literary man's main incentive to write in his review of Blanchard, p. 551; see above, note 36.

68. See Ray, Thackeray, I, 428.

69. ibid., p. 427.

70. Quoted by Lewis Melville, 'Introduction', Harry Lorrequer (London, 1907), pp. vii-ix (p. vii).

71. Charles Lever, 'Notice', The Fortunes of Glencore, 3 vols (London, 1857), I, v-x (p. vii).

72. Ray's terminology, Thackeray, I, 393.

73. Quoted by Ellis, p. 246.

74. G.P.R. James, The Fate, 3 vols (London, 1851), II, 3-4.

75. Altick, Common Reader, p. 385, his note 31.

76. Figures quoted by Q.D. Leavis, p. 159.

77. ibid., p. 169.

Chapter 4. "Bon Gaultier" and the Victorian Poet

1. George Gilfillan in the Eclectic Review (1852); quoted by Mark A. Weinstein, William Edmonstoune Aytoun and the Spasmodic Controversy, Yale Studies in English, 165 (New Haven, 1968), p. 115. This book is an invaluable source of information about Aytoun's later career, although its brief account of the "Bon Gaultier" partnership is sometimes inaccurate.

2. Thomas Macaulay criticized the practic of poet-hunting in 'Mr. Robert Montgomery's Poems, and the Modern Practice of Puffing', Edinburgh Review, 51 (April 1830), pp. 193-210.

3. See, for example, The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, edited by H.F. Lowry (London, 1932), Letters, 5, 24 and 40; Arnold's essays on Wordsworth, Keats, Byron, Shelley, and 'On Translating Homer', The Complete Prose Works, edited by R.H. Super, 11 vols (Michigan, 1960-1977); Arthur Clough, 'Some Poems by Alexander Smith and Matthew Arnold' (1853), Prose Remains, 2 vols (London, 1869), I, 359-83; Charles Kingsley, 'Alexander Smith and Alexander Pope', Fraser's Magazine, 48 (Oct. 1853), pp. 452-66, and 'Thoughts about Shelley and Byron', Fraser's Magazine, 48 (Nov. 1853), pp. 568-76.

4. 'Illustrations of the Thieves' Literature. - No. I. Flowers of Hemp; or, The Newgate Garland', Tait's Magazine N.S., 8 (April 1841), pp. 215-23.

5. Martin took his pen-name from Rabelais; see Memoir, p. 61.

6. See Weinstein pp. 16-23 for Aytoun's early career; and Martin, Memoir, pp. 133-4 for Aytoun's influence at Blackwood's.

7. ibid., p. 62.

8. The magazine versions of the parodies will be found listed in the bibliography of this study under "Bon Gaultier".

9. Arnold to Clough, 28 Oct. 1852, pp. 123-5 (p. 124). Letter 40.

10. Martin, Memoir, p. 131.

11. 'Review of Unpublished Albums. The Topaz, for 1842', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 8 (Dec. 1841), pp. 749-56. Pagination in the text refers to this volume.

12. Hood, Odes and Addresses to Great People (1825); Poetical Works.

13. 'My Wife's Album', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 11 (Jan. 1844), pp. 49-55.

14. Martin, 'Preface', The Book of Ballads, sixteenth edition (Edinburgh and London, 1903), pp. v-xxvii (p. vii).

15. A line from the 'Song of the Ennuyé', 'Bon Gaultier and his Friends. No. II', Tait's Magazine,N.S., 11 (June 1844), pp. 341-8 (p. 345).

16. 'Specimens of Modern Romance', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 9 (Jan 1842), pp. 6-7 and pp. 50-54; 9 (Feb. 1842), pp. 78-80; 9 (Dec. 1842), pp. 774-8; 10 (Jan. 1843), pp. 61-65; 10 (Sept, 1843), pp. 581-5.

17. 'Duggins's Impressions of America', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 9 (May 1842), pp. 329-39.

18. 'A Night at Peleg Longfellow's', Fraser's Magazine, 28 (Aug. 1843), pp. 160-68. The murder of printer Adams is described in a note to pp. 161-2.

