WILLIAM WHITEHEAD

A STUDY OF HIS LIFE, HIS PLACE IN HIS DAY, AND HIS WORKS

by

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To: My wife and children



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to study the literary career of William Whitehead, a minor eighteenthcentury poet and dramatist. Whitehead was for a time closely associated with Garrick as a playwright and reader of plays, and was known to his contemporaries as a successful poet. He was appointed poet laureate in 1757 and held the position until his death in 1785. He was also an author of a few essays, which appeared in contemporary magazines.

Not much scholarly work has been done on Whitehead's career. The only two recent studies of any magnitude are a doctoral dissertation by Hans Plattner on Whitehead's two tragedies (1914); and a German monograph by August Bitter on Whitehead's life and works (1933). Bitter's major interest lay in finding the romantic elements in Whitehead's poetry. His work, however, is not up-to-date and has, consequently, omitted valuable material. Cursory discussions of Whitehead's life and works have been included in accounts of the poets laureate. Tobin, in his <u>Eighteenth Century English Literature and its Cultural</u> Background. A Bibliography (1939), lists but five primary sources of Whitehead's works and only four studies, including those by Bitter and Plattner. Another of these studies is Mason's <u>Memoirs of his</u> Whitehead's] <u>Life and Writings</u> (1788), the source which has furnished most of the material for those who wrote of Whitehead's life. It is regrettable that Mason, who included a large number of Gray's letters in his <u>Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. Gray</u> (1775), did not include any by Whitehead in the <u>Memoirs</u> of Whitehead. <u>The Harcourt Papers</u> partially supply this deficiency.

The present work treats Whitehead's life and his literary activities. It seeks to evaluate Whitehead's literary productions, and, by presenting the evidence from contemporary journals and writers, to indicate his reputation in his own day.

In order to furnish a background for detailed study of Whitehead's works, his life is presented chronologically in Chapter One. Chapter Two presents a study and estimate of his poems, other than the odes written during his laureateship, with a consideration of their verse forms, the influence of other poets on them, and an appraisal of their permanent worth. The odes are discussed in Chapter Three, chiefly with respect to the ideas contained therein, since the odes themselves are not

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outstanding as poetry. In Chapter Four Whitehead's meager publications in prose are discussed. In Chapter Five Whitehead's two tragedies and one burlesque dramatic sketch are considered, with stress placed upon their reception in their own day, not only in England, but also in America. Chapter Six considers his two lighter dramas, The School for Lovers and A Trip to Scotland.

It is hoped that this dissertation may be some help in the greater task of giving a complete picture of eighteenth-century literature.

CHAPTER ONE

LIFE

I. Early Life and Schooling

William Whitehead, the son of Richard and Mary Whitehead, was born at Cambridge in the beginning of the year 1715. The register of St. Botolph's Parish, Cambridge, records his baptism as occurring on February 12, 1715. Little is known of his family. His father, a baker, served the neighboring college of Pembroke-Hall. Of a careless disposition, he attended little to business, and employed his time chiefly in ornamenting rather than cultivating a few acres of ground near the neighboring village of Grantchester, a plot which came to be called Whitehead's Folly. The poet's mother, according to Mason, Whitehead's biographer, was "a very amiable, prudent, and exemplary woman." She inherited her husband's debts, which the

William Whitehead, <u>Plays and Poems</u>, <u>To Which are</u> <u>Prefixed</u>, <u>Memoirs of his Life and Writings</u> by W. <u>Mason. 3 vols. York: A. Ward</u>, 1788. Vols. 1 and 2 are a reprint of Whitehead's 1774 <u>Plays and Poems</u>. Volume 3, which contains Mason's <u>Memoirs and addi-</u> tional poems and one prose piece, will hereafter be referred to simply as Mason. Mason, p. 4.

poet later discharged with the profits from his theatrical productions. William's only and older brother John (b. 1700) received a liberal education, entered the church, and held the living of Pershore, in the diocese of Worcester. An imprudent marriage caused him to lead a retired life. An only sister died in infancy.

William received the first rudiments of his education at a common school in Cambridge. On July 6, 1728, 1 through a nomination by the interest of Henry Bromley, he entered Winchester College. The eighteenth "century did not open auspiciously" for Winchester; the number in attendance was low. With the accession in 1724 of John Burton as Headmaster, however, "the quality of the attendance, or rather the attendance of the quality, improved with the quantity." At Winchester, Whitehead was well thought of by both students and masters. His school friendships were usually contracted with noblemen or with 4 gentlemen of large fortune. Some of his school-fellows attributed this tendency to vanity, others to prudence, while Dr. Balguy, a canon of Winchester Cathedral, imputed

- 2. Arthur F. Leach, <u>A History of Winchester College</u>. London: Duckworth & Co., 1899. p. 367.
- 3. Ibid., p. 372.

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^{1.} Bromley later became Lord Montfort and served as high steward of the University of Cambridge.

^{4.} Among them were Lord Drumlanrig, Sir Charles Douglas, Sir Robert Burdett, Mr. Tryon, and Mr. Munday of Leicestenham. Mason, p. 7.

it to Whitehead's disgust "'with the coarser manners of l ordinary boys.'" At Winchester, Whitehead was schooltutor to Mr. Wallop, later Lord Lymington. For some time he also enjoyed the lucrative position of preposter or "Praefect" of the hall, a post awarded a senior pupil and involving the management and control of the hall.

Whitehead was always proud of his Winchester associations. Later he expressed thanks for his education in a poem prefixed to the second edition of Dr. Robert 3 Lowth's Life of William of Wykeham (1759):

From the same fount, with reverence let me boast, The classic streams with early thirst I caught; What time, they say, the Muses revel'd most, When Bigg presided, and when Burton taught.

William Collins was at Winchester from 1733 until 1741, when he entered Oxford. Joseph Warton was a Wykehamite from 1735 until 1740. Warton, like Whitehead, retained a great affection for his teacher. When Burton died, Warton wrote verses in which he pictured his spirit consoling the scholars who were grieving over him:

Bathe not for me, dear youths! your mournful lays In bitter tears. O'er blooming Beauty's grave Let Pity wring her hands: I full of years, Of honours full, satiate of life, retire

- 1. Mason, p. 8.
- 2. Ibid.
- Lowth (1710-1787), bishop of London, was a student at Winchester from 1722-1729. William of Wykeham (1324-1404) founded Winchester College (finished in 1394).

Like an o'erwearied pilgrim to his home, Nor at my lot repine. Yet the last prayer, That from my struggling bosom parts, shall rise Fervent for you! May Wickham's much-lov'd walls Be still with Science, Fame, and Virtue blest, And distant times and regions hall his name. 1

Whitehead's chief activities at school seem to have been literary. Early in life he showed an interest in dramatic writing and in acting. At sixteen he wrote a 2whole comedy, of which there is now no trace. It is said that in the winter of 1732 at Winchester he acted a female part in Terence's <u>Andria</u>, which was directed by the headmaster. While there is some doubt of this, there is no doubt that he played the part of Marcia in Addi-3son's <u>Cato</u>, a play to which two of his later works, <u>The</u> <u>Roman Father</u> (1750) and <u>Creusa</u> (1754), were indebted.

More significant at this time than his dramatic activities were his poetic efforts. From Dr. Balguy, Mason learned that Whitehead, of a delicate turn, went to the hills with the other boys, but spent his time in reading poetry, in addition to plays and books of private history or character. In the classroom, while the other boys would hand in twelve or fourteen lines of poetry,

- 3. Ibid.
- 1014+

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The Works of the English Poets, from Chaucer to Cowper; including the series edited, with Prefaces Biographical and Critical, by Dr. Samuel Johnson: and the Most approved Translations. The Additional Lives by Alexander Chalmers, F.S.A. 21 vols. London: 1810. 18, 171.
 Mason, p. 6.

Whitehead would fill half a sheet with English verse. At first Dr. John Burton, the headmaster, discouraged this practice, but after some time was rather charmed with the verses and spoke enthusiastically of them.

At Winchester also Whitehead met a man who was to exert a great literary influence on him, Alexander Pope. When Pope visited the Earl of Peterborough near Southampton in 1733, the Earl took him to Winchester to see the college. The Earl gave ten guineas to be distributed among the boys as prizes, and Pope set them to writing upon "Peterborough." Six boys, one of them $\frac{1}{2}$ Whitehead, received a guinea each.

Whitehead must have made an impression on Pope, for Pope later employed him, along with other persons, to translate the <u>Essay on Man</u> into Latin. In his blography, published in 1788, Mason spoke of this translation

- These verses by Whitehead are not available. The story that James Hampton, who spent the years 1733-1739 at Winchester and is known as the translator of Polybius, was another of the winners, the <u>DNB</u> terms "doubtful." <u>Dictionary of National Biography</u>. ed. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. 66 vols. New York: Macmillan and Co., 1885-1901.
- 2. Mason, although attributing little worth to the prize verses, allows them that merit "of mere easy versification, which he seems to have acquired by sedulously imitating Mr. Pope's manner" (Mason, p. 10). Mason believed that if Whitehead had "taken the versification of Spenser, Fairfax, Milton and poets similar to them for his model, rather than the close and condensed couplets of Pope" the poet's fancy would have "obtained greater strength and powers of exertion" (Mason, p. 11).

as still extant in the original manuscript. Despite this early work Whitehead did not make any considerable figure in Latin verse. The only other known Latin poem by him is "An Inscription in the Gottage of Venus," with an English translation. This he wrote later in life.

Whitehead imitated Pope also in "Verses to His Mother," which Mason says was written when Whitehead was 2 fifteen or sixteen. In this poem he followed the general scheme used by Pope in his verses to Mrs. Martha Blount on her birthday: congratulations, best wishes for added years, and the suggestion of heaven as the goal after death. Pope had concluded his poem:

Peaceful, sleep out the Sabbath of the Tomb, And Wake to raptures in a life to come.

Whitehead ends his "Verses":

Full in thy sight let choirs of angels spread Their radiant plumes, and hover round thy head: Then one soft sigh thy issuing soul convey (While thy great loss and mine points out the way) To scenes of bliss, and realms of endless day. 3

Not all of his early poetry follows Pope. Whitehead went to Spenser for the verse form for his "The Vision of Solomon," which consists of eight stanzas with <u>ababededee</u> rhyme scheme, the first nine lines iambic pentameters, but the final line of each stanza an Alexandrine--a variation

^{1.} Mason, p. 7. I have found no trace of this manuscript. 2. Ibid., p. 48.

^{3.} A reference to the death of Richard Whitehead, the poet's father.

of the Spenserian stanza and a noteworthy departure from the closed couplet of Pope. In the poem Whitehead tells the story, found in <u>2 Chronicles 1: 7+12</u>, of Solomon's choice of Wisdom as the most desirable gift of God.

While Whitehead was at Winchester, his father died, but William's frugality and the small help of his mother enabled him to remain there until September, 1735. II. Pre-Laureate Days (1735-1757)

A. Cambridge (1735-1746)

After leaving Winchester in 1735, Whitehead spent the next eleven years at Cambridge. It had not been his original intention, however, to attend Cambridge. In September, 1735, Whitehead appeared as a candidate for l election to New College, Oxford. In this election, however, he was treated rather shabbily. His name, "through the force of superior interest," was placed so low on the roll that he could hardly hope to succeed to Oxford.

Since Oxford was soon to become the center of an early movement toward Romanticism in poetry, it is interesting to speculate as to the effect that attendance there might have had on Whitehead's literary career had he been admitted. Although Thomas Warton the elder, who had for some time been Professor of Poetry at Oxford,

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^{1.} New College, Oxford, was founded by William of Wykeham.

^{2.} Mason, p. 8. In 1702 Edward Young was on the election roll for New College, but was superannuated before a vacancy occurred. Collins and Joseph Warton also failed to obtain election from Winchester to New College, Oxford (DNB).

was no longer in residence, his sons were both students there at the time that Whitehead was at Cambridge. Joseph Warton matriculated at Christ College on January 16, 1739/40, and was graduated March 13, 1743/44, and Thomas, Junior, attended Trinity College from 1734 until 1737.

All three of the Wartons wrote poetry that revealed pre-Romantic tendencies, and both Joseph and Thomas, Junior, preached romantic ideals in their critical writing. In the preface to his <u>Odes on Various Subjects</u> (1746) Joseph Warton wrote:

The Public has been so much accustom'd of late to didactic Poetry alone, and Essays on moral Subjects, that any work where the imagination is much indulged, will perhaps not be relished or regarded. The author therefore of these pieces, is in some pain lest certain austere critics should think them too fanciful or descriptive. But as he is convinced that the fashion of moralizing in verse has been carried too far, and as he looks upon Invention and Imagination to be the chief faculties of a Poet, so he will be happy if the following Odes may be look'd upon as an attempt to bring back Poetry into its right channel. 2

A similar attack on neo-classic didacticism is to be found in his <u>Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope</u>

1

Bitter errs when he says that Warton was at Oxford at this time. August Bitter, William Whitehead--<u>Poeta Laureatus. Eine Studie zu den Literarischen</u> <u>Strömungen um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts.</u> <u>Studien zur Englischen Philologie. LXXVIII (1933)</u> 5. Warton had been Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1718 until 1728; after 1723 he ceased to reside there regularly and left in 1728.

^{2.} Quoted in Oswald Doughty, English Lyric in the Age of Reason. London: Daniel O'Connor, 1922. pp. 204-5.

(1757-1782), in which he ranks Pope below Spenser, Milton, and Shakespeare, and in Thomas Warton's <u>Observations</u> on the Poetry of <u>Spenser</u> (1754).

The Romantic ideals of the Wartons were carried out in their own poetry and in that of William Collins, who was at Oxford from 1740 to 1743 and was a close friend of Joseph Warton. In the poetry of these men were such Romantic qualities as an interest in external nature, a subdued melancholy, an interest in and sympathy for primitive life, an exaltation of imagination and emotion at the expense of reason, a tendency to look to Spenser and Milton rather than Dryden and Pope, as guides, and an interest in the past.

Had Whitehead found it possible to attend Oxford, it is quite possible that the entire direction of his poetic talent might have been changed by his contact with the Wartons and Collins.

On his failure to gain the election to Oxford, Whitehead returned in November, 1735, to his native city of Cambridge, where his being a baker's son and an orphan gave him an unexceptionable claim to one of the scholarships founded at Clare-Hall by Thomas Pyke, a baker of Cambridge. Pyke, according to the College orders dated December 20, 1720, had left 525 a year "for the maintenance of two scholars who were to be the sons of bakers, or if there were none such, the sons of deceased

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clergymen." On November 26, 1735, Whitehead was ad-2 mitted a sizer, the scholarship amounting to four shillings a week and free board, with a few required duties. In view of his circumstances, this stipend was a welcome windfall.

Whitehead was to remain connected with the university, as student and later as Fellow, for eleven years-years of preparation and direction. During this period his literary tendencies were strengthened, and his successful publication of some of his works led him to decide on a career of letters. During these years, too,

- 1. John Reynolds Wardale, <u>University of Cambridge College Histories. Clare College.</u> London: F. E. Robinson and Co., 1899. p. 149.
- What Gray, who studied at Cambridge from 1734-38, thought of Cambridge and sizers is to be seen in a 2. letter he wrote to Walpole October 31, 1734: ". . . the Men of Peter-house, Pembroke & Clarehall of course must be Tories; . . . there are 5 ranks in the University, subordinate to the Vicechancellour, who is chose annually: these are [Masters, Fellows, Fellow-Commoners, Pensione] rs, & Sizers; . . . The Sizers are Graziers Eldest Sons, who come to get good Learning, that they may all be Archbishops of Canterbury: . . . Now as to eating: the Fellow-Com: dine at the Fellows Table, their Commons is worth 68-4d a-week, the Pensioners pay but 28-4d; if any body don't like their Commons, they send down into the Kitchen to know, what's for Sizing: the Cook sends up a Catalogue of what there is; & they chuse, what they please: they are obliged to pay for Commons, whither they eat it, or no: there is always Plenty enough: the Sizers feast upon the leavings of the rest" (Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935. Letter 2).

he developed stylistic qualities which he retained during the remainder of his life. In general, his tendency toward neo-classicism was strengthened.