19. See 'My Monomaniacal Experiences', Tait's Magazine,N.S., 10 (May 1843), pp. 312-6 (p. 315).

20. 'The Poets of the Day', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 9 (April 1842), pp. 237-45. See also 'The Cadi's Daughter' and 'The Broken Pitcher' in 'Review of Unpublished Annuals', p. 751 and p. 755.

21. ibid., p. 752.

22. Thackeray, 'The Ghazul, or Oriental Love Song' (5 June 1847), VII, 112-5.

23. Aytoun, 'Alexander Smith', Blackwood's, 76 (1854); quoted by Weinstein, p. 117.

24. Macaulay, 'Montgomery', p. 198.

25. 'Puffs and Poetry', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 10 (Oct. 1843), pp. 649-54.

26. Martin and Aytoun refer to Warreniana, ibid., p. 650.

27. See Martin's note in Ballads (1903), p. 155. 'Lays of the Would-be Laureates', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 10 (May 1843), pp. 273-6.

28. See Martin and Aytoun's parody of The Story of Rimini: 'Francesca da Rimini', 'Bon Gaultier and His Friends. - No. II', p. 347 (see above, note 15).

29. In 'Cracknels for Christmas', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 9 (Dec. 1842). pp. 800-07 (p. 806).

30. ibid., p. 806.

31. According to Kitchen, p. 294.

32. See Maginn, 'Gallery of Literary Characters, XX. Robert Montgomery', Fraser's Magazine, 4 (Jan. 1832), p. 672; also DNB entry, pp. 769-70.

33. ibid., p. 769.

34. Macaulay quoted these lines from The Omnipresence of the Deity in his review of Montgomery, p. 202.

35. Thackeray, 'Woman: The Angel of Life', (National Standard, 15 June 1833), I, 25-9.

36. See above, notes 34, 2, and 32.

37. See above, note 2.

38. See Hayden, pp. 135-8.

39. Arnold to Clough, 6 Dec. 1847 (?), pp. 62-64 (p. 63). Letter 5.

40. Matthew Arnold, 'Preface', Poems (1853). The Poems, edited by Kenneth Allott (London, 1965), pp. 590-607 (p. 598). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

41. 'Montgomery. A Poem' was one of the 'Lays of the Would-Be Laureates', p. 247 (see above, note 27). 'The Death of Space' was written for the first edition of The Book of Ballads (London, 1845).

42. Arnold, 'Preface', pp. 598-9.

43. ibid., p. 598.

44. Clough, 'Alexander Smith and Matthew Arnold', pp. 360-61.

45. Arnold to Clough, 28 Oct. 1852, p. 124.

46. Arnold, 'Wordsworth', Prose Works, IX, 36-55 (p. 46).

47. See Weinstein, pp. 26-27. I have consulted the first five editions of The Book of Ballads (1845, 1849, 1849, 1855, 1857), the fourteenth edition (1884), and the sixteenth edition (1903). Between 1855 and 1857 Blackwood's took-over the publishing rights from William S. Orr.

48. Martin, Ballads (1903), p. xx.

49. Macaulay, 'Montgomery', pp. 195-6.

50. Martin, Memoir, p. 62.

51. ibid., p. 148.

52. See above, note 1; and Part II, note 20.

53. Aytoun, 'Longfellow's Golden Legend', Blackwood's Magazine, 71 (Feb. 1852), pp. 212-25 (p. 225).

54. Quoted by Weinstein, p. 64 and p. 112; dated 1852 and 1853 respectively.

55. Richard Hengist Horne in Orion (1843); quoted by Buckley, p. 46.

56. Philip James Bailey, Festus (1839); quoted by Weinstein, p. 72.

57. See Buckley, p. 42.

58. Gilfillan, A Second Gallery of Literary Portraits (1850); quoted by Weinstein, p. 83.

59. Gilfillan, 'Longfellow's Golden Legend', Eclectic Review, fifth series, 3 (April 1852), pp. 455-67 (p. 467).

60. See Buckley, p. 50.

61. Aytoun, 'Our Relations with the Continent', Blackwood's Magazine, 85 (June 1859), pp. 765-80 (p. 770).

62. In his review of Longfellow Aytoun called Bailey "revoltingly presumptuous", p. 213 (see above, note 53).

63. Arnold, 'Preface', pp. 597-8.

64. Details of popularity and sales will be found in Martin, Memoir, pp. 146-7 and Weinstein, p. 124. Frederick Page's edition of Aytoun's Poems (London, 1921) contains the complete text of Firmilian together with the original Blackwood's mock-review (pp. 497-504). All quotations are taken from Page and pagination in the text refers to this edition, although I have also consulted the first edition of Firmilian published by Blackwood's in 1854.

65. See Weinstein, p. 146; also letter from Aytoun to Martin, 27 May 1854, Memoir, pp. 146-7.

66. See letter to Martin ibid., where Aytoun refers to Marlowe as a type of early Spasmodic, p. 146.

67. ibid., p. 164.

68. An anonymous critic in the North British Review, 35 (1861); quoted by Weinstein, p. 170.

69. See Buckley, p. 59 and pp. 61-5.

70. See Weinstein, pp. 153-72.

71. See, for example, 'The Last Spasm', Tait's Magazine, N.S., 21 (Sept. 1854), pp. 557-61 which parodies Gilfillan's style.

72. Arnold, 'Preface', p. 591 and p. 599.

Chapter 5. Philistines and Aesthetes

1. See above, Part II, notes 20 and 21.

2. See Buckley, p. 153.

3. Wilde's epigram (1895) is reprinted in H. Montgomery Hyde, Oscar Wilde (London, 1976), following p. xii.

4. Walter Pater's 1873 'Preface', The Renaissance (London, 1910), p. x.

5. Wilde expressed his opinion of representational art in 'The Decay of Lying' (1891) where he speaks of "the prison-house of realism". The Artist as Critic, edited by Richard Ellmann (New York, 1969), p. 305. See also letters defending Dorian Gray, ibid., p. 240 and p. 247.

6. See Buckley, p. 212.

7. Wilde's remark on landing at New York; quoted by Hyde, p. 52.

8. See the NED's definition of "aesthetic" (1888) which complains of the use of the word to describe "recent extravagances in the adoption of a sentimental archaism as an ideal of beauty".

9. Alfred North Whitehead (1946); quoted by Buckley, p. 208.

10. See Felsteiner, pp. 3-22; and below.

11. See Hyde, p. 47.

12. 'A Legend of Camelot', Punch, 3-31 March 1866, pp. 94, 97, 109, 128, 131.

13. See Graham Hough, The Last Romantics (London, 1949), pp. 41-6; and William Gaunt, The Pre-Raphaelite Dream (London, 1943), p. 11.

14. W.S. Gilbert, Patience (1881). The Savoy Operas (London, 1926), p. 161.

15. Hamilton collected several in Parodies, VI, 26 and 70-76.

16. The parodies were privately printed in 1872. I have consulted the 1873 edition published by Whittaker (London) and Shrimpton (Oxford). The volume also included parodies of Tennyson, Swinburne, Arnold, and the Spasmodics.

17. Charles Stuart Calverly was the most famous of the Cambridge parodists. Both his first volume, Verses and Translations (1862) and Fly Leaves (1872) went through several editions in the author's lifetime - see W.J. Sendall, 'Biographical Notice', The Works (London, 1901), pp. xiii - xxxvii; and below, Postscript.

18. The article first appeared in the Contemporary Review, Oct. 1871. Buchanan later expanded it into a pamphlet, The Fleshly School of Poetry and other Phenomena of the Day (London, 1872).

19. See Katherine Lyon Mix, A Study in Yellow (Lawrence, 1960), pp. 211-12; and DNB entry, first supplement, pp. 1257-9.

20. Henry Duff Traill, 'Sister Helen', Recaptured Rhymes (Edinburgh and London, 1882).

21. Traill, 'The God and the Damosel', World, 24 Dec. 1879; reprinted in Hamilton, Parodies, VI, 23-4.

22. Traill, 'The Modern Poet', Rhymes.

23. See W.M. Rossetti, A Bibliography of the Works of D.G. Rossetti (London, 1905), p. 20. For details of the Buchanan controversy see Samuel Chew, Swinburne (London, 1931), pp. 242-3.