Not much is known of Whitehead's life at Cambridge. At this time Cambridge seems to have been held in low esteem by some of the men of letters who claimed it as alma mater. Gray, for example, was bored with this university, considered it "very ugly," and called the prevailing atmosphere of the place "the Spirit of Lazyness." Walpole derided its "rusticity." Whitehead did not share the opinion of these men, with whom he was

1. Correspondence of Thomas Gray (Toynbee), Letter 8. Winstanley described Cambridge in rather uncomplimentary terms: "The eighteenth century was a time of heavy eating and copious drinking, and Cambridge, faithfully reflecting the characteristics of the age, was the home of rude plenty" (D. A. Winstanley, The University of Cambridge in the Eighteenth Century. Cambridge: The University Press, 1922). p. 8. Draper speaks of the low state of scholarship at Cambridge in the middle of the eighteenth century: "University scholarship in the mid-century was certainly suffering a relapse from the days of Newton and Bentley" (John W. Draper, William Mason. A Study in Eighteenth Century Culture. New York: The New York University Press, 1924). p. 22.

Correspondence of Thomas Gray (Toynbee), Letter 51. Ibid., Letter 149. 2. 3.

4.

The Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton (1734-1771). ed. Paget Toynbee. 2 vols. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1915. p. 50.

probably not acquainted at this time. All his references to Cambridge were laudatory. In his "To the Reverend Mr. Lowth" he confessed that he found conditions agreeable to him:

And sure in Granta's philosophic shade Truth's genuine image beam'd upon my sight; And slow-ey'd reason lent his sober aid To form, deduce, compare, and judge aright. 2 In "On the Conclusion of the Peace," which was written in 1748 and included in the <u>Cambridge Gratulatory Verses</u>,

Whitehead was probably thinking of his alma mater when he wrote:

Far from the noise of arms, in cells and shades, The sons of science wait th' inspiring maids. 3

Even though Whitehead was a baker's son and a sizer, he did not cringe before the wealthy among the Cambridge students. His breast, he wrote in a poem to a friend 4 several years later, was free "from servile fear," He met rich and noble without fawning before money or title.

- 1. Mason, in the <u>Memoirs</u>, writes that he had the happiness to be acquainted with Whitehead over a period of forty years (p. 126). From Mason's remark it is clear that Mason and Whitehead must have known each other about the year 1745, the year Whitehead moved from Cambridge to London in order to become the private tutor to the second son of the Earl of Jersey. Draper favors the idea that Whitehead knew Mason at Cambridge (William Mason, p. 48). From Gray's letter to Walpole of Dec. 29, 1737, it seems probable that both Gray and Walpole were acquainted with Whitehead's work, if not with Whitehead himself. Gray wrote: "Mr. Whitehead does not shine vastly this time" (<u>Correspondence of</u> <u>Thomas Gray</u> (Toynbee), Letter 44).
- 2. Granta--the old name of the river Cam. Above Cambridge it still retains its name.
- 3. Chalmers, 17, 278.

^{4. &}quot;To the Honourable Charles Townshend," Ibid., p. 222.

During his stay at Cambridge he began his public career as a poet, and the money he received from his published poems helped support him. The encouragement he got from their successful publication also influenced him in his choice of literature as a vocation.

One teacher at Cambridge exerted a great influence upon Whitehead's dramas: Dr. Powell, who introduced the practice of annual college examinations. Powell considered the dramatic unities as unchanging as the laws of the Medes and Persians and would not have altered his convictions in spite "of all that has been since written in reprobation of the unities." Whitehead followed the precepts of Powell and observed the unities in his plays, with the exception of his last play, <u>A Trip to Scotland</u>, in which he dispensed with the unity of place.

It was in the early 1740's that Whitehead first began to publish his verse. The period was one of transition, and many of Whitehead's contemporaries were writing on themes and forms that may be called romantic. The stranglehold of neo-classicism on literary taste was beginning to weaken. Pope, the chief architect of "The Citadel of Reason" died in 1744. Swift died the

- 1. Winstanley, p. 25.
- 2. Mason, p. 31
- Oswald Doughty, <u>English Lyric in the Age of Reason</u>, p. 29.

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following year. Neither had written anything significant since 1740. Johnson, who was to become the high-priest of neo-classicism, had just begun to publish. His London had appeared in 1738, and his <u>The Vanity of Human Wishes</u> was to appear in 1749. The neo-classicism of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, governed by reason and form, by practical and conventional values, had nearly exhausted its possibilities. In the 1740's a number of poets were reaching out in new directions. Poetry for them was to deal with more than the practical and the tangible; there were to be beauty for its own sake, imagination and fancy, imaginative sympathy, emotion, solitude, nature (nature as external nature, rural scenes, not nature as the equivalent of reason), melancholy, and the past.

The writers of this new movement, the precursors of romanticism, include a number of Whitehead's contemporaries. Robert Blair published his blank-verse poem, <u>The Grave</u>, in 1742-3, and Young's <u>Night Thoughts</u>, also in blank verse, began to appear about the same time (1742-45). In addition to the "Graveyard School," the forties saw the emergence of imitators of Spenser, such as William Shenstone, Thomas Warton the Younger, and James Thomson. Mark Akenside's <u>Odes on Several Subjects</u> revealed the influence of the Greek odes. Joseph Warton

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greeted West's translation of Pindar (1749) with an ode. Warton further proclaimed his revolt from neoclassicism in his <u>The Enthusiast</u>, or the Lover of <u>Mature</u> (1744). William Collins's <u>Ode on the Popular</u> <u>Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland</u>, with its melancholy and its medieval supernaturalism, appeared in 1749. Gray began his famous <u>Elegy</u> in 1742. In the realm of religion, John Wesley had begun field-preaching in 1739 and had displayed an interest in the poorer classes, whom the Established Church had neglected in favor of the well-to-do. The 1740's were definitely years of emphasis on the new spirit.

Whitehead, however, continued to follow Pope. His earlier poetry at Cambridge included two poems, both in the Popean tradition, to be inserted in the <u>University</u> <u>Gratulations</u>: one (1736) to celebrate the marriage of George II's son, Frederick Louis, to Augusta, daughter of Frederick II, duke of Saxe-Gotha; the other (1738) to honor the birth of his son, the later George III. At this time he also wrote a poem on the death of the queen; the poem was included in <u>Pietas Academias Cantabrigiensis</u> in <u>Funere Principis Wilhelminae Carolinae, & Luctu</u> <u>Augustissimi Georgii II, Brittanniarum, &c. Regis.</u>

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^{1.} Frederick Louis died in 1751. His son became George III in 1760.

^{2.} I have not had access to this poem.

Gray wrote Walpole that "Mr. Whitehead does not shine l vastly this time."

Whitehead's later verse at Cambridge began with The Danger of Writing Verse, which was written in closed couplets and advertised in The Daily Advertiser for January 22, 1741. Two years later he published three pieces in the general manner of Pope. The first of these, published on February 19, 1743, was An Essay on Ridicule. In closed couplets, Whitehead surveyed satiric literature, mentioning such masters of satire as Swift, Pope, and Addison. but finally leaving the field clear to Addison as the master of didactic satire. The same year, in Ann Boleyn to Henry the Eighth, Whitehead imitated Pope's Eloisa to Abelard. Whitehead's third poem of 1743, Atys and Adrastus, a Tale in the Manner of Dryden's Fables, is a moralized tale taken from the first book of Herodotus's History. During the time when he wrote closed

- 1. <u>Correspondence</u> of <u>Thomas</u> Gray (Toynbee), Letter 44, Dec. 29, 1737.
- 2. A poem written in Popean couplets was addressed to Whitehead and printed in <u>The Gentleman's Magazine</u>, VIII (1738), 483. It is entitled "To Mr. W--h--d, Student of C---Hall, Camb. An Invitation. From Hor. <u>Ep. V. B.I.</u>" The anonymous poet invites Whitehead to have supper "just at <u>eight.</u>" At this supper each person present should provoke his "friend with sprightly mirth" and "crack alike his bottle and his joke." In addition to Whitehead and the author of the poem,

Young <u>K-s</u> and pleasant <u>T-k</u>, two common friends, Shall both be there, whom long-try'd truth commends. The author refers to Whitehead as one who "love[s] to live by reason's certain laws."

3. Robert Dodsley published The Danger, which sold for one shilling.

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couplet poems, he also produced Spenserian adaptations, I both addressed to Charles Townshend.

The year 1745 marked a turning point in Whitehead's life. Earlier he had intended to take orders, He had received the B.A. with "oreditable degree" in the winter of 1741/42, had been elected a Fellow of Clare College in June, 1742, and had been awarded the M.A. degree in 1743. His mother had died in April of 1741, and, according to Mason, had had no fears about the "certain advancement" of her son. Except for his clergyman brother, William was alone in the world. From a Ms. poem in Mason's possession it is clear that Whitehead was seriously considering entering the ministry:

0 ever mine: whate'er my fate portends
0f absence, passions, business, fortune,
 friends;
Whether in wide-spread scarf, and rustling
 gown,
My borrow'd rhet'rick sooths the saints in
 town.

- Townshend (1725-1767) in later life entered Parliament in 1747 and held the office of Lord of the Admiralty for a short time in 1754-5, and was Secretary-at-War from 1761 to 1763. Under Chatham he became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Townshend took an active part in the contest between Hardwicks and Sandwich for the office of High steward at Cambridge. Townshend's man, Hardwicke, was finally declared elected in April, 1765. Townshend advocated the Stamp Act, which lost the American colonies to England. <u>The Everyman Encyclopaedia</u>, ed. Andrew Boyle. 12 vols. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. and Winstanley, Chapt. II, "The University and Politicians."
 Mason, p. 43.
- 3. Ibid., p. 44.

Or makes in country pews soft matrons weep, Gay damsels smile, and tir'd churchwardens sleep, Whether, to ease consign'd, my future day, One downy circle, sportive rolls away; Or deep in Cambria, or the wilds of Kent, I drag out life, and learn from ills content; Still be thy friendship like a genius there, Zest of the joy, and solace of the care. 1

He had already composed a sermon and had transcribed the prefatory collect before it. Mason, himself a preacher, remarks that the sermon was

written in a plain, clear, and unornamented style, such as might be expected from a man, whose judgment was too correct to give any species of composition, which he exercised himself in, graces foreign to it. 2

But Whitehead did not become a clergyman. A number of possible factors must be taken into consideration to account for his change of plans. As he mentions in the Ms. poem, there was the uncertainty as to where the living might be; the prospect of "drag [ging] out life" in "the wilds of Kent" did not appeal to a man who had associated during his school years with members of the nobility and with men of wealth. Furthermore, since his boyhood he had experienced an uphill struggle in the quest for economic security; the ministry would not place him in a position of financial independence.

Doubtless, however, the most important factor in his decision was the fact that during the early 1740's he had

- 1. Mason, pp. 49, 50.
- 2. Ibid., p. 50 fn.

found himself. He had discovered that his life's work. his duty, lay not in "borrowed rhetoric," but in the field of writing. Therefore, when he received the offer to become private tutor to the second son, the first son had died -- of the Earl of Jersey, he accepted it, since the office of tutor would give him ample time and opportunity to devote himself to his first love, writing. In the summer of 1745 Whitehead moved from Cambridge to London, where he was given "a very convenient apartment fitted up for him contiguous to that of his Noble pupil." A young friend of the family, later General Stephens, was added to his care. After a year of living with the Jersey family, Whitehead gave up his fellowship at Clare-Hall at Michaelmastime (September 29), 1746. The Earl, who wanted to keep him with the Jersey family, had made his stay in London so congenial and pleasant that Whitehead was persuaded to give up the idea of entering the ministry. Poetry was henceforth to be his profession.

- 1. Mason, p. 52. Whitehead was recommended by Mr. Commissary Graves.
- 2. The statutes of Clare-Hall would have obliged him to "take orders" (Mason, p. 69).

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B. The First London Period (1746-1757)

In this period Whitehead extended his endeavors and became acquainted with important literary figures. It is doubtful that he knew Samuel Johnson personally, but it is certain that he was intimately acquainted with David Garrick, who had come to London as Johnson's pupil and had remained to become a famous actor, dramatist, and producer. In 1747 Garrick joined Lacy to revive the bankrupt (1745) Drury Lane Theatre. Whitehead looked upon Garrick as the reformer of the theatre, and in "To Mr. Garrick" (1747) he burned "poetical incense" to the actor-manager's efforts in acting Shakespearean drama.

--O thou, whom Nature taught the art To pierce, to cleave, to tear the heart, Whatever name delight thy ear, Othello, Richard, Hamlet, Lear, 1 O undertake my just defence, And banish all but Nature hence!

In the same year Whitehead paid tribute to Garrick in another poem, "Nature to Dr. Hoadly, on his comedy of The Suspicious Husband":

That changeful Protous of the stage, Usurps my mirth, my grief, my rage; And as his different parts incline, Gives joys or pains, sincere as mine.

1. Cf. O thoul whatever title please thine ear, Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver... (Pope, The Dunciad, Book I, 11. 19420.)

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The friendship with Garrick had a very important bearing on Whitehead's career. When he wrote his first i tragedy, <u>The Roman Father</u>, Garrick not only produced it, but acted the leading part. It was presented for the first time on February 24, 1750, with Garrick as Horatius and Mrs. Pritchard as Horatia. It was given eleven times the first season and three times in the following season, a respectable if not brilliant record. Johnson's <u>Irene</u> had been given nine times.

Whitehead's continued interest in the theatre and his association with Garrick prompted him to write the prologue to Garrick's revival of Ben Jonson's <u>Every Man</u> <u>in His Humour</u> for presentation on October 29, 1751. In the prologue Whitehead, employing closed couplets, claims undying fame for Jonson because of his ability to picture the essential human being:

Nature was Nature then, and still survives; The garb may alter, but the substance lives, Lives in this play-where each may find complete, His pictur'd self--Then favour the deceit--Kindly forget the hundred years between; Become old Britons, and admire old Ben.

Four years after the appearance of <u>The Roman Father</u>, 2 came his second tragedy, <u>Creusa</u>, which was produced by Garrick for the first time on April 20, 1754, at Drury Lane. It saw nine performances the first season, and was

^{1.} This tragedy will be discussed in Chapter V.

^{2.} This tragedy will be discussed in Chapter V.

given occasionally in the following years (twice in 1759, February 15, 17). Whitehead sold all of his rights to the copy of Greuse to the publisher Dodsley for one hundred guineas.

Garrick's confidence in Whitehead's dramatic knowledge led to his appointing Whitehead in 1756 as his reader of new plays. In being called upon to pass judgment on plays submitted to Garrick for presentation, Whitehead wielded a tremendous power. At times he opposed Garrick's opinions. The Orphan of China incident discloses the indebtedness of Arthur Murphy, author and actor. to Whitehead and the latter's boldness in standing up to Garrick. At the close of the 1758 season, Murphy offered Garrick his Orphan of China, which was based on Voltaire's Orphelin de la Chine. In a few days Garrick returned it. Murphy questioned his judgment, and a paper war resulted. Garrick asked for the play in order to reread it and again rejected it. A joint letter was sent to Whitehead, who was at Bath, requesting him to give his opinion "whether the manager ought to act the Orphan of China. and whether he thought the public would approve of it." Whitehead

Arthur Murphy, The Life of David Garrick Esq. 3. 2 vols.

London: J. Wright, 1801. p. 335.