24. D.G. Rossetti, 'The Brothers' (1871). Published for the first time in The Works, edited by W.M. Rossetti (London, 1911), p. 276.

25. See Pearsall, p. 199; T. Earl Welby, A Study of Swinburne (New York, 1926), p. 200; also Rossetti, Works. pp. 259-77.

26. A.C. Swinburne, 'Sonnet for a Picture', Heptalogia; or, The Seven Against Sense (London, 1880).

27. See Walter Hamilton, The Aesthetic Movement in England (London, 1882), pp. 65-74. This is an early study by the author of the Parodies collection.

28. Hamilton collected over a hundred to 1889 in Parodies, VI, 1-34 and 204-6.

29. See Georges Lafourcade, Swinburne (London, 1972), pp. 134-7; and Chew, pp. 70-77.

30. Quoted ibid., pp. 241-2. See also Buchanan's 'A Session of the Poets', Spectator (15 Sept. 1886), reprinted in Hamilton, Aesthetic Movement, pp. 52-54; and 'The Monkey and the Microscope' (Sept. 1872), reprinted in Swinburne, Under the Microscope (Portland, 1899), pp. 92-93.

31. 'Calling a Thing by its Right Name', Punch, 10 Nov. 1866, p. 189.

32. T.S. Eliot, Essays Ancient and Modern (1936); quoted by Buckley, p. 173.

33. 'Lofty Lines', Funny Folks, 11 May 1878; collected by Hamilton, Parodies, VI, 13.

34. Walter Parke, 'Foam and Fangs', Patter Poems (London, 1885); and 'St. Simeon Stylites', Lays of the Saintly (London, 1882).

35. Richard Le Gallienne, 'A Melton Mowbray Pork Pie'; reprinted in Macdonald, p. 140.

36. Arthur Clement Hilton, 'Octopus', The Light Green (May, 1872). The Works, edited by Robert P. Edgcumbe (Cambridge, 1904).

37. Owen Seaman, 'A Song of Renunciation', The Battle of the Bays (London, 1896).

38. See Welby, pp. 199-200.

39. 'The Monomaniac's Tragedy' (1858). New Writings of Swinburne, edited by Cecil Y. Lang (New York, 1964), pp. 81-87.

40. See Swinburne, New Writings, pp. 88-174. The quotation about Wordsworth is part of an earlier version of the story, reprinted ibid., p. 229.

41. All quotations from the 1880 edition (see above, note 26). Conjectural dates of composition will be found in Chew, pp. 154-5.

42. Swinburne also parodied Tennyson's 'Despair' (Nov. 1881) in 'Disgust' (Dec. 1881); reprinted in The Works, edited by Edmund Gosse and T.J. Wise, Bonchurch Edition, 20 vols (London, 1925-7), VI, 387-91.

43. ibid., V, 297.

44. "Vernon Lee" [i.e. Violet Paget], Miss Brown, 3 vols (London, 1884).

45. See Hough, pp. 166-74.

46. William Hurrell Mallock, The New Republic (1877); edited by John Lucas (Leicester, 1975). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

47. Pater, 'Preface', Renaissance, p. viii.

48. New Republic, pp. 67-70. Hamilton only collected seven Arnold parodies in Parodies, II, 236-8, and Arnold was not a popular model for parodists.

49. Twain was another of Ruskin's parodists according to Hamilton, Aesthetic Movement, pp. 20-21. Hamilton also gives the text of an abusive hoax letter purporting to be from Ruskin to the secretary of a Chesterfield art school which caused some unpleasantness in 1880 - ibid., pp. 14-15.

50. See above, note 8.

51. For the circle's sporting activities see Price, p. 131.

52. Wilde's term - see below, note 80.

53. Between 1879 and 1881 parodies and cartoons about Aestheticism appeared in almost every issue of Punch. The following are representative of their kind:

'The Palace of Art', 7-14 July 1877, p. 305 and p. 9.

1879: 'The Palace of Art', 15 Feb. p. 70; 'À Fortiori', 31 May, p. 249; 'Artistic Amenities', 26 July, p. 35; 'The Two Ideals', 13 Sept. p. 120; 'Aesthetic Pride', 27 Sept. p. 142; 'A Promising Young Aesthetic', 18 Oct. p. 180; 'The Height of Aesthetic Exclusiveness', 1 Nov. p. 198; 'The Line of Beauty', 6 Dec. p. 262; 'Nincompoopiana', 20 Dec. p. 282.

1880: 'The Cimabue Browns', 3 Jan. p. 303; 'Nincompoopiana', 14 Feb. p. 66; 'Distinguished Amateurs', 13 March, p. 114; 'Nincompoopiana', 24 April, p. 182; 'Aesthetic Inconsistency', 1 May, p. 198; 'The Mutual Admirationists', 22 May, p. 234; 'A Love-Agony', 5 June, p. 254; 'Affiliating an Aesthete', 19 June, p. 287; 'An Aesthetic Midday Meal', 17 July, p. 23; 'A Reaction in Aesthetics', 9 Oct. p. 167; 'The Six-Mark Tea-Pot', 30 Oct. p. 194; 'A Philistine', 20 Nov. p. 237; 'Fleur des Alpes', 25 Dec. pp. 293-4.

1881: 'Maudle on the Choice of a Profession', 12 Feb. p. 62; 'Dado!' 26 Feb. p. 85; 'Athlete and Aesthete', 19 March, p. 122; 'A Maudle-in Ballad', 9 April, p. 161; 'What It Has Come To', 16 April, p. 177; 'An Aesthetic Rondeau', 30 April, p. 201; 'Philistia Defiant', 14 May, p. 221; 'Frustrated Social Ambition', 21 May, p. 229; 'La Fuite des Oies', 28 May, p. 242; 'A Match. (Matched.)', 18 June, p. 288; 'Oscar Wilde', 25 June, p. 298; 'The Aesthete to the Rose', 1 Oct. p. 154; 'Theoretikos', 26 Nov. p. 242; 'Lines to a Japanese Air', 3 Dec. p. 253.

'Oscar Interviewed', 14 Jan. 1882, p. 14; 'A Poet's Day', 4 Feb. 1882, p. 58; 'Ossian', 11 March 1882, p. 117; 'Impatience', 11 Nov. 1882, p. 218; 'Sage Green', 31 March 1883, p. 156.

54. The first recorded use of "aestheticism" noted by the NED is in Brimley's essay on 'The Lotus Eaters' (1885) - see above, note 8.

55. Punch ran a series of 'Gay Grosvenor Gallery Guides' after its founding by Sir Coutts Lindsay in May 1877. See, for example, the issue 14 June 1879, pp. 268-9.

56. Quoted by Hamilton, Aesthetic Movement, p. 31.

57. See also Andrew Lang's 'Ballade of Aesthetic Adjectives', XXXII Ballades in Blue China (London, 1881).

58. 'A Match. (Matched)', Punch, 18 June 1881, p. 288.

59. Hamilton described London as being split into "two hostile Camps, one known as the Aesthetes, the other as the Philistines", Parodies, VI, 69.

60. Wilde, 'Decay of Lying', Critic, p. 307.

61. 'Frustrated Social Ambition', Punch, 21 May 1881, p. 229. The rumour is supposed to have originated with George Augustus Sala - see Hamilton, Aesthetic Movement, pp. vii - viii.

62. See Martin Fido, Oscar Wilde (London, 1976), p. 47.

63. Max Beerbohm, '1880', The Works of Max Beerbohm (London, 1896), pp. 41-55 (p. 46). First published in January 1895, The Yellow Book.

64. See Hyde, p. 49.

65. 'Swinburne and Water', Punch, 23 July 1881, p. 26.

66. 'Punch's Fancy Portraits. - No. 37. "O.W." ', 25 June 1881, p. 298.