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Drury Lane Calendar 1747-1776. Compiled from the Play-bills and Edited with an Introduction by Dougald Mac-1. Millan. Published in Co-operation with the Huntington Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1938. Library. p. 228. Ralph Straus, <u>Robert Dodsley Poet</u>, <u>Publisher and Play-</u> wright. London: John Lane, 1910. p. 352. 2.

was reluctant to accept this responsibility, but agreed to give his own opinion of the play if it would end all differences. And so "The distressed Orphan went to Bath," as the author said in his letter, "for the recovery of his health." In less than a week's time came Whitehead's pronouncement, not only approving it, but also saying that Garrick ought to act it and that the public would like it. Whitehead's declaration brought peace. Whitehead came to London, visited Murphy at his quarters in Lincoln's Inn, and told him that he intended to be present at the reading of the play. The day arrived. Garrick read with "that wonderful power, of which he was a complete master, changing his countenance and the tone of his voice, as the sentiment of passion varied." Garrick proposed a number of changes, but Whitehead overruled them with great politeness. When Garrick proposed a considerable change in the fifth act. Whitehead

answered in terms so elegant, that they have been from that time engraved on my memory. His words were, 'Mr. Garrick, there are so many beauties in this play, that, for the sake of us, who may hereafter write for the stage, I beg we may have no more.' In this manner Mr. Whitehead was the author's patron, and afterwards favoured him with an elegant prologue. 3

1. Arthur Murphy, The Life of David Garrick Esq., p. 336. 2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

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The <u>Orphan of China</u> was a success. It was produced nine times the first season, 1758/9, two or three times practically every year until 1767, and once in 1767/8.

A number of years later Whitehead made changes in <u>Braganga</u>, a tragedy by Robert Jephson. Of these changes Jephson wrote to Garrick that it was his intention "to abide for the most part by those made by Mr. Whitehead; he was so good carefully to peruse the manuscript." Jephson thought the "very judicious" atterations could "easily be made without demolishing much of the main building." A few weeks later Jephson again wrote to Garrick that he proposed "from a hint of Mr. Whitehead's, to bring the Duke in to the conspirators towards the end of the fourth act." According to the <u>Drury Lane Calen-</u> <u>dar</u>, <u>Braganza</u> was presented fifteen times in the 1774/5 season, and six times in the following.

Goldsmith, however, did not possess Garrick's or Murphy's or Jephson's confidence in Whitehead's judgment of plays. In 1767 Goldsmith had placed the manuscript of <u>The Good-Natur'd Man</u> in Garrick's hands. Unable to find a reason for producing the play, Garrick proposed

^{1.} Drury Lane Calendar, p. 300.

^{2.} The Private Correspondence of David Garrick with the Most Celebrated Persons of His Time. 2 vols. London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831-2. 2, 23 (Dec. 23, 1774).

^{3.} Ibid.

^{4.} Ibid., p. 34 (Jan. 2, 1775).

^{5.} Op. cit., p. 214.

that Whitehead arbitrate the matter. Goldsmith refused the offer, and "smarted more under this than any other part of the tedious negotiation." A "dispute of so much vehemence and anger ensued, that the services of Burke as well as Reynolds were needed to moderate the disputants." Colman produced the play January 29, 1768, at Covent Garden. It ran ten nights in succession the first season and was occasionally revived. Goldsmith's profit amounted to something like L400.

Goldsmith's aversion to Whitehead may have been contracted from Johnson, who had a low opinion of the poet. In 1747 Whitehead had met with an unpleasant experience with Johnson. Johnson had prepared the prospectus to his Dictionary and had sent it to the Rev. Dr. John Taylor for his perusal. Whitehead visited Dr. Taylor and was shown the manuscript, which was lying on the table. He was so highly pleased with the portions he had time to read that he asked and received permission to take the manuscript home with him. From Whitehead it passed "into the hands of a noble Lord,

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John Forster, The Life and Times of Oliver Gold-1. 2 vols. London: Chapman and Hall, 1871. smith. II, 41. Ibid.

^{2.}

Henry Saxe Wyndham, The Annals of Covent Garden 3. Theatre from 1732 to 1897. & Windus, 1906. 1, 177. 2 vols. London: Chatto

who carried it to Lord Chesterfield." Johnson did not approve of his prospectus's being seen by others and cherished a grudge against Whitehead for his indiscretion. When Whitehead became laureate and his odes were brought to the attention of Johnson, the latter termed 2 them "Grand nonsense." This judgment, however, may have been due perhaps to jealousy on Johnson's part, for Whitehead outshone Johnson in the public theater. The <u>Roman Father</u> (1750) became a stock play, whereas Johnson's Irene perished after nine performances (1749).

In addition to writing drama during this part of his life Whitehead continued to write poetry. Closed couplets still had a hold upon him. Three pieces which come from his pen: "On the Conclusion of the Peace" (1748), the prologue to <u>Every Man in His Humour</u> (1751), and "An Inscription in the Cottage of Venus" (1754), were in this form.

But he also wrote poetry in forms other than those of Pope. Spenser had already been his model in "The Vision of Solomon," and in the two pieces to Charles Townshend. Two more Spenserian adaptations, "To a

Taylor suggested that this was of advantage to Johnson, but Johnson replied, "'No, Sir, it would have come out with more bloom, if it had not been seen before by any body!" (Boswell's Life of Johnson; with an introduction by Chauncey Brewster Tinker. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1933). I, 126.
 Ibid., p. 269.

Gentleman on his Pitching his Tent in his Garden," and "Hymn to Venus," appeared in the early London period.

Another verse form employed by Whitehead in this period was the octosyllabic couplet. His use of the rhymed iambic tetrameters, after the example of Milton's <u>L'Allegro</u> and <u>Il Penseroso</u>, extended into the next period, as far as 1777. The early London period included the poems to Garrick and Hoadly, "The Lark," and "To Richard Owen Cambridge." Just how Whitehead formed the friendship with Cambridge, who attended Oxford but did not receive a degree, and who is known chiefly for his <u>Scribleriad</u> (1751), a mock heroic poem in six books, is not known. Cambridge did not justify the praise in Whitehead's poem:

Yet Pope in Twit-nam's peaceful grot Scarce ever more correctly thought.

Whitehead praised the versatility of Cambridge:

That Caesar did three things at once, Is known at school to every dunce; But your more comprehensive mind Leaves pidling Caesar far behind.

Cambridge was not remiss in returning the postical bouquet and answered in "To William Whitehead, Esq.":

Cease, Whitehead, to lavish on others the fame Which you better deserve, and unenvied may claim: The Muses, your bankers, all honour your hand, When you draw for a rhyme, you're paid on demand, All in specie, all gold, current coin of the land. On my poor shallow bank the call scarce is begun, Ere my Muse pays in silver to ward off the run. 1

1. Chalmers, 18, 243.

Another influence of Milton is evident in Whitehead's use of blank verse. This departure from the heroic couplet began as a jeu d'esprit when in 1747 Whitehead wrote a parody on Young's The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality, which had appeared in the years 1742-5 and immediately gained popularity which lasted throughout the century. Whitehead, probably sensing the "Uberschwänglichkeit" of the poem, prepared a short parody of fifty-two lines. Whitehead considered Young's brooding as sickly sentimentalism, and took this opportunity to poke fun at him. He termed his clever mimicking of Young's poem "New Night Thoughts on Death, a Parody," and published it in the September 1747 issue of the Gentleman's Magazine. Whitehead employed blank verse also in "The Sweepers," in which he humorously followed as a model The Splendid Shilling of John Philips.

For material for his third blank verse poem Whitehead went to Greek literature. In <u>An Hymn to the Nymph</u> of <u>Bristol Spring</u> he imitated the hymns of Homer and Callimachus. In so doing he was reflecting a trend of

Richard Paul Wülker, <u>Geschichte</u> der englischen <u>Literatur von den Eltesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart</u>. Leipzig und Wien; Bibliographischen Instituts, 1896. p. 419.

^{2.} Cf. p. 87 for discussion of poem.

^{3.} The parody was reprinted in the Foundling Hospital for Wit No. 4, 1748, pp. 41-43.

his day. Although Augustan classicism had been chiefly Latin in its form and spirit, between 1740 and 1750 the Greek influence became very important and for a time even pushed the Latin influence into the background. Akenside with his <u>Hymn to the Naiads</u>, Collins with his <u>Odes</u> (1746), and Gray with his odes in the fifties ushered in a kind of second Greek Renaissance.

Gray was another influence upon Whitehead during the early London period. The latter employed the stanza form of the <u>Elegy</u> in his "On Friendship" of 1751, a piece which irritated Gray. Whitehead used this elegiac stanza form in all the elegies written in the second London period.

During the early London period Whitehead employed still other verse forms. The delightful "Je ne scai quoi" was written in the ballad stanza; the "Ode to the Tiber" in a complicated pattern; "In a Hermitage" (1754) in alternately rhyming tetrameter lines; "The Enthusiast" in $a^4a^4b^3c^4c^4b^3$ scheme; "To the Reverend Mr. Wright" in alternately rhyming tetrameters and trimeters.

During this time Whitehead's fame and popularity were steadily growing. Several of his earlier pieces, "An Ode to a Gentleman, on his Pitching a Tent in his Garden," "The Verses to Garrick," and the two poems to Townshend, were included in Dodsley's 1748 collection of miscellanies. In 1754 Dodsley published a collection of Whitehead's verse under the title of Poems on Several

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<u>Occasions</u>. Four of the poems written in 1748 had prompted Gray to mild praise. Walpole thought highly of Whitehead's ability; he listed "Mr. W. Whitehead" among "our first writers." Whitehead's popularity had grown to such an extent that <u>The Critical Review</u> of 1756 included his name in a list of authors whose works "are not inferior to those of Pope himself, and who might have vied with him in reputation, had they been properly introduced into the temple of Fame." Whitehead, according to the <u>Review</u>, possessed "the true spirit of poetry," as did Young, Armstrong, Akenside, Gray, Mason, and Warton.

Whitehead had also tried his hand at prose.during this period. Besides the "Observations on the Shield of Aeneas" (1746), he wrote three articles for <u>The World</u> (1753-1754), a periodical with contributions from "our 4 first writers." His "Observations" were originally published in Dodsley's <u>Museum</u> (1746), and added by Joseph Warton to his and Pitt's four-volume translation of Vergil (1753).

In 1754 Whitehead's literary activity was partially interrupted. The Grand Tour through Europe was then considered almost indispensable to a young man's education.

^{1.} The Letters of Horace Walpole, Fourth Earl of Oxford. ed. Mrs. Paget Toynbee. 16 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903-5. III, 193.

^{2.} The Critical Review, I (1756), 276.

^{3.} Ibid.

^{4.} The Letters of Horace Walpole (Toynbee), III, 193.

Therefore, when the Earl of Jersey proposed that Whitehead act as guide and companion to the future earl on the Grand Tour through the mainland, the poet eagerly accepted the offer. The eldest son of Lord Harcourt, who had been an intimate friend of the Jersey youth since infancy, was added to Whitehead's care. This contact marked the beginning of a friendship with the Harcourt or Nuneham family which was to extend throughout the poet's life and was to offer him the opportunity of meeting many literary notables.

The three left England in 1754 and travelled through France, Germany, and Austria to Italy, stopping at various l places along the way. While Whitehead was at Rome, he received the badges of secretary and register of the Right 2 Honourable Order of the Bath. These positions were secured for him by the interest of the Countess of Jersey, through the mediation of her near relation, the Duchess of Newcastle. On their return homeward, Whitehead and his companions crossed the Alps, and passed through Switzerland, Germany, and Holland. The outbreak of the

^{1.} In Leipzig they listened to the lectures of Professor Gottfried M. Mascow on public law. But Whitehead and his companion "found the famous professor in a state of dotage, without being quite incapacitated from reading his former lectures" (Mason, pp. 80. 81).

^{2.} To various officers, as Register and Secretary, the Sum of Twenty-two Pounds was to be paid by every Companion. Statutes of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath. London: 1744. p. 44.

Seven Years' War (1756-1763) caused them to bypass France. After a two-year absence from England, the party landed at Harwich in September, 1756.

Whitehead composed a number of poems during the Tour. At Rheims, where the two pupils studied the French language, Whitehead saw the neighboring country, which he celebrated in his "Elegy I, Written at the Convent of Haut Villiers in Champagne." At Hanover. where George II was paying his last visit to the electorate, Mason met the party and renewed and improved "a friendship which I have had the honour to retain through life." Mason had lately taken orders and attended Lord Holdernesse, the secretary of state, as his domestic chaplain. During their stay at Hanover, Mason and Whitehead conversed much about "public and retired life." Mason inclined to the latter, but Whitehead maintained such feelings on Mason's part inconsistent with the view of advancement. This difference of opinion finds itself expressed in Whitehead's "To Mr. Mason," which Whitehead sent to his friend from Vienna. Of these verses Mason wrote to Gray:

Whitehead has sent me some Verses from Vienna treating of my indolence and other weighty matters, and exhorting me not to detach myself too much from the world.

1. The Letters of Horace Walpole (Toynbee), II, 193. 2. Mason, p. 81.

3. Ibid.

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After asserting that man was made "for all mankind," Whitehead appeals to Mason:

And tell me, has not Nature made Some stated void for thee to fill, Some spring, some wheel, which asks thy aid To move, regardless of thy will? Go then, go feel with glad surprise New bliss from new attentions rise; Till, happier in thy wider sphere, Thou quit thy darling schemes of ease; Nay, glowing in the full career, Ev'n wish thy virtuous labours more; Nor till the toilsome day is o'er Expect the night of peace. 1

In this poem Whitehead had reversed the position which he had held in 1751. At that time the Rev. Mr. Wright had chided him for not entering public life, and Whitehead had replied in the poem, "To the Reverend Mr. Wright":

Nere case is my humble request; I would neither repine at a niggardly fate, Nor stretch my wings far from my nest. 2

Whitehead's sense of duty was becoming stronger. He considered that a part of his task was to prepare his wards for a life of service to the state; and he, as a true follower of Pope, wished to realize for himself and for others the duty of man to mankind. This concept of duty was expressed in four of the five elegies Whitehead wrote in Italy. It had been found in the two tragedies, and it was to be one of the chief themes of the laureate odes.

- 1. Chalmers, 17, 225.
- 2. Ibid., p. 226.

The seven pieces, the ode and the six elegies, Whitehead published in 1757 under the title of <u>Elegies</u>, with an <u>Ode</u> to the <u>Tiber</u>. Though not widely popular, the volume saw a second edition the same year.

Whitehead's supervision of his two wards during the Grand Tour was highly appreciated by the parents. Lord Jersey invited him to continue in his family, and Whitehead, who had found living with people of nobility to his liking, readily accepted. Lord Harcourt, the father of Lord Nuncham, also gave him a general invitation to his table in town and to his seat in the country. The two wards had sunk the idea of governor into that of friend and showed their former tutor every mark of affection. The Countess of Jersey at this time began a gradual decline in health, and the Earl of Jersey experienced more frequent, lasting, and severe attacks of gout. As a matter of gratitude and duty, Whitehead willingly devoted the major portion of his time to amusing his patron and patroness, and spent fourteen years in this office. The invitation to become a welcome guest at any time in the Jersey and Nuncham homes pleased Whitehead, who "had now, by long habit, acquired a taste for living with people of fashion."

1. Mason, p. 102. 2. Ibid., p. 101. -35-

At the close of this period Whitehead received an additional honor as well as welcome financial assistance. In the year following his return to England he was made poet-laureate.

III. Laureate Days (1757-1785)

In 1757 the office of poet-laureate was left vacant by the death of Colley Cibber, who had been laureate since 1730 and who left the laurel "in a very shrivelled, "I" upon Cibber's death, Lord John Cavendish, at the request of his brother, offered the laureateship to Gray, In refusing the offer, Gray revealed the low esteem in which he held the office;

Tho' I very well know the bland emollient saponaceous qualities both of Sack & Silver. yet if any great Man would say to me, 'I make you <u>Rat-Catcher</u> to his Majesty with a salary of 300 h a-year & two Butts of the best Malaga; and tho! it has been usual to catch a mouse or two (for form's sake) in publick once a year, yet to You, Sr, we shall not stand upon these things!. I can not say, I should jump at it. nay, if they would drop the very name of the Office, & call me Sinecure to the Kg's majesty I should still feel a little awkward, & think every body, I saw, smelt a Rat about me: but I do not pretend to blame any one else, that has not the same sensations. for my part I would rather be Serjeant-Trumpeter, or Pin-Maker to the Palace. nevertheless I interest myself a little in the History of it, & rather wish somebody may accept it, that will retrieve the credit of the thing, if it be retrievable, or ever had any credit. Howe was, I think, the last Man of character that had it. as to Settle, whom you mention, he belong'd to my Ld Mayor, not to the King. Eusden was a Person of great hopes in his youth, tho' at last he turned out a drunken Parson. Dryden was as disgraceful

1. Mason, p. 90. For a detailed account see Chapter III.

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to the Office from his character, as the poorest Scribler could have been from his verses. (In sh) ort the office itself has always humbled the pos(sess) or hitherto (even in an age, when Kings were somebody) if he were a poor Writer by making him more conspicuous, and if he were a good one, by setting him at war with the little fry of his own profession, for there are poets little enough to envy even a Poet-Laureat. 1

Mason was also considered as a possible laureate, but, as he was told in a letter from Lord Cavendish, since he was in orders, he was thought less eligible than a layman.