67. 'Maudle on the Choice of a Profession', Punch, 12 Feb. 1881, p. 62. See also 'The Mutual Admiration Society', 14 Feb. 1880, p. 66; and 'A Love-Agony', 5 June 1880, p. 254.

68. Beerbohm Tree, 'A Poet's Day', Punch, 4 Feb. 1882, p. 58; and 'Oscar Interviewed', 14 Jan. 1882, p. 14.

69. See, for example, 'La Fuite des Oies', Punch, 28 May 1881, p. 242.

70. Truth, 25 Dec. 1882; collected by Hamilton, Parodies, VI, 73-4.

71. Wilde's terminology; see letter to Harry Mariller (1885), quoted by Fido, p. 79.

72. See Hyde, p. 46; also Hamilton, Aesthetic Movement, pp. 79-81 for a more detailed account of The Colonel.

73. See Hyde, p. 47.

74. Gilbert, Patience, p. 196.

75. 'The Muse in Manacles', Punch, 22 Oct. 1887, p. 192; Traill, 'The Doom of the Muses', Universal Review (Dec. 1888), reprinted in Hamilton, Parodies, VI, 86.

76. Gleeson White, 'Ballade of a Ballade-Monger', Judy, 5 Oct. 1887; reprinted in Hamilton, ibid., p. 85.

77. Osbert Burdett's term (1925); quoted by Desmond Flower, 'Introduction', The Poetical Works of Ernest Dowson (London, 1967), p.12.

78. Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray (London, 1974), p. 22. First publd.1891.

79. See Pater's dictum: "Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end", 'Conclusion', Renaissance, p. 236.

80. Wilde, 'The Preface', Dorian Gray, p. xxxiii.

81. Gilbert, Patience, p. 196.

82. Arthur Symons (1893); quoted by Mix, p. 11. Max Nordau's Degeneration was translated into English and published in 1895.

83. George Slythe Street, The Autobiography of a Boy (London, 1894). Pagination in the text refers to this edition.

84. Wilde, Dorian Gray, p. 122.

85. Lionel Johnson, 'Incurable', The Pageant (1896), pp. 131-9.

86. See Mix, pp. 115-6.

87. Pater, 'Conclusion', Renaissance, p. 237.

88. Wilde, 'The Truth of Masks', (1891), Critic, p. 417.

89. See Hyde, p. 162; and Fido, pp. 101-02.

90. Ada Leverson, 'The Minx', Punch, 21 July 1894, p. 33; 'The Advisability of Not Being Brought up in a Handbag', 2 March 1895, p. 107.

91. 'The Blue Gardenia', Punch, 20 Oct. 1894, p. 185.

92. 'Lyre and Lancet', Punch, 14 July, 1894, p. 16.

93. 'The Decadent Guys', Punch, 10 Nov. 1894, p. 225. This is actually a parody of a parody - The Green Carnation (see following note) - which the Punch staff appear to have taken seriously.

94. Robert Hichens, The Green Carnation (London, 1894). The novel was published in September and reprinted twice in the next four weeks. See also Fido, p. 96 and p. 102.

95. See Wilde, 'Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young', Critic, p. 433.

96. See, for example, the following issues of Punch:
1894: 'She-Notes', 10 March p. 109, 17 March p. 129, 8 Dec. p. 276; 'Ars Postera', 21 April, p. 189; 'Ars Cosmetica', 5 May, p. 210; 'Our Decadents', 19 May, p. 234; 'To Any Boy-Poet of the Decadence', 9 June, p. 276; 'Lyre and Lancet', 14 July, p. 16; 'The Minx', 21 July, p. 33; 'The Blue Gardenia', 20 Oct. p. 185; 'A Phalse Note on George the Fourth', 27 Oct. p. 204; 'Lileth Libifera', 3 Nov. p. 205; 'The Decadent Guys', 10 Nov. p. 225; 'Britannia à la Beardsley', Almanack for 1895.
1895: 'A Penny Plain - but Oscar Coloured', 19 Jan. p. 36; '1894', 2 Feb. p. 58; 'The Book-Bills of Narcissus' and 'The Advisability of Not Being Brought up in a Handbag', 2 March, p. 101 and p. 107; 'The Woman Who Wouldn't Do', 30 March, p. 153; 'A Philistine Paean', 11 May, p. 222; 'The Scarlet Parasol', 25 May p. 249, 1 June p. 261, 8 June p. 268; 'Ugly', 28 Sept. p. 153; 'Be It Cosiness', 21 Dec. p. 297.
'The Saveloy', 1 Feb. 1896, p. 49; 'The Chaunt of the Bodley Head', 14 March 1896, p. 121.