Whitehead's appointment in December, 1757, did not include a concession made to Gray. Gray would not have been compelled to write the two odes per year, but would have kept the post as a mere sinecure. No such terms were granted Whitehead. Mason advised Whitehead, partly in jest and partly in earnest, to employ a deputy to write the annual odes and to conserve his poetical strength for such great occasions as peace and marriage. Whitehead could thus have followed the example of the musician Handel, who made use of poetical subalterns "to new-array the rank and file of their metres" to suit his oratorios. But Whitehead did not accept Mason's advice. Instead, he gealously set himself to the

<u>Correspondence</u> of <u>Thomas</u> <u>Gray</u> (Toynbee), Letter 259.
 <u>Mason</u>, p. 87.
 Ibid.

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periodical task and endeavored to "retrieve the honours of that laurel." Whitehead wrote of the office:

Howe'er unworthily I wear the crown.

Unask'd it came, and from a hand unknown. 2 During his career as poet-laureate Whitehead wrote fortyeight birthday and new year's odes. For this he was "blest with one hundred pounds per ann."

The summer of his appointment to the laureateship he visited Mason at his rectorship at Aston and wrote to Lord Harcourt with approval of his friend's ability in the pulpit: "He is by much the finest preacher in the whole country, & village & towns flock to hear him." Mason at this time was a single man and had his curate living with him. Whitehead took upon himself the role of a matchmaker between Mason and a Miss Ford. Whitehead wrote Lord Harcourt from Bath that "she is the wife in the world for Mason" and "is excellent in music, loves solitude, & has immeasurable affectations." In spite of Whitehead's recommendation of Miss Ford, Mason married someone else.

Mason, p. 90. 1.

2.

A Charge to the Poets (1762), 11. 21.22. WA Pathetic Apology for all Laureates, Past, Present, 3. and to Come." Chalmers, 17, 277.

4. The Harcourt Papers. ed. Edward William Harcourt. 14 vols. Oxford: James Parker and Co., 1880-1905. VII. 214.

John Delap, who was curate to Mason at this time, 5. was also a poet and dramatist. His unsuccessful Hecuba was presented at Drury Lane in 1761.

- The Harcourt Papers, VII (Dec. 16, 1758), 220. Ibid., WII7(October, 1759), 79. 6.
- 7.

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A few years later Miss Ford wrote an open letter to Lord Jersey, Whitehead's benefactor, without mentioning his name; the letter was printed in <u>The Gentleman's</u> <u>Magazine</u> for January, 1761, pp. 33-35. She accused the earl of offering her a sum of money if she would become his mistress and of defaulting on a settlement of 5800 a year. An anonymous person wrote a denial to the letter.

Although Whitehead interested himself in securing a wife for his friend Mason, he himself remained a bachelor. When Lord Harcourt brought up the question of marriage, Whitehead put him off with: "As a single man I can jog on, easy, if not happy, but when (as has been said of a parson's wife in her black bombazeen) <u>post equitem sedet atra cura</u>, the case, my good Lord, is strangely altered." Whitehead confessed that "the power, not the will is wanting." He considered it "madness to think of raising a family without a prospect of at least a tolerable provision for them." Nine years later Whitehead, in a letter to Lord Nuneham, states that

1. The Harcourt Papers, VII (August 2, 1763), 240.

2. Ibid. 3. Ibid. -40-

to his liking: "It has been the he finds celibacy study of my life, however, to learn to be able to live alone: & I find the use of that study still more & more as that life advances."

A change was taking place in Whitehead's religious views. In his early days he held to the orthodox Christian view, but later in life he accepted deistic beliefs. Whitehead's mother had "impressed upon her son that early sense of a God and a providence, which he retained through life." The concept of duty was strongly engraved in his mind. In "Verses to His Mother" Whitehead confessed his faith in a heaven. During his early years he held to the essence of orthodox Christianity. The Essay on Ridicule (1743) pictured the parish priest as he presented "the GOD" in various manifestations in nature and then proceeded to point "th' instructed Soul" to "a dying Saviour," and through Him, to "a Life to come." In Ann Boleyn (1743), which Bitter rightly

4. Bitter, pp. 10, 11. -41-

1

In the correspondence in The Harcourt Papers the name of one Miss Fauquier appears as one of the fre-1. quent visitors at Nuneham. Jane Georgiana, daughter of William Fauquier, of Hanover, "more or less domesticated with the Harcourts" (Edward Jerningham and His Friends. A Series of Eighteenth Century Letters. ed. Lewis Bettany. London: Chatto & Windus, 1919. p. 87 fn.), married on "May 25th, 1876, as his second wife, the 2nd Baron Vernon, Countess Harcourt's half-brother" (Ibid.).

The Harcourt Papers, VII, 301. Mason, p. 46. 2.

^{3.}

claims contains biographical material, Ann oried out her faith in a forgiving God:

I fear not death, yet dread the means to die. To thee, 0 God, to thee again I come; The sinner's refuge, and the wretch's home.

In these two poems, The Essay on Ridicule and Ann Boleyn, Jesus is pictured as the Savior of sinners.

This early faith changed in the course of the years. Whitehead's association with Pope and others who embraced a deistic belief was perhaps responsible for this change. "The dying Saviour" of the 1743 edition of the Essay on <u>Ridicule</u> was deleted in the 1754 edition. Whitehead felt that "'man was made for man,'" that the human being dare not run away from mankind, but will employ each power in order to gain "'some social good.'" Whitehead believed that man ought to engage actively in good works. Therefore, he rebuked the monks of a French monastery for their conception of godliness:

Temp'rance, not abstinence, in every bliss Is man's true joy, and therefore Heaven's command, The wretch who riots thanks his God amiss: Who starves, rejects the bounties of his hand. 3

Man is to enjoy life, not to run away from it. The human being must imitate the bird which

^{1. &}quot;The Enthusiast," Chalmers, 17. 220.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{3. &}quot;Elegy I. Written at the Convent of Haut Villiers in Champagne, 1754." Chalmers, 17, 227.

Must rove to glean his scanty fare From field to field, from tree to tree, Yet, bound by fate, by instinct wise, He hails with songs the rising morn, And, pleas'd with evening's cool return, He sings himself to rest. 1

The person who would lead a full life, he wrote to Mason, must fill "some stated void,"

Nor till the toilsome day is o'er Expect the night of peace. 2

The year Whitehead assumed the laureateship he stressed this idea of duty in his <u>Verses to the English</u> <u>People</u> (1758) in order to rouse his countrymen to deeds of bravery. England was in a critical state. She was embroiled in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), allied with Prussia and Hanover against Austria, Russia, France, Saxony, and Sweden. Pitt had been called to power in November, 1756, and, as he took office, had said, "I want to call England out of that enervate state in which 20,000 men from France can shake her." Minorca had fallen to the French fleet, thanks to the poor judgment of Byng. In India Clive had avenged the ghastly outrage of the massacre of the British in Calcutta in the so-called "Black Hole." On the continent Frederick was gradually turning the tables

^{1. &}quot;To Mr. Mason." Chalmers, 17, 225.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{3.} Advertised for the first time in the February 11, 1758 edition of The Daily Advertiser. A second edition was advertised in the February 28, 1758 edition of the same paper.

against his enemies. In America the expeditions raised to destroy French rule were not to gain full momentum until 1759. Whitehead's 1758 <u>Verses</u> called upon the Britons, "the monarchs of our wooden walls," and the "poetic guard," to be ready for deeds of death.

During his laureateship Whitehead did not forget his first teacher, Pope. Pope's influence is to be seen in the closed couplets of his A Charge to the Poets, Quasi ex Cathedra loquitur (1762), which Coleridge considered "perhaps the best, and certainly the most interesting of" Whitehead's works. In original fashion Whitehead humorously pictures himself as a bishop addressing the inferior clergy, and urging them to "keep the peace," but to avoid "the sons of fire." Mason thought that "the idea was new, pregnant with grave humour." He considered the execution so successful "that even the Egotisms, necessary to the subject, are among the most pleasing parts of the whole poem." But, "notwithstanding this liberal turn of the piece, its publication brought upon him the vindictive resentment of a young poet," Charles Churchill, who had become famous by his The Rosciad (1761), a satire on contemporary actors.

When Whitehead showed the manuscript of the <u>Charge</u> to Mason, the biographer pointed out certain lines which might cause trouble from "a certain junto of wits of the

1.	Samuel Taylor Coleridg	ge, Biogr	aphia Liter	Literaria: or,		
	Biographical Sketches			and Opinions	;	
	and Two Lay Sermons.	London:	George Be.	ll and Son,		
	1894. p. 108.					
2.	Mason, p. 106.					
3.	Ibid., p. 107.					

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Whitehead smiled in reply. Mason warned again, time." but to no avail. His suspicions were confirmed. Churchill. "The Son of Fire," attacked Whitehead violently and acrimoniously in what Mason calls "those hasty productions with which he glutted the town."

Churchill selected Whitehead as king of Dunces to succeed Colley Cibber, Pope's choice in the Duncied. What Churchill lacked of Pope's skill, he supplied with violent invective. In The Prophecy of Famine (1763) Churchill termed Whitehead "Dull and unvaried."

Folly's chief friend, Decorum's eldest son. In every party found, and yet of none. 3 Continuing the attack in The Ghost (1762-3) he called Whitehead, upon whose "placid" brow the blasted "regal laurel" rested, the "darling son" of "Dulness and Method."

Churchill found Whitehead in the laureate chair

By grace, not merit, planted there, In awkward pomp is seen to sit, And by his patent proves his wit; For favours of the great, we know. Can wit as well as rank bestow; 6

Whitehead's School for Lovers Churchill considered "A heap of words together." He had nothing but contempt

^{1.} Mason, pp. 107-108.

Ibid., p. 109. 2.

The Prophecy of Famine (1763), 11. 257, 258. The Ghost (1762-3), Book II, 11. 537, 538. 3.

^{4.}

Ibid., Book III, 11. 93, 94. Ibid., 11. 106-110. 5.

^{6.}

Ibid., 1. 151. 7.

for the "silent and soft" Whitehead, who put Fontenelle to sleep in The School for Lovers. He viewed Whitehead as afraid of Satire.

Good-natured, easy creature, mild And gentle as a new-born child. Thy heart would never once admit E'en wholesome rigour to thy wit; Thy head, if Conscience should comply, Its kind assistance would deny, And lend thee neither force nor art To drive it onward to the heart. 2

He considered Whitehead's thoughts "trite" and his lines "moral" and "dull." The Odes he would wash down with a draught of "cool Castalian beverage." He saw

. . . the laurel worn By poets in old time, but destined now, In grief, to wither on a Whitehead's brow. 5

In Independence. Churchill included Whitehead among the "little, piddling witlings"

Who all in raptures their own works rehearse, And drawl out measured prose, which they call verse.

Whitehead, in speaking of Churchill's attacks, wrote to Lord Harcourt:

Churchill, I find, has been attacking me vehemently. I suppose he takes some part of the charge to himself, & does not feel the satire quite so pointless as he affects to call it. But peace be with him; a violent adversary, who says anything of anybody, is not a very dangerous one.

- 2.
- 3.

- 6.
- 7.

^{1.}

The Journey (published posthumously), 1. 108. The Ghost, Book III, 11. 167-174. Ibid., 11. 179, 180. Ibid., Book IV, 11. 744, 749. cf. also 11. 1569-1572. Gotham (1764), Book I, 11. 288-290. Independence (1763), 1. 292. The Harcourt Papers, VII, 239. 4. 5.

Whitehead had given the precept: "Keep the peace." He could not retaliate. Such a procedure would have l been "abhorrent to his natural temper."

To Churchill's attacks Whitehead wrote a reply, but it was not printed until after his death. "A Fragment of Verses on Churchill," included by Mason in the <u>Memoirs</u>, revealed his estimate of the author of <u>The</u> Ghost.

Ten years after the death of Churchill, Whitehead published two volumes of poetical works (1774). He advertised that he would not have published his pieces, if he "had not imagined that his Character, as Laureat, obliged him, in some measure, to revise and correct them." In his collection Whitehead included a number of pieces hitherto not published: "The Dog: A Tale," "To Mr. Mason," "Song of Ranelagh," "The Double Conquest, a Song," and "An Epitaph in Westminster-Abbey To the Memory of Mrs. Pritchard." Mrs. Pritchard, who had been a famous actress in Garrick's company and who had acted

- 1. The Works of the British Poets with Prefaces Biographical and Critical. ed. Robert Anderson.
- 13 vols. London: J. & A. Arch, 1795. XI, 897.
 2. The difference between Whitehead and Churchill can be seen in a letter of John Wilkes, March 25, 1763, in which he compares Whitehead with the "son of thunder":

"In a week I had made you as tame as Will Whitehead, tho' not quite so decent." George Nobbe, The North Briton. A Study in Political Propaganda. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939.

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^{3.} Cf. ch. 2, p. 75.

the parts of Horatia and Creusa in Whitehead's tragedies, died in 1768. Whitehead complimented her for her artistic acting. He also manifested again his strong moral bent:

Oft, on the scene, with colours not her own, She painted vice, and taught us what to shun: One virtuous track her real life pursued, That nobler part was uniformly good, Each duty there to such perfection wrought, That, if the precepts fail'd, th' example taught. 1

Whitehead did not end his poetical career with the 1774 edition of his works. Besides the usual odes, he wrote two longer poems, one of which drew upon him further abuse. In <u>The St. James's Chronicle</u>, or <u>British</u> <u>Evening Post</u>, from Saturday, February 24, to Tuesday, February 27, 1776, the following appeared:

> This day was published. Price 1s. VARIETY. A tale for Married People. Printed for J. Dodsley, in Pall-Mall; and sold by J. Wilkie, St. Paul's Church-Yard.

In its day <u>Variety</u> enjoyed popular acclaim. It speedily ran through five editions. A later poem, <u>The Gcat's</u> <u>Beard</u> (1777), which humorously attacked women for trespassing on the rights of men, provoked attacks which 2 continued even after Whitehead's death.

^{1.} Plays and Poems (1774), II, 238.

^{2.} For details of this poem and the attack see chap. 2, pp. 97-103.

During the time of his laureateship Whitehead's interest in the theatre turned from the writing of tragedy to that of comedy. His <u>The School for Lovers</u>, which had been finished for some time, appeared at Drury Lane, February 10, 1762, and within the space of a month was presented thirteen times.

When Garrick was asked why he did not "bring out 2 the new play sconer," the producer told Mrs. Palmer that "it would have shown too strongly the similitude 3 between 'The Guardian' and 'The School for Levers."

Whitehead's other comedy, <u>A Trip to Scotland</u> (1770), was presented six years after the death of Churchill (1764). No doubt Churchill's death made Whitehead's relationship with Garrick more tranquil and influenced him to return to the writing of drama. Whitehead wrote: "I shall write plays again whether I will or not." One result of this resolution was his farce, <u>A Trip to</u> <u>Scotland</u> (1770), which Garrick insisted be presented without mentioning the name of the author. Churchill's

- 2. The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, I, 139.
- 3. A play by Garrick, it opened on February 3, 1759, at Drury Lane.
- 4. The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, I, 139, 140. The Guardian was presented a total of seventeen times from February 3 to May 31, 1759, three times in 1759-60, and once on November 23, 1761.

6. The Harcourt Papers, VII (Aug. 22, 1765), 253.

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^{1.} To be discussed in Chapter VI.

^{5. &}lt;u>V. supra</u>, pp. 44-47.

<u>Ghost</u> was still haunting Whitehead. Nevertheless, the <u>Trip</u> was given seventeen times the first season.

In addition to the four dramas which had been presented on the stage, whitehead had prepared other dramatic material. Among the manuscripts left behind by whitehead, Mason found a tragedy, which "may be called dol mestic," probably after the order of George Lillo's <u>George</u> <u>Barnwell</u> (1731). It had been offered to Garrick, but the producer

did not venture to bring it on the stage, and those who know Mr. Garrick's timid temper, will easily believe that the fear of a party being raised against it by Churchill and his friends, might prompt him to behave as he did on the occasion. 2

Mason says that a gentleman had a copy of this tragedy in his possession and was waiting for "some favourable moment" for its presentation. Mason found in addition to this completed drama

the first act of an OEdipus; the beginning and an imperfect plan of a tragedy founded

^{1.} Mason, p. 120.

^{2.} Ibid., pp. 120, 121.

 <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 121. I have found no trace of this tragedy.
 Mason added four acts to the one act of the <u>OEdipus</u> of Whitehead and privately printed the drama at York in 1765. Robert Davies, <u>A Memoir of The York Press</u>. Westminster: Nichols and Sons, 1868. p. 304 fn.

on the historical fact of King Edward the Second's resignation of his crown to his son; and also of another, composed of Spanish and Moorish characters. 1

It is impossible to find out from Mason or the Whitehead-Garrick correspondence which of these fragments is referred to when Whitehead writes to Garrick:

It was not in my power to show you my play again before I left London. I had but just time enough to put it into Dr. Hurd's hands, and to talk it over with him. He is a very favourable judge, and was so much struck with the conduct as to be almost blind to its other imperfections. I mentioned every objection you had made, and some of them we tried to remove, but always found that every alteration hurt the mechanism of the whole, and agreed at last, that it must stand or fall as it is. I have, however, softened some parts a little, and thrown in lines here and there, to make it clearer to the audience at a first hearing. 2

This letter was written September 3, 1775. On January 5, 1776, Whitehead wrote to Garrick about the possible success of a play of Whitehead's. One wonders if this play is the one referred to in the letter of September 3, 1775. In this letter of January 5, 1776, Whitehead shows his relationship towards Garrick:

I am most extremely obliged to you for your letter: the only motive of mine was that we might end the affair explicitly and amicably. It would have given me very little satisfaction to have brought on a play under your direction, which you trembled for the success of. Your apprehensions would have awakened mine; and the whole time of the getting up, and the representation, would have been an humiliating scene of anxiety which I should not wish to go through.

^{1.} Mason, pp. 122-124.

^{2.} The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, II, 90-91.

My obligations to you will certainly not admit of any coldness on my side, and I hope the regard you so obligingly express for me will still continue. 1

A little over a month later Dr. J. Hoadly wrote a 2 letter to Garrick in which "a comedy" is mentioned, but its name is not given:

I hear the Poet Laureat has lately offered you a comedy, which you have refused. I suppose, duller as he grows older. I hear it had great merit, but you did not care to hazard it; particularly objecting to a character as unnatural, of a man who marries for love, and afterwards wants to get rid of his wife. 3

Meanwhile, Whitehead's relations with the Jersey family were changing. In 1762 the Countess of Jersey died; in 1769 the Earl also died. Whitehead secured from the new Earl an "unwilling permission" to move to private lodgings, but with the proviso that he should choose a house near the Earl's and should consider himself a "daily-invited guest" to the Jersey table. The Lady whom the Earl soon married furthered the friendship. She appreciated Whitehead's worth and relished his society. When in 1774 the Countess of Jersey was about to give birth to a child, she

The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, II, 123.
 Ibid., 139. Bitter mistakenly assumes that Hoadly is talking about "ein bürgerliches Trauerspiel." p. 97.
 The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, II, 139.
 Mason, p. 114.
 Ibid.

sent for me to sit with her; & I read to her the greater part of the evening. The first news I heard this morning was that she was brought to bed at five o'clock of another little girl. 1

Even though Whitehead had his own lodgings in Charlesstreet, Grosvenor Square after 1769, he was always a welcome guest at the Jersey home.

Whitehead died at his lodgings on April 14, 1785. Mason describes his end as "'sudden and without a groan. !" He was laid to rest in South Audley-street chapel by his friend and executor, General Stephens.

In his rise from sizer to laureate, Whitehead, though not wealthy, was never in want, "not affluent, but at ease." He was made the butt of numerous attacks to which, because of his peaceful spirit, he aid not reply in print. His life, fairly unexciting, except for the attacks caused by two of his poems, could be termed the life of a gentleman. Not given to extremes, but devoted to whatever task he assumed, Whitehead honestly endeavored to perform his labors conscientiously. Though no clergyman, he preached

^{1.}

The Harcourt Papers, VII, 319. Garrick died in 1779. Thirty-three mourning coaches, 2. drawn by six horses each, composed the procession to Westminster Abbey. William Whitehead was one of the occupants of coach 29. The Life and Death of David Garrick, Esq. The celebrated English Roscius. By an By an Old Comedian. London: 1779.

^{3.} Mason, p. 125.

^{4.} A Charge to the Poets, Chalmers, 17, 232.

duty and practiced duty. Whitehead deserves respect for being able to be at home with men of wealth and rank and to maintain his dignity through day-by-day association with the nobility, even though he himself was a sizer and a baker's son. His four plays established him as a dramatist of importance in his age. The odes, which will be considered further in Chapter Three, were superior to those of his predecessor, Colley Cibber, even though they were not such as to enhance greatly his poetical reputation. His other poetry increased his reputation to such an extent that he was classed among the leading writers of his time.

CHAPTER TWO

POEMS

I. The Poet's Choice

Although it is generally recognized that Whitehead's literary sympathies and practice were predominantly neo-classic, it must not be assumed that his poetry shows no romantic tendencies. A detailed consideration of his work will reveal influences other than those of Pope, and will show that, although much of his poetry was neo-classic in theme and form, there are occasional traces of romanticism.

Perhaps more explicitly than in any other poem, Whitehead reveals his full awareness of the rivalry between the old and the new, between reason and enthusiasm, between neo-classicism and romanticism, in "The Enthusiast," found in <u>Poems on Several Occasions</u> (1754). In the opening stanzas of the poem Whitehead pictures himself as an enthusiast:

Once, I remember well the day, 'Twas ere the blooming sweets of May Had lost their freshest hues, When every flower on every hill, In every vale, had drank its fill Of sun-shine, and of dews. 'Twas then beside a green-wood shade Which cloth'd a lawn's aspiring head I wove my devicus way, With loitering steps, regardless where, So soft, so genial was the air, So wond'rous bright the day.

With no hint of preaching or moralizing the poet's eyes rove with transport over "the blue expanse" and "a full brim'd river." He stops, he gazes, and "th' unbidden lay" bursts forth. Here in the midst of "serenest Solitude" there is no room for the "vile world," not even for the gay. Away from "the busy," "the learn'd, the wise," "divine Philosophy" reigns supreme. Contemplation views "Nature's charms and in these charms "Nature's God." "A philosophic calmness" steals over the enthusiast, and in his heart reigns "a Stoic stillness." The l passions of "fear, anger, shame," which move the bosom to correct the world, are gone; in their stead he seems to feel, in lines that are almost Wordsworthian.

A kind of visionary zeal Of universal love.

Thus far Whitehead is the romanticist: he has turned his back on the world, he has gone forth into the fields

^{1.} Addison has the same sentiment bout Stoic philosophers in The Spectator, No. 397: "As the Stoic philosophers discard all passions in general, they will not allow a wise man so much as to pity the afflictions of another. 'If thou seest thy friend in trouble (says Epictetus), thou mayest put on a look of sorrow, and condole with him, but take care that thy sorrow be not real.'"

of Nature and found in Solitude the only real joys. The romanticist is speaking in "accents which convey with singular force all the rapture of solitude and l of natural scenery."

But he is not to remain long in the enjoyment of Solitude; reason whispers "monitory strains" in his ear and reminds him that the "Almighty Power," who has fixed every movement of man's soul, also "bids the tyrant passions rage." How can he dare to withdraw from the world!

"Art thou not man? and dar'st thou find A bliss which leans not to mankind? Presumptuous thought, and vain! Each bliss unshar'd is unenjoy'd, Each power is weak, unless employ'd Some social good to gain.

What can be compared with the "exalted joys" felt by active virtue? The external things of nature, as "light, and shade, and warmth, and air?" By no means! For active virtue

. . drags, as lawful prize, Contempt, and indolence, and vice, At her triumphant wheels.

"Virtue's glorious deeds" serve as "life's refreshing springs," which "soothe him on his way." The enthusiast

^{1.} Emile Legouis & Louis Cazamian, <u>A History of English</u> <u>Literature</u>, 2 vols. vol. 2. <u>Modern Times</u>, by Louis Cazamian. Tr. by W. D. MacInnes and the Author. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1927. II, 143.

is commanded to unstring his lyre, for in solitude there is none to admire his song, and man with his bliss and excellence, wants and weaknesses, must find out "That man was made for man." Truly a Popean close! Whitehead, aware of the existence of conflicting ideas of romanticism and neo-classicism, made his l

1. Fourteen years before Whitehead's "The Enthusiast" appeared, Joseph Warton had written a poem by the same name, "a polemic on the superiority of nature to art" (Raymond Dexter Havens, <u>The Influence of</u> <u>Milton on English Poetry</u>. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1922, p. 243). Warton's "Enthusiast," however, was not recalled by reason:

> Creative Titian, can thy vivid strokes, Or thine, O graceful Raphael, dare to vie With the rich tints that paint the breathing mead? The thousand-colour'd tulip, violet's bell Snow-clad and meek, the vermil-tinctur'd rose, And golden crocus?--Yet with these the maid, Phillis or Phoebe, at a feast or wake Her jetty locks enamels; fairer she, In innocence and homespun vestments dress'd, Than if cerulean sapphires at her ears Shone pendant, or a precious diamond-cross Heav'd gently on her panting bosom white.

What are the lays of artful Addison, Coldly correct, to Shakespear's warblings wild? (Chalmers, 18, 160-1.)

II. The Influence of Pope

During his days at Cambridge Whitehead had the pleasure of seeing two of his poems, both in heroic couplets, inserted in the <u>University Gratulations</u> (1736 and 1738). The first, to celebrate the marriage of George's son, struck what was always to be one of Whitehead's major themes, patriotism. The house of Hanover at that time found itself in a very shaky condition. In 1745 Scotland was to rise against England in an effort to put the Stuart pretender, Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie), on the English throne. Despite the fact that the Hanoverian dynasty

1. Cf. p. 5.

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had been in power for more than twenty years there was still a widespread, sentimental attachment to the house of Stuart. In his poen Whitehead urged that party strife be forgotten and called for a spirit of unity:

Thus, in herself secure, shall Albion rise, And the vain power of future fate despise. See willing worlds beneath her scepter bend, And to the verge of Time her fame extend. 1

These rather puerile verses are clearly imitations of Pope. Although Whitehead included them in his 1754 collection, he judiciously expunged them from his 1774 edition.

Whitehead's first significant poem under Pope's influence, <u>The Danger of Writing Verse</u> (1741), which Shen-2 stone recommended as "a very good thing" and "poetical," gives various reasons why appearing in print is fraught with danger. Whitehead fears that the first rebuff would result in having all arts barred to him "for having fail'd in one." Once before the public, the poet must learn to bear

Flatt'ry's full beam, detractions's wintry store, The frowns of fortune, or the pride of pow'r. Whatever the poet does will be dissected and closely scrutinized. False motives will be imputed to him. But

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Poems on Several Occasions with The Roman Father, A Tragedy. London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1754, p. 131.
 The Letters of William Shenstone. ed. Marjorie Williams. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939. p. 18.

the poets are to blame for some of their disappointments; they have the obsession that everyone must like their wit, and that the business of the world must come to a halt in order to hear the commands of their pen. Whitehead regrets that "on parties now our fame depends." "Keen invective," to which Whitehead was still a stranger, but which he was to feel most severely in later life, is stamped on the literature of the age. He yearns for the days of Greece and Rome, when the poet enjoyed his "native freedom." While patrons must always be at hand to help struggling poets, Whitehead would have the poet think "Of living labours and a deathless name." Those who enjoy the patronage of the great too often deserve their fate; they indulge in "every vice with every lord."

Whitehead's insistence on the moral purpose of literature is clearly manifest:

He, only he, should haunt the Muse's grove, Whom youth might rev'rence and grey hairs approve; Whose Heav'n-taught numbers, now, in thunder roll'd, Might rouse the virtuous and appal the bold; Now, to truth's dictates lend the grace of ease, And teach instruction happier arts to please.

Whitehead rebukes the writers of immoral literature, who have submitted to vice's rule, who with their dangerous verse and sensual lure wound the heart of the young. Since he sees such great and manifold dangers, Whitehead

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will "Catch the first gale, and make the nearest shore," where "In sacred silence" he would join those who live in "humble peace and sweet contentment."

Earlier in the century (1716) Pope had expressed the same fears about writing verse:

I believe, if any one, early in his life, should contemplate the dangerous fate of authors, he would scarce be of their number on any consideration. The life of a Wit is a warfare upon earth; and the present spirit of the learned world is such, that to attempt to serve it (any way) one must have the constancy of a martyr, and a resolution to suffer for its sake. 1

Joseph Warton recognized the fact that Whitehead was adapting ideas of Pope in this poem:

This fate and these dangers have been the subject of an ingenious epistle by the amiable Mr. Whitehead. The danger of writing Verse, one of the happiest imitations of our Author's didactic manner; in which are many particulars suggested or borrowed from this preface. 2

Whitehead's basic neo-classicism is revealed in his insistence that although fancy is important in poetry, reason should hold the romantic urge in check:

'Tis powerful reason holds the straiten'd rein, While flutt'ring fancy to the distant plain Sends a long look, and spreads her wings in vain.

Viewing the dangers in writing verse, Whitehead decided that he would

2. <u>Ibid.</u>, I, 6 fn.

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^{1.} The Works of Alexander Pope. In Verse and Prose. 10 vols. London: 1806. The Author's Preface. 1, 6.

In sacred silence join th' inglorious train, Where humble peace and sweet contentment reign; If not thy precepts, thy example own, And steal through life not useless, though unknown.

1

But he did not cease writing. Two years later he 2 published three poems, all in heroic couplets. In <u>An</u> <u>Essay On Ridicule</u>, Whitehead asserted that ridicule in literature may go too far, and he set limitations on the objects which are proper matter for satire. He rejected Shaftesbury's

. . . mirth's the test of sense;

Th' enchanted touch, which fraud and falsehood fear, as being too dangerous, but made obvious use of Fielding's discussion of ridicule in <u>Joseph Andrews</u>, which had been published the year before. In <u>Joseph Andrews</u>, Fielding considered affectation "the only source of the true Ridiculous." "Affectation proceeds from one of these two causes, vanity or hypocrisy," said Fielding. Whitehead paraphrased Fielding's ideas:

But affectation--there, we all confess, Strong are the motives, and the danger less. Sure we may smile where fools themselves have made, As balk'd spectators of a farce ill play'd,

4. Ibid.

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 [&]quot;The Danger of Writing Verse," Chalmers, 17, 201.
 An Essay on Ridicule, Feb., 1943; Ann Boleyn to Henry the Eighth, May, 1743; Atys and Adrastus, Dec., 1743.

Henry Fielding, The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews and His Friend Mr. Abraham Adams. London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1932. Preface p. 5.

And laugh, if satire's breath should rudely raise The painted plumes which vanity displays.