97. Mix quotes contemporary criticism of The Yellow Book, p. 88.

98. Seaman, 'Ars Postera', Punch, 21 April 1894; p. 189; 'Lileth Libifera', 3 Nov. 1894, p. 205.

99. Seaman, 'A Ballad of a Bun', Battle of the Bays.

100. 'Morbidezza', Punch, 27 Oct. 1894, p. 204; 'Ugly', 28 Sept. 1895, p. 153.

101. 'Ars Cosmetica', Punch, 5 May 1894, p. 210; and 'A Phalse Note on George the Fourth', 27 Oct. 1894, p. 204. See also '1894', 2 Feb. 1895, p. 58; 'Be It Cosiness', 21 Dec. 1895, p. 297; 'A Fine Child', 1 Feb. 1896, p. 49.

102. Beerbohm, 'Be It Cosiness' (1895). Reprinted in The Works as 'Diminuendo', pp. 149-60 (p. 160).

103. See, for example, 'A Christmas Garland', Saturday Review Illustrated Supplement (Dec. 1896); Zuleika Dobson (London 1911); A Christmas Garland (London, 1912); 'The Guerdon (1916), A Variety of Things (London, 1953); Seven Men (London, 1919).

104. This is most noticeable in his early work, and later in Dorian Gray; but many of his letters preserve a similar strain. See letter to Harry Mariller (1885), for example - above, note 71.

105. A poem particularly quoted against Wilde was 'Hélas' (1881), in which the poet speaks of his "austere control". The Works, edited by G.F. Maine (London, 1948).

106. See Hyde, pp. 223-6; and Fido, pp.111-12.

107. Wilde, 'De Profundis', Works, p. 857; 867-78. See also Ellmann's 'Introduction' to The Artist as Critic, pp. xxiii-xxviii.

108. 'The Chaunt of the Bodley Head. (After Praed)', Punch, 14 March 1896, p. 121. The Battle of The Bays went through several editions, and in the eleventh (London, n.d.) was praised for its "wholesome satire" and "sane and healthy" humour - see 'Some Press Reviews', following p. 86.

109. See G.K.Chesterton, 'Dedication to E.C. Bentley', The Man Who Was Thursday (Penguin, 1967). First published in 1908.

110. Richard Le Gallienne, The Life Romantic (London, 1901).

111. Beerbohm, 'Enoch Soames', Seven Men.

112. Quoted by Cecil, p. 367. See also Beerbohm's Christmas Garland parodies (1912) of Kipling and Bennett: 'P.C., X. 36' and 'Scruts'.

113. Robert Alter's phrase, Partial Magic, p. ix.

Postscript

1. Kitchin, p. ix.

2. Harold Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence (New York, 1973).

3. The most popular American parodists in England were Bayard Taylor, whose The Echo Club (Boston, 1876) was pirated as Diversions of the Echo Club (London, 1877); and Bret Harte, whose first series of Condensed Novels (San Francisco, 1867) was also pirated - as Sensation Novels Condensed (London, 1871). Based on Thackeray's method of 'potting' the novel, Harte's parodies are more acute and funnier than Thackeray's, and he augmented the series until his death in 1902. See Bret Harte Bibliography and Biographical Data, edited by Joseph Gaer, California Literary Research Monographs, 10 (n.pl., 1935).

4. Harley Coleridge; quoted by J.C. Reid, p. 113.

5. See above, Part II, note 19. See also Hamilton's collection of Parodies, most of which were taken from the magazines and newspapers of the period.