O fruitful source of everlasting mirth: For fools, like apes, are mimics from their birth. By fashion govern'd, Nature each neglects, And barters graces for admir'd defects. The artful hypocrites, who virtue wear, Confess, at least, the sacred form is fair;

Whitehead followed Fielding in his rejection of "ugliness, infirmity, or poverty" as objects of satire:

Resign we freely to th' unthinking crowd Their standing jest, which swells the laugh so loud, The mountain back, or head advanc'd too high, A leg misshappen, or distorted eye:

Whitehead also held that it was dangerous for satire 2 to sport with crimes. Like Fielding, he felt that crimes should attract detestation rather than ridicule:

'Tis dangerous too, in these licentious times, Howe'er severe the smile, to sport with crimes. Vices when ridicul'd, experience says. First lose that horrour which they ought to raise, Grow by degrees approv'd, and almost aim at praise. When Tully's tongue the Roman Clodius draws, How laughing satire weakens Milo's cause! Each pictur'd vice so impudently bad, The crimes turn frolics, and the villain mad; Rapes, murders, incest, treasons, mirth create, And Rome scarce hates the author of her fate.

However, satire must be very careful, for

.

Men's faults, like Martin's broider'd coat, demand The nicest touches of the steadiest hand.

1.	Henry Fielding,	Joseph	Andrews,	Proface.	p. 6.
2.	Ibid., p. 7.		server in a state of the second state of the s		•
3.	Cf. The Tale of	a Tub,	Section	the Second	. The
	Works of Jonatha	n Swift	b. D.D.	and Deen c	A QA
	Patrick's, Dubli	n. Wi	th copiou	s notes an	d addi-
	tions, and a Mem	oir of	the auth	or. by The	mas
	Roscoe. 6 vols.	New 1	lork: De	rby & Jack	son.
	II, 288 ff.				

Truth also must be treated fairly. The great danger to Truth comes from "sly fraud" and "close craft."

Truth, drawn like truth, must blaze divinely bright; But, drawn like errour, truth may cheat the sight. Some awkward epithet, with skill apply'd, Some specious hints, which half their meanings hide, Can right and wrong most courteously confound, Banditti like, to stun us ere they wound.

As a proper object of satirs, Whitehead mentions contemporary mathematicians in much the same way that Swift had satirized them in Book 3 of <u>Gulliver's Travels</u>. The following lines are, of course, definitely influenced by Swift:

But should your taylor, with as much of thought Erect his quadrant, ere he cuts your coat; The parchment slips with algebra o'erspread, And calculations scrawl on every shred; Art misapply'd must stare you in the face, Nor could you, grave, the long deductions trace.

Nevertheless, Whitehead had a great respect for Sir Isaac Newton:

> Let mighty Newton with an augur's hand, Through Heav'n's high concave stretch th' imperial wand.

Among the satirists who might serve as legitimate models in the art of ridicule Whitehead does not mention Addison's name, but it is obvious that Whitehead is referring to him under the pseudonym Clio:

Grave as <u>Cervantes</u>, or as <u>Lucian</u> gay. In <u>Clio's</u> number'd Prose, teach Mirth to chide, <u>Clio Britannia's</u> Censor, and her Pride: Let, like <u>Scarron's</u>, the strong Description glow, To sink at once more eminently low: With <u>Butler's</u> Drollery, <u>Garth's</u> Politeness vie, And Rabelais' Jest, without his Ribaldry:

Wear Phillips' pompous, Gay's ingenuous Stile, Arbuthnot's various, Swift's unweary'd Smile; Or His, who bids all Greece at once revive, I Shares every Art that Every Muse can give, 1 And, nobly conscious whence that influence came. To silence Envy, dares avow the Flame.

These lines were omitted in the 1754 edition of his poems, in which neither Addison's name nor Clio is mentioned. In the 1774 edition, however, Whitehead says that the gentle Addison should reign alone as the master and teacher of satire:

Then let good-nature every charm exert, And, while it mends it, win th' unfolding heart. Let moral mirth a face of triumph wear, Yet smile unconscious of th' extorted tear. See, with what grace instructive satire flows, Politely keen, in Clio's number'd prose! That great example should our zeal excite. And censors learn from Addison to write.

The second heroic couplet poem of 1743, Ann Boleyn to Henry the Eighth, is based on Addison's Spectator, No. 397, which contained a letter of Ann which had been found in the Cotton Library. Addison saw in the letter "the expostulations of a slighted lover. the resentments of an injured woman, and the sorrows of an imprisoned queon." Whitehead added incidents from the queen's life to Addison's prose account. The latter has Ann remembering the kings who were martyred in the Tower, blaming herself

^{1.} Evidently a reference to Pope and his translation of

the <u>Iliad</u> (1715-20) and <u>Odyssey</u> (1725-6). Cf. Pope, <u>Essay on Criticism</u>, II, 524: "Good-nature and good-sense must ever join." 2.

The Works of Joseph Addison. ed. Richard Hurd. 6 vols. London: George Bell and Sons, 1906. 3. III, 374.

for sharing "the guilty bed," asserting that she helped in preserving Protestantism to England, and asking Henry to look after their daughter Elizabeth. Addison's Ann prays to the "Trinity to have your Grace in his good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions." Whitehead's Ann would vanquish her too faithless lord by bringing from heaven to him in his repentance "kind forgiveness" and thus

From every pang the much-lovid suffirer free, And breathe that mercy he denies to me.

Whitehead's queen rises above her misfortunes, above Henry; even in the face of death she is supreme. Into the poem Whitehead injects a personal note--a lament for his mother's death. He reveals his hopes and respect for her:

I fear not death, yet dread the means to die. To Thee, 0 GOD, to thee again I come, The sinner's refuge, and the wretch's home.

Perhaps Whitehead thought of himself as the answer to Ann's prayer:

Perhaps some pitying bard shall save from death Our mangled fame, and teach our woes to breathe.

Pope's <u>Eloisa to Abelard</u> is obviously similar in content and manner to Whitehead's <u>Ann</u>. The latter, however, falls below the stature of the <u>Eloisa to Abelard</u>

1. The Works of Joseph Addison, III, p. 376.

(1717), which Mason calls "such a chef d'ouvre, that nothing of the kind can be relished after it." While Whitehead's attempt to imitate Pope brings upon the poem the judgment of "ein misglückter Versuch," Ann is interesting in revealing Whitehead's attempt to deal with feeling. He must be credited with an attempt, though unsuccessful, to branch out beyond the restraints of "powerful reason" and to paint the doomed queen in her anguish and sorrow of rejection.

In typically Popean couplets, Whitehead's third poem of 1743, <u>Atys and Adrastus</u>, <u>a Tale in the Manner</u> of <u>Dryden's Fables</u>, which was taken from the first book of Herodotus's <u>History</u>, narrates how Atys, the son of Croesus, encountered death at the hands of Adrastus, whom Croesus had befriended, and how this occurred in fulfilment of a dream which came to Croesus. In spite of all the cautions of the wealthy king:

• • • vainly we oppose Weak human caution, when the gods are foes; The story's sequel must too surely prove, That dreams, prophetic dreams, descend from Jove.

The reader of <u>Atys and Adrastus</u> can almost feel the futility of Croesus's attempts to ward off danger from his son and will agree that <u>Atys and Adrastus</u> would not

1. Mason, p. 35. 2. Bitter, p. 10. be out of place among Dryden's <u>Fables</u>, even though l Mason, while calling <u>Atys</u> "pleasing and pathetic," claims that Whitehead did not "with equal force" copy Dryden's narrative style.

Whitehead continued in the Popean tradition in On Nobility (1744), a verse sermon to the Earl of Ashburnham to "be virtuous and wise." Whitehead looks to the past, when worth and not birth, when talent and not the circumstance of heredity, were the deciding factors in a man's rise to fame. While the wealthy are "lull'd high in Fortune's silken lap," and feel none of the shocks or "turns of her uncertain wheel," those of humbler birth have their virtue tested. Whitehead's reference to city maids being translated to "envy'd heights" and his line "Who does not, Pamela, thy suffiring's feel?" are obvious references to Samuel Richardson's recently published Pamela, which had taken literary London by storm in 1740 and 1741. The poem's protest against favoritism may have caused Whitehead to omit it from his collected works of 1754 and 1774, although Dodsley included it in his own 1775 Collection of Poems.

Mason, p. 34.
 <u>Ibid</u>., p. 35.

Whitehead used closed couplets also in the early London period. When peace came in 1748 to conclude the War of the Austrian Succession, he wrote "On the Peace, 1748." This piece, included in the <u>Cambridge Gratula-</u> tory Verses, shows his desire for peace and his love of freedom, themes often found in his laureate odes:

But Peace returns, and o'er this smiling land The fair magician waves her olive wand. 1

Whitehead was proud of English freedom and spoke to the "lands of slaves," France and Spain, reminding them that they were pursuing "inglorious schemes":

'Tis a juster cause our arms engage Than weak Ambition, or insatiate Rage; 'Tis from a nobler source our spirits roll: Toil forms the limbs, but Liberty the soul. 2

Whitehead has some romantic touches in the lyrical "An Inscription in the Cottage of Venus," found in the 1754 edition of poems. Written in Popean couplets, the poem warns the youth with "too soft a flame" and "some unguarded dame" to fly the place, since everything "persuades to love."

See to yon oak how close the woodbine cleaves And twines around the luxury of leaves!

Venus herself would lead the youth astray by her example and influence:

1. Poems on Several Occasions, p. 136. 2. Ibid., p. 138. But Venus! self does her own rites approve In naked state, and thro! the raptur'd grove Breathes the sweet madness of excessive love. 1

Whitehead's final poem in Popean couplets, <u>A Charge</u> to the Poets, a sequel to his earlier <u>The Danger of</u> <u>Writing Verse</u> (1741), appeared in 1762. As a bishop speaking to the clergy under him, the poet laureate addresses the other poets. He himself holds his "pension'd laurel" "on the throne of modern wit" without seeking it:

Howe'er unworthily I wear the crown, Unask'd it came, and from a hand unknown.

In the <u>Charge</u> the laureate advises poets to keep peace among themselves and to leave their claims to precedence to posterity:

To you, ye guardians of the sacred fount, Deans and archdeacons of the double mount, That through our realms intestine broils may cease, My first and last advice is, "Keep the peace!" What is't to you, that half the town admire False sense, false strength, false softness, or false fire? Through Heav'n's void concave let the meteors blaze, He hurts his own, who wounds another's bays. What is 't to you, that numbers place your name First, fifth, or twentieth, in the lists of fame? Old Time will settle all your claims at once, Record the genius, and forget the dunce.

Contrasting himself by implication with those of his contemporaries who are "mistaking prejudice for taste," he states that these fail to appreciate Milton and Spenser:

1. Whitehead cast this poem into Latin.

Some hate all rhyme; some seriously deplore That Milton wants that one enchantment more. Tir'd with th' ambiguous tale, or antique phrase, O'er Spenser's happiest paintings, loveliest lays, Some heedless pass; . . .

The bishop in <u>The Charge</u> realizes the power of a certain group of people and consequently bids the poets beware

The sons of fire!--you'll know them by their marks. Fond to be heard, they always court a crowd, And, though 't is borrow'd nonsense, talk it loud. One epithet supplies their constant chime, Damn'd bad, damn'd good, damn'd low, and damn'd sublime!

He even goes so far as to say that without Garrick's interpretation, the "sons of fire" would be unable to grasp the genius of Shakespeare:

Or would ye sift more near these sons of fire, 'T is Garrick, and not Shakespeare, they admire. Without his breath, inspiring every thought, They ne'er perhaps had known what Shakespeare wrote; Without his eager, his becoming zeal, To teach them, though they scarce know why, to feel, A crude unmeaning mass had Jonson been, And a dead letter Shakespeare's noblest scene.

One could wish that Whitehead had been more specific in his estimate of contemporary poets when he says:

'Tis true, our poets in repose delight, And, wiser than their fathers, seldom write. Yet I, but I forbear for prudent ends, Could name a list, and half of them my friends, For whom posterity its wreaths shall twine, And its own bards neglect, to honour mine. 1

1. Chalmers, 17, 233.

He also prophesies the dawning of a brighter day for poetry:

I'm no enthusiast, yet with joy can trace Some gleams of sunshine for the tuneful race, If monarchs listen when the Muses woo, Attention wakes, and nations listen too. The bard grows rapturous, who was dumb before, And every fresh-plum'd eagle learns to soar! 1

He concludes the poem with the monition that poets be true to themselves:

True to yourselves, not anxious for renown, Nor court the world's applause, nor dread its frown. Guard your own breasts, and be the bulwark there To know no envy, and no malice fear. At last you'll find, thus stoic-like prepar'd, That verse and virtue are their own reward. 2

Realizing the difficulty experienced by the poets who try to support themselves by their writings, Whitehead advises them to find more lucrative occupation. Their poems should be their avocation rather than their support:

A life of writing, unless wondrous short, No wit can brave, no genius can support. Some soberer province for your business choose, Be that your helmet, and your plume the Muse. Through Fame's long rubric, down from Chaucer's time, Few fortunes have been rais'd by lofty rhyme. And, when our toils success no longer crowns, What shelter find we from a world in frowns? 3

The Monthly Review and The Critical Review both re-4 viewed the Charge favorably. The Monthly Review extolled

- 3. <u>Ibid</u>., 232.
- 4. The article was written by Ralph Griffiths, editor of the Review.

^{1.} Chalmers, 17, 234.

^{2.} Ibid.

the poet's "good sense, refined taste, and worthy heart." It commended Whitehead's "advice to shun the society of those who make a trade of scribbling" as "founded on a thorough knowledge of the dangerous fraternity," for "these people are not bad men because they are Authors, but Authors because they are bad men." Thus are born, said the Review, "our numerous catch-penny productions, -- the offsprings of indigence, -the spawn of profligacy .- or the sweepings of jails." The Critical Review hoped that the laureate's "good humour, good sense, and agreeable verse" might be able to appease "the mutual animosities of the genus irritabile vatum." While The Critical Review commended the "very judicious, fatherly, and seasonable charge," nevertheless it imagined some bard, hardly able to gain a mere subsistence on the common of Parnassus, as he shook his head and said, "'Ah, master Whitehead, how fluently a man philosophises on abstinence, when his stomach is well stored with capon and claret!"

- 2. Ibid.
- 3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 223.
- 4. <u>Ibid</u>.
- 5. The Critical Review, XIII (March, 1762), 268.
- 6. Ibid.
- 7. Ibid.
- 8. Ibid.

^{1.} The Monthly Review, XXVI (March, 1762), 222.

But the "liberal turn" of the <u>Charge</u> did not keep Charles Churchill from attacking Whitehead most vicious-1 ly. Although Whitehead could hardly reply publicly to the attacks made upon him--he had urged the poets to "Keep the peace!"--he nevertheless penned a few lines, also in heroic couplets, which show his opinion of and plans for Churchill:

So from his common-place, where Churchill strings Into some motley form his <u>damn'd</u> good things; The purple patches ev'ry where prevail, But the poor work has neither head nor tail. 2

In this "Fragment of Verses on Churchill," Whitehead says that he would like to bridle Churchill's "eccentric soul" and make it roll in "reason's sober orbit." Whitehead desired to reform his attacker, to

. . . make thy rancour cease, Preserve thy present fame and future peace, And teach thy Muse no vulgar place to find In the full moral chorus of mankind. 3

^{1.} V. supra, ch. I, pp. 44-47.

^{2.} Mason included this fragment in his Memoirs,

pp. 110-113.

^{3.} Ibid., p. 113.

III. The Influence of Spenser

Pope's influence is evident in both the content and the form of Whitehead's verse. Pope powerfully influenced Whitehead's thought and idea of what poetry should be and do. The didacticism of Pope is reflected in Whitehead; both felt that the post should be a teacher. Whitshead sometimes, as in Ann Boleyn, definitely followed a pattern that Pope had established. The influence of others was mainly on his form. In the case of Spenser, the notable borrowing lay in adaptations of the Spenserian stanza. Even on Whitehead's form the influence was not very great. He never used the actual Spenserian stanza, and he did not use Spenser's device of linking quatrains together by carrying the rhyme from one to the next. The only important device which he seems to have borrowed from Spenser is the practice of ending his stanzas with an Alexandrine.

In three of the poems in which Whitehead used an altered Spenserian stanza, the stanza has six lines, the first four and the last two of which are metrically identical with the first four and the last two lines of the Spenserian stanza. Whitehead's stanza can be

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metrically recorded thus: $a^{5}b^{5}a^{5}b^{5}c^{5}c^{6}$, as compared with Spenser's $a^{5}b^{5}a^{5}b^{5}c^{5}b^{5}c^{5}c^{6}$. In other ways Whitehead's poems are quite different from Spenser's. They have none of Spenser's conscious archaism and almost none of his pictorial vividness.

Of the five poems in altered Spenserian stanzas, none is of great importance. The first, "The Vision of Solomon. Written When at School," was mentioned in Chapter One. The two poems to Charles Townshend, which were written early in Whitehead's life, have the rhyme scheme mentioned above. This stanza, which resembles the Spenserian stanza chiefly in its use of a final Alexandrine, is one which "Whitehead seems to have inl vented." The first poem, "To the Honourable," recalls the personal association of Whitehead and Townshend. It also reveals Whitehead's estimate of his poverty and of its inability to keep him from making friends of the wealthy students:

In vain had fortune plac'd her weak barrier: Clear was thy breast from pride, and mine from servile fear.

I saw thee gen'rous, and with joy can say My education rose above my birth. Thanks to those parent shades, on whose cold clay Fall fast my tears, and lightly lie the earth! To them I owe whate'er I dare pretend Thou saw'st with partial eyes, and bade me call thee friend.

^{1.} Edward Payson Morton, "The Spenserian Stanza in the Eighteenth Century." <u>Modern Philology</u>, X (1912-13), 6.

The second poem, "On the Death of a Relation," points out that sorrow over bereavement can be overcome only after time and reason have brought some measure of consolation. Until then one who seeks to console a mourner finds that consolation

In Tully's language, and the learned pride Of wordy eloquence, . . .

vainly soothes the breast of real grief and that the mourner,

. . unfortunately wise, Will see thro! every scheme thy art can frame.

The day of sorrowing will pass when

. . . reason triumph [s] where thy counsels fail; Save when some well-known object ever dear Recalls th' untutor'd sigh, or sudden-starting tear. The power of fiction to move and to shift emotion from self to others Whitehead describes in:

Tho' oft I've known a sorrow like to theirs, In well-devised story painted strong, Cheat the fond mourners of their real cares, And draw perforce the list'ning ear along, Till powerful fiction taught the tears to flow, And more than half their grief bewail'd another's woe. 2

The fourth, "To a Gentleman, on his pitching a tent in his garden," advises against

1. Marcus Tullius Cicero.

^{2.} Chalmers, 17, 222.

• • • fright [ing] the fields With hostile scenes of imag'd war; Content still roves the blooming wilds, And fearless ease attends her there: Ahl drive not the sweet wand'rer from her seat, Nor with rude arts profane her latest best retreat. 1

For defiling the "artless grove"

Where through each hallow'd haunt the poets stray'd, And met the willing Muse, and peopled every shade, 2 a sudden vengeance shall fall upon "thy polluted taste." The garden, peopled with "each fairy form," with "Nymph, Satyr, Faun," will experience a deforming blight and

"Thus, thus the green-hair'd deities maintain Their own eternal rights, and Nature's injur'd reign." 3

The romantic element in this poem is easily discernible. It is perhaps not surprising that Gray wrote to Walpole in 1748 that he liked three of Whitehead's poems which had appeared in Dodsley's <u>A Collection of Poems in</u> <u>Three Volumes by Several Hands</u> (1748):

I like Mr. Whitehead's little poems, I mean the Ode on a tent, the Verses to Garrick, and particularly those to Charles Townshend, better than anything I had seen before of him. 4

The final poem in imitation of Spenser, "Hymn to Venus on a great variety of Roses being planted round

^{1.} Chalmers, 17, 220.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{3.} Ibid., 221.

^{4.} The Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton (1734-1771) (Toynbee), II, 92.

her cottage" (1754), laments the internal woes of England:

While there, in more fantastic streaks, The red rose mingles with the white 1 And in its name records poor Albion's woes, Albion, that oft has wept the colours of the rose!

This poem is written in an unusual rhyme scheme, $a^4b^4a^4b^4c^4d^4c^4d^4e^5e^6$. It is like the Spenserian stanza chiefly in its use of a final Alexandrine.

Whitehead thus never used the actual Spenserian stanza. Its main influence on its versification seems to have been in its suggesting his use of a final Alexandrine to conclude each stanza.

^{1. &}quot;York and Lancaster roses." The Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton (1734-1771) (Toynbee), II, fn. 125.

IV. The Influence of Gray

Whitehead followed Gray as well as Pope and Spenser in his versification. "On Friendship" follows the pattern of Gray's <u>Elegy</u>, with iambic pentameters rhyming <u>abab</u>. Whitehead defines friendship as

. . . the sacred tie Of souls unbodied, and of love refin'd.

In romantic fashion he looks back to his days at school:

In youth's soft season, when the vacant mind To each kind impulse of affection yields, When Nature's charms, and love of humankind With its own brightness every object gilds, Should two congenial bosoms haply meet, Or on the banks of Camus, hoary stream, Or where smooth Isis Elides on silver feet, Nurse of the Muses each, and each their theme, How blithe the mutual morning task they ply! How sweet the saunt'ring walk at close of day! How steal, secluded from the world's broad eye, The midnight hours insensibly away!

Probably Whitehead was thinking of the end of his friendship with Townshend, who was now a prominent statesman. Mason holds that the poem was occasioned by a rupture with the friend to whom he had earlier penned two poems. If the following lines do refer to the break with Townshend, then Whitehead is accusing himself of jealousy, even of hypocrisy:

1. Mason, p. 40.

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And yet, should either oddly soar on high, And shine distinguish'd in some sphere remov'd, The friend observes him with a jealous eye, And calls ungrateful whom he never lov'd.

The poet, however, is generous in his wishes for his former friends:

O--but I will not name you--ye kind few, With whom the morning of my life I pass'd, May every bliss, your generous bosoms knew In earlier days, attend you to the last.

So dear is friendship to Whitehead that he sings the advice:

Who knows not friendship, knows not bliss sincere. Court it, ye young; ye aged, bind it fast; Earn it, ye proud; nor think the purchase dear, Whate'er the labour, if 'tis gain'd at last. Compar'd with all th' admiring world calls great, Fame's loudest blast, ambition's noblest ends, Ev'n the last pang of social life is sweet; The pang which parts us from our weeping friends. 1

When Whitehead showed Mason the manuscript of the poem, the latter gained permission to show it to Gray, who "gave it, in point of poetry, higher commendations than ever I heard him give on a similar occasion." Gray thought the verses "natural," and the poem "the best thing he ever wrote." But he "much disapproved the general sentiment which it conveyed, for he said it would furnish the unfeeling and capricious with apologies for

4. Ibid., Letter 357.

^{1.} Probably a reference to the death of his mother.

^{2.} Mason, p. 40.

^{3.} Correspondence of Thomas Gray, Letter 359.

their defects." Gray called the poem "that Elegy against Friendship" and "Satyr on Friendship," and termed the sense "detestable." Mason took the liberty to repeat Gray's criticism to Whitehead, "who, in consequence, made a considerable addition to the concluding part of the piece." Gray "continued unsatisfied."

It is difficult to ascertain what Gray found "detestable," unless it be the idea that license is given for the abrupt sundering of friendships. But the concluding portion of the poem reaches such a height of fervor that whatever examples of ruptured friendships are mentioned, they are forgotten in the idealistic close.

The Elegies of the Grand Tour also follow the verse pattern of Gray's Elegy, but there is in them. as there is in "On Friendship," a decided difference of tone. Gray's Elegy does not possess the optimism of Whitehead's Elegies. True it is that in the first elegy Whitehead views

O dire effects of war! the time has been When desolation vaunted here her reign; One ravag'd desert was yon beauteous scenes, And Marne ran purple to the frighted Seine.

^{1.} Mason, p. 40.

Correspondence of Thomas Gray, Letter 357. Ibid., Letter 359. 2.

^{3.}

Ibid., Letter 357. 4.

Mason, pp. 40-41. 5.

^{6.} Ibid., p. 41.

But Whitehead goes on to say those days are past. Now the vineyard is clustered, and golden the field. Nature with an ample volume opens up before the inhabitant of the convent. Man is invited to enjoy the bounties of the field:

Look forth, and be convincid, Yon prospects wide To reason's ear how forcibly they speak; Comparid with those how dull is letterid pride, And Austin's babbling eloquence how weak!

Temp'rance, not abstinence, in every bliss Is man's true joy, and therefore Heaven's command. The wretch who riots thanks his God amiss: Who starves, rejects the bounties of his hand.

While the verse is Gray's in form, the content is Pope's, neo-classical, with its insistence upon the <u>via media</u> and the avoidance of extremes.

The influence of Gray upon Whitehead as to content is largely limited to one poem, probably the last poem Whitehead wrote, exclusive of his odes. Whitehead's "The Battle of Argoed Llwyfain," inserted in Jones's <u>2</u> <u>Historical Account of the Welch Bards</u> (1784), is a "translation of a Poem of Taliessin, King of the Bards, and is a description of the battle of Argoed Llwyfain, fought about the year 548, by Godden, a King of North

^{1.} Augustine (345-430), bishop of Hippo, author of De Civitate Dei.

^{2.} Jones introduced the poem: "'I am indebted to the obliging disposition and undiminished powers of Mr. Whitehead, for the following faithful and animated versification of this valuable antique.'" Mason, p. 84 (Part II).

Britain, and Urien Reged, King of Cumbria, against Fflamdwyn, a Saxon General, supposed to be Ida, King 1 of Northumberland." Gray had evidenced his interest in Welsh lore by his "The Bard" (1757). Possibly Thomas Warton, too, might be considered as a factor in influencing Whitehead's use of Welsh material, for Warton's "Ode XIII. The Grave of King Arthur" (1777) had preceded Whitehead's "Battle."

In "The Battle of Argoed Llwyfain," one of Whitehead's favorite themes reappears. When the enemy called for surrender, the answer, no doubt, appealed to Whitehead's patriotism:

"Shall Goel's issue pledges give To the insulting foe, and live? Never such be Britons' shame, Never, till this mangled frame Like some vanquish'd lion lie, Drench'd in blood, and bleeding die."

Probably Whitehead was thinking of his own <u>Verses</u> to the <u>English People</u>, as he wrote the words:

These are Taliessin's rhymes, These shall live to distant times, And the bard's prophetic rage Animate a future age.

Dr. Burney, in a review of Mason's <u>Memoirs</u>, speaks highly of "The Battle," and terms Whitehead's version "wild, spirited, and characteristic."

1. Mason, p. 84.

2. The Monthly Review, LXXVIII (1788), 181.

V. The Influence of Milton

Milton also exercised an appreciable effect on Whitehead, largely, as in the case of Spenser and Gray, on his verse forms.

The blank verse of <u>Paradise Lost</u> and the octosyllabic couplets of <u>Il Penseroso</u> and <u>L'Allegro</u> were employed by Whitehead in a considerable number of poems. In his <u>Charge</u> (1762), he referred to the two tastes of the eighteenth century; some, he says, preferred rhyme, others preferred blank verse:

Some hate all rhyme; some seriously deplore That Milton wants that one enchantment more.

Thomson and Young employed blank verse in their <u>magna</u> <u>opera, The Seasons and Night Thoughts</u>, respectively. The Wartons, father and two sons, were enthusiastic about Milton and admired <u>Paradiso Lost</u>, but made slight use of blank verse. Although the sum total of their blank verse amounts to but a few hundred lines, each employed the form in his most important poem, Joseph Warton in <u>The Enthusiast</u>, or the Lover of Nature (1740), and Thomas in <u>The Pleasures of Melancholy</u>.

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^{1.} Cf. Raymond Dexter Havens, The Influence of Milton on English Poetry.

Whitehead's first attempt at blank verse, "New Night Thoughts on Death, a Parody" (1747), mimicked Young's <u>Night Thoughts</u>. In this "very amusing takeoff on Young's style and content" Whitehead "shortly but clearly parodied" the "choppy lines, weak sentiment, and false phraseology" of Young's work. Not only is Young expressly mentioned, but Young's charac-4

Whitehead thus parodied Young's habit of hunting a simile to death:

The grave's a privy; life the alley green Directing there--where 'chance on either side A sweet-briar hedge, or shrubs of brighter hue, Amuse us, and their treach'rous sweets dispense, Death chases Life, and stops it ere it reach The topmost round of Fortune's restless wheel. Wheelt Life's a wheel, and each man is the ass That turns it round, receiving in the end But water, or rank thistles, for his pains!

Whitehead works the simile to such an extent that it goes from the sublime to the ridiculous:

 Richmond P. Bond, <u>English Burlesque Poetry</u>. <u>1700-</u> <u>1750</u>. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932. p. 438.

- 3. Ibid.
- 4. "Lorenzo," in Night Thoughts, was "the Duke of Wharton, a profligate spendthrift and freethinking nobleman of considerable talent, whom Pope called 'the scorn and wonder of our days.' From 1717 to 1719 Young was associated with him in a kind of secretarial capacity" (English Literature, 1650-1800. ed. John C. Mendenhall. Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1940). p. 1095.

^{2.} Ibid.

Death's a dark-lanthorn, life a candle's-end Stuck on a save-all, soon to end in stink.

One of the most prominent of Young's pet devices is his continual use of antithesis. Whitehead shows his power of mimickry:

A life of labour is a life of ease; Pain gives true joy, and want is luxury. Is the bachelor Whitehead exulting in his bachelorhood when he writes:

The females fly me--and my very wife, Poor woman! knows me not!-----

"The Sweepers," his second blank verse poem, was profoundly influenced by "The Splendid Shilling" (1701) of John Philips, who himself had consciously imitated the Miltonic style. Whitehead urges them not to despise their low and often unknown origin; immortal herces have of old sprung from the stolen embrace. "The Splendid Shilling" considered as happy the person who was able to keep himself alive with his small amount of money, for a man without money was at the mercy of hunger, thirst, cold, and prison. "The Sweepers," which Harder calls "the first story" of "numerous short stories" about "the victims of seduction, who were forced to a life of prostitution," warns the sweepers

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^{1.} Johannes Hendrick Harder, <u>Observations on some Tendencies of Sentiment and Ethics Chiefly in Minor Poetry and Essay in the Eighteenth Century until the Execution of Dr. W. Dodd in 1777. Amsterdam: M. J. Portielje, 1933. p. 260.</u>

to preserve their moral integrity and to beware of seduction from

Great lords of counties, mighty men of war, And well-dress'd courtiers, who with leering eye Can in the face begrim'd with dirt discern Strange charms, and pant for Cynthia in a cloud. In order to illustrate his point, Whitehead tells the story of Lardella, who was seduced with powerful gold, cast aside by her indifferent and fickle lover, and, in falling deeper and deeper into anguish, finally cursed

Her proud betrayer, curs'd her fatal charms, And perish'd in the streets from whence she sprung.

In his only serious effort in blank verse, <u>An Hymn</u> to the Nymph of Bristol Spring (1751), Whitehead imitated Akenside's <u>Hymn to the Naiads</u>, which itself had been influenced by Milton. Akenside's poem, written in 1746 and published in 1758 in Dodsley's <u>Collection of Poems</u>, tells how the "blue-eyed progeny of Thames" produce the brooks and the breezes, and grant health:

To crown his [Vertumnus's] feast, O Naiads, you the fair Hygeia calls; and from your shelving seats, And groves of poplar, plenteous cups ye bring, To slake his veins; till soon a purer tide Flows down those loaded channels; washeth off The dregs of luxury, the lurking seeds Of crude disease; and through the abodes of life Sends vigour, sends repose. Hail, Naiads, hail, Who give, to labour, health; to stooping age, The joys which youth had squander'd. 2

^{1.} Raymond Dexter Havens, The Influence of Milton on English Poetry, p. 392.

^{2.} The Poetical Works of Mark Akenside. ed. Rev. George Gilfillan. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1857. p. 243.

Pain as well as inauspicious care flies from those who drink of the waters with their "seeds metallic and the lemental salts." Whitehead had seen Akenside's poem in manuscript, and modelled his <u>Hymn to the Nymph of</u> <u>Bristol Spring</u> on it. After the manner of hymns of Homer and Callimachus, he tells how the nymph, violated by the azure god of the ocean, was recompensed with the gift of health-giving. Like the neighboring city of Bath, Bristol Spring was a health resort. The latter part of the poem recounts the story of Thenot's successful wooing of Leya with the help of the trident bearer and of his subsequent failure to thank the nymph of Bristol Spring.

Whitehead imitates Milton when, in describing the salutary qualities of Bristol waters, he stiltedly describes the visit of "the sable wretch" (Satan):

To ease whose burning entreils swells in vain The citron's dewy moisture, thee he hails; And oft from some steep cliff at early dawn In seas, in winds, or the vast void of Heaven Thy power unknown adores; . . .

In his praise of Solitude for giving the poet the opportunity to absent himself from care, and to enter a new world, the world of fancy and romance, Whitehead strikes a romantic note:

1. The Poetical Works of Mark Akenside. ed. Rev. George Gilfillan, p. 244.

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. . . Solitude itself But opens to his keener view new worlds, Worlds of his own: from every genuine scene Of Nature's varying hand his active mind Takes fire at once, and his full soul o'erflows With Heaven's own bounteous joy; he too creates, And with new beings peoples earth and air, And ocean's deep domain. The bards of old, The godlike Grecian bards, from such fair founts Drank inspiration. Hence on airy clifts Light satyrs danc'd, along the woodland shade Pan's mystic pipe resounded, and each rill Confess'd its tutelary power, like thine.

Again, Whitehead, confesses his adoration of Shakespeare and sees in external nature "romantic foliage":

O for a Shakespeare's pencil, while I trace In Nature's breathing paint, the dreary waste Of Buxton, dropping with incessant rains Cold and ungenial; or its sweet reverse Enchanting Matlock, from whose rocks like thine Romantic foliage hangs, and rills descend, And echoes murmur. . .

Whitehead realized that his own verse does not rank with that of the great but holds that his poetry does have value. He asks that

My humbler weaker verse, from scantier rills Diffusing wholesome draughts, unheard, unseen, Glide gently on, and imitate thy spring. 1

Shenstone expressed his disapproval of this poem: "I have seen Whitehead's Ode to the Bristol-Spring; 2 which I dont much like."

Whitehead's use of the rhymed iambic tetrameter or octosyllabic couplets of <u>L'Allegro</u> and <u>Il Penseroso</u> may be in part a result of Miltonic influence. Many eighteenthcentury poets, like the Wartons, who used the form, did so in more or less direct imitation of Milton. It is

^{1.} Chalmers, 17, 214.

^{2.} The Letters of William Shenstone, p. 309.

questionable how extensive this influence was on Whitehead, whose tetrameter couplets only occasionally suggest Milton's and are often closer in form and spirit to Swift's in such light verse as "On the Death of Dr. Swift."

The first work by Whitehead in this form was "The Lark, a Simile" from his 1754 collection of poems, which pictures the lark as she sings in soaring, but remains quiet in sinking to the plain. Whitehead is a poor prophet:

For never can my humble verse The cautious ear of patron pierce.

Three years later he became poet laureate through the interest of a patron.

In "The Youth and the Philosopher, a Fable," Whitehead portrays a Grecian youth as he leaves the arena with his chariot and rides through "Academus' sacred shade." Plato is the only one who does not praise the youth. The philosopher indignantly views the waste of skill and judgment:

The time profusely squander'd there On vulgar arts beneath thy care, If well employ'd, at less expense, Had taught thee from a coachman's fate To govern men, and guide the state.

In "An Epistle from a Grove in Derbyshire to a Grove in Surrey," the poet has the grove complain about the master who is interested in "vain discourse" and "dull morality" and who leads such an ascetic life that "we scarcely see a woman here."

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The grove looks back to the days when gods came down to mix with human beings, especially the "blushing, flying, yielding maid." In the answer of the second grove that while "we're not chaste, but more polite," Whitehead asserts that his age has not advanced in morals, but that it has progressed in social graces.

In 1758, one year after he became laureate, Whitehead employed the verse form of <u>L'Allegro</u> in <u>Verses to</u> <u>the English People</u>. The <u>Verses</u> shows that the laureate intended to take his work seriously. As the court poet, he summons people of all walks of life to spend themselves in the service of Albion. Seeing that one group in particular, the poets, has tremendous power, he urges the bards to put aside their differences and place their pens at the service of their country. During the days of peace the poets may tune the reed "in the daisy painted mead," but when the isles are shaken by "war's tremendous roar."

Every bard of purer fire, Tyrtaeus-like, ¹ should grasp the lyre; Wake with verse the hardy deed, Or in the generous strife like Sydney bleed.

 According to tradition, Tyrtaeus, a lame schoolmaster of no reputation, inspired the Spartans by his songs so that they gained the victory over the Messenians. <u>The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia</u>. 12 vols. New York: The Century Co., 1889-1911.

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A similar sentiment Whitehead wrote to Lord Harcourt, July 1, 1778: "Poets have done wonders in war, as l Tyrtaeus can witness."

The Daily Advertiser for March 1 had announced the publication of Whitehead's poem, and the March 16 issue that of Akenside's <u>Ode to the Country Gentlemen of Eng-</u> <u>land</u>. John Byrom, the poet from Manchester, accuses 2 both of them of "Hanoverian jingoism" in his "Remarks":

Really these fighting poets want a tutor, To teach them--ultra crepidam ne sutor; To teach the doctor, and to teach the laureat, Ex Helicone sanguinem ne hauriat: 3 Tho' blood and wounds infect its limpid stream, It should run clear before they sing a theme. 4

He concludes his "Remarks" with the advice:

If these two bards will, by a tuneful labour, Show, without sham, their love to killing life, Let Akenside go thump upon the tabor; And Whitehead grasp th' exacuating fife.

Byrom does not think highly of either the <u>Ode</u> or the <u>Verses</u> as rabble-rousing instruments. He has a captain speak:

"Poi let my serjeant, when his dose is taken, Britons strike home! with moisten'd pipe rehearse, To deeds of death 't will sooner much awaken, Than a cart load full of such ode and verse."

^{1.} The Letters of Horace Walpole (Cunningham), VIII, 317 fn.

^{2.} W. Forbes Gray, The Poets Laureate of England Their History and Their Odes. London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1914. p. 177.

^{3.} Reminiscent of the rhymes in Butler's Hudibras.

^{4.} Chalmers, 15, 201.

The 1774 edition of poems contained "The Dog: A Tale," also written in tetrameters. Milton had popularized the tetrameter for the eighteenth century, but Swift had employed it for lighter poetry. Whitehead, following Swift's tone, tells how a squire, who, upon leaving his bride of a few days, was overcome with jealousy and sent his servant Ben to order his wife not even to see a certain Captain Wilkins. The servant, Sancho-like, decided instead to tell her not to "mount the mastiff dog." The enraged wife disobeyed the command of the servant with the result that when the husband returned, he found his wife bandaged up after her attempt to ride the mastiff dog. The servant explained the entire business to his master and concluded his story and the poem with:

But, had I done as you directed, Whose forehead then had been affected? Had Captain WILKINS been forbidden, Ah master, who had then been ridden?

The 1776 <u>Variety</u> was intended as "A Tale for Married People." The clue came from Martial's "<u>Nec tecum possum</u> <u>vivere, nec sine te.</u>" Whitehead, again in Miltonic meter, tells how a gentle maid was wooed by a lover.

One who had trod, as well as she, The flow'ry paths of poesy; Had warm'd himself with Milton's heat, Could ev'ry line of Pope repeat, Or chant in Shenstone's tender strains, "The lover's hopes," "the lover's pains."

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For some time all was Paradise. Then they tired of each other. The husband gave as his reason for their ennui: "'We live, my dear, too much together.'"

From a rich old uncle they inherited a fortune which they spent to amuse themselves in their separate ways in London. But the life of separation did not give the joy for which they were longing. His ruddy health had disappeared, and rouge had failed to hide "The rapine of the midnight air." "Dissipation's giddy round" had not given them happiness. The husband cited his reason for their unhappiness: "'We live, my dear, too much asunder.'" Probably the bachelor Whitehead wrote the lesson of the tale with a touch of wistful longing:

So real happiness below Must from the heart sincerely flow; Nor, list'ning to the syren's song, Must stray too far, or rest too long. All human pleasures thither tend; Must there begin, and there must end; Must there recruit their languid force, And gain fresh vigour from their source.

Part of the popularity of <u>Variety</u> can probably be attributed, as Campbell suggests, to the fact that it was l printed anonymously. Even though Churchill had died in 1764, there was still the possibility that the satirist's attacks upon the laureate might have blighted the poem when it appeared in 1776.

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^{1.} Specimens of the British Poets; with Biographical and Critical Notices, and An Easay on English Poetry. ed. Thomas Campbell. 7 vols. London: John Murray, 1819. VII, 12.

In The Goat's Beard (1777) Whitehead took eight lines from Phaedrus, a Latin fabulist of the first contury, and extended them to eight hundred. The Miltonic borrowing is again limited to form, and, as in "The Dog" and Variety, there are suggestions of Swift's lighter The Goat's Beard, however, made such a stir in vein. its day that it merits some detailed account. According to Phaedrus, when the she-goats had gained permission from Jove to have a beard, the he-goats were grieved and began to become indignant. Jove said, "Let them enjcy their empty glory and usurp the honor of your office, as long as they are not your equals in bravery. This argument advises you to endure the circumstances that those who are inferior to you in manliness (virtute) are similar to you in dress (habitu).

Whitehead tells how one day, while the he-goats were away,

The ladies of the colony Had form'd a female coterie; And, as they browz'd the cliffs among, Exerted all their power of tongue.

One matron complains that the he-goats had usurped the power of the queens and that only the beard kept the queens from their "right divine." Jove grants their request to grow beards. The resulting "general discord"

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^{1.} A free translation of <u>Liber IV</u>, <u>fabula XV</u> of <u>Phaedri</u> <u>Fabulae Aesopiae</u>. 2 vols. London: A. J. Valpy, 1822. I, 221.

which Jove has caused by his "hasty nod," he is now compelled to dispel by convening the states. Jove's long-winded advice to the she-goats closes with:

As husbands, though on small pretence, Are wondrous jealous of their sense, Perhaps 't were prudent to conceal The great accomplishments you feel. Then screen what pains the naked eye With that thin gauze called modesty; At least with diffidence maintain The triumphs you are sure to gain. Arm'd with this caution, justly claim Your genuine share of power and fame; Be every thing your conscious merit Inspires, and with becoming spirit Expand each passion of the heart, Each talent Nature gives exert; Be wise, be learn'd, be brave, nay fear'd--But keep your sex, and HIDE THE BEARD.

Jove thereupon advises the he-goats that they are responsible for this state of affairs:

Is there a fault in womankind You did not make, or strive to find?

Jove concludes his harangue with this advice:

A tree a tree, a stone a stone. So in each sex distinct and clear A genuine <u>something</u> should appear, A <u>je ne sal quoi</u>, however slight, To vindicate the natural right.

"Then, sirs, for I perceive you yawn, Be this conclusion fairly drawn: Sexes are proper, and not common; 1 Man <u>must</u> be man, and woman woman, In short, be coxcombs if you please, Be arrant ladies in your dress; Be every name the vulgar give To what their grossness can't conceive: Yet one small favour let me ask, Not to impose too hard a task--Whether you fix your fancied reign

1. Whitehead is no doubt punning.

In brothels, or in drawing-rooms, The little <u>something</u> still retain. Be gamesters, gluttons, jockies, grooms, Be all which Nature never meant, Free-thinkers in the full extent, But, ah! for <u>something</u> be rever'd, And <u>keep your</u> <u>sex</u>, and SHOW THE BEARD."

In urging the he-goats to live in such a fashion that the she-goats will "for instruction wait your motions," Whitehead warns the he-goats not to make the mistake of Charles, who gained nothing from his tour of Europe:

To all that should improve his mind, The voluntary dupe was blind.

The blind Charles did not even learn anything in the school of experience:

Whate'er calamities fell on him, Distress was thrown away upon him.

Whitehead's strong moral attitude causes him to sound a warning against imbibing the rationalism of Voltaire and Lucretius:

Why therefore will ye condescend To tease a weak believing friend, Whose honest ignorance might gain From errour a relief in pain, And bear with fortitude and honour The miseries you brought upon her? Momus perhaps would slily say, For Momus has a merry way, Why will your wisdom and your wit To such degrading tricks submit? Why in soft bosoms raise a riot? Can't ye be d--mn'd yourselves in quiet? The Goat's Beard provoked attacks which continued l even after Whitehead's death. The Asses Ears, a Fable (1777), an anonymous satire, called Whitehead the

Immortal Bard, ordain'd to sit, Sole arbiter of <u>British</u> wit; Who whilom deign'd to trace the cause, Whence <u>Hymen</u> joy and sorrow draws, Who drew the mystic veil aside, Which nuptial secrets used to hide, And shew'd the various charms that lie, Concentred in variety. 2

The author of <u>The Asses Ears</u> pictures Jove's gathering of the animals for the purpose of appointing one of their number Poet-Laureate. The Bear, Dr. Johnson, almost wins the coveted prize. But since his writings contained sense and wit, he is deemed unfit for the place. The "Ass with braying loud" begins to harangue the crowd. He speaks:

'Did ever in my vacant eye, 'One spark of genius seem to lie. 'Or did my voice those looks belie?) 'Say were my brayings ever fraught, 'With anything that seem'd a thought? 'Have I, on any one pretence, 'Been known to deviate into sense? Who then is versed like me to cheer. 'With tranguil sounds Jove's quiet ear. 'And lull to rest the high abodes, With New-Year songs and Birth-day Odes? 'Blest with your votes, the' immortal train, 'Shall praise my soul-composing strain, 'Which ne'er, by frantic genius drest, 'Shall break the Gods eternal rest, 'Placid my verse shall flow along, 'As Sternhold's and as Hopkins' song.' 3

^{1.} R. C. Whitford, "On the Origin of <u>Probationary Odes</u> for the Laureateship." <u>Modern Language Notes XXXV</u> (1920) 81-84.

^{2.} A hit at the 1776 piece.

^{3.} Thomas Sternhold (d.1549) and John Hopkins (d.1570) jointly versified the Psalms.

Loud acclaim stops his further beasting. Jove approves the rabble's choice

And from that hour the Ass remains, Unrival'd laureat of the plains, And o'er his vacant forehead wears, The envied badge of spreading ears.

The following year Richard Tickell, a minor pamphleteer and dramatist, published <u>The Wreath of Fashion</u> (1778), in which he described competition among poets for the laureateship. Three years before Lord Clare had published his <u>Verses addressed to the Queen with a New</u> <u>Year's Gift of Irish Poplin</u> (1775). This suggested Tickell's <u>Wreath</u>, in which Whitehead is represented as speaking:

'What, if some rival Bard my empire share! Yet, yet, I tremble at the name of <u>Clare</u>. <u>Pindar</u> to <u>Clare</u> had yielded--so did I--Alas, can Poetry with <u>Poplin</u> vie! Perish the thought! hence visionary fear! Phoebus, or Phaedrus, shall old <u>Whitehead</u> cheer. Behold their nobler gift: be this preferr'd! He said; and proudly brandish'd the <u>Goat's beard</u>, Then dropt it in the <u>Vase</u>--immers'd it falls Mid Sonnets, Odes, Acrostics, Madrigals: 1

Tickell continued his mockery of Whitehead even after the laureate's death. In <u>Probationary Odes for</u> <u>the Laureateship</u>, in the production of which "it is certain that he <u>Tickell</u> took an important part" by

Richard Tickell, The Wreath of Fashion, or, The Art of Sentimental Poetry. The Fourth Edition. London: T. Becket, 1778. pp. 8, 9.

"writing much of the introductory matter in prose and all of two odes and having a hand in the manufacture of at least one other," Tickell ironically asks:

And finally, in the example of Whitehead