6. See Reginald Shirley Brooks, 'Introduction', The Wit and Humour of Shirley Brooks (London, 1875), pp. xiii-xv.

7. See M.H. Spielmann, 'The Rivals of Punch', (above, Part II, note 9).

8. Works referred to in the text will be found listed in the Bibliography to this study.

9. "Peers, idle Peers", Punch, 7 March 1868, p.102; "Cuthbert Bede" [i.e. Edward Bradley], 'In Immemorium', reprinted in Jerrold and Leonard, p. 273.

10. "A. Merion" [i.e. C.S. Butler], 'To L.P. on Taking his Degree', Odd Echoes from Oxford (London, 1872).

11. Leslie Stephen, Sketches from Cambridge by a Don (London, 1865),p.34.

12. W.J. Sendall, 'Notice', Works of Calverly, p. xxxiv.

13. ibid. See also Leslie Stephen, op. cit.; Walter Besant, Autobiography (London, 1902), pp. 79-102; The Eighteen-Seventies, edited by Harley Granville-Barker (London, 1929): R.W. Macan, 'Oxford in the 'Seventies', pp. 210-48; and W.E. Heitland, 'Cambridge in the 'Seventies', pp. 249-72.

14. See R.P.Edgcumbe's edition of Hilton's Works, 'The Life and Letters', pp. 1-120 (pp. 73-78). Quotation in the text taken from this edition.

15. Calverly, 'Proverbial Philosophy', Verses and Translations (1862). The Works edited by Sendall.

16. Calverly, 'The Cock and the Bull', Fly Leaves (1872), ibid. See also a small pamphlet by Percy L. Babington - Browning and Calverly (London, 1925) - which traces references in the parody to the original poem.

17. See Pearsall, p. 113. Quotation in the text from the 1928 edition of Stephen's poems (see above, Ch. 2, note 66).

18. For the relationship between Woolf and her cousin see Quentin Bell, Virginia Woolf, 2 vols (London, 1972), I, 34-35. For Stephen as the Ripper see Michael Harrison, Clarence (London, 1972), pp.156-89.

19. See Patricia Meyer Spacks, 'Logic and Language in Through the Looking-Glass' (1961). Aspects of Alice, pp. 317-26.

20. See The Annotated Alice, edited by Martin Gardner (London, 1964).

21. Pagination in the text refers to the Nonesuch edition of Carroll's Complete Works (London, 1939).

22. Florence Milner traced the originals of the Wonderland verse parodies in 1903; see above, Part I, note 96.

23. Kitchin, p. ix.

24. W.V. Quine; quoted by Harry Levin, 'Wonderland Revisited' (1965). Aspects of Alice, pp. 217-42 (p. 225).

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

I have not attempted to present an exhaustive bibliography of parodic texts, since the number of parodies written in the period under consideration runs into many hundreds. With respect to ephemeral parodies scattered throughout a variety of publications, principally periodicals, the bibliography of primary sources cites works, anthologies, and the titles of magazines and newspapers (together with appropriate dates) where these short, generally anonymous parodies are to be found. An invaluable collection is Walter Hamilton's Parodies of the Works of English and American Authors, in six volumes (1884-9), which contains over a thousand magazine parodies and additional lists of texts. In the case of Blackwood's Magazine and Punch, further details (title, author, and location) are given in my Notes to Chapter 2 for Blackwood's parody, and in Chapter 5, notes 53 and 96, for late nineteenth century Punch parody. Single, attributable parodies and volumes of parody discussed in the study have been included in the bibliography. Anonymous works, for both primary and secondary sources, have been listed by title, or in the case of untitled, non-attributable pieces, under the subject's name - as: [Ruskin, John], Letter to Chesterfield art school (1880).

The bibliography of secondary sources does not represent a complete source-list of books and articles consulted but includes those works which I found most helpful in establishing a background for this study: the Dictionary of National Biography (1908 -) and the New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature, 5 vols (1969-77) were referred to extensively throughout. Peripheral items cited once in the Notes have not been included, nor have original works that are the subjects of parodies. An asterisk against an entry indicates a text relating specifically to the subject of parody. Unless otherwise indicated, the place of publication is assumed to be London.

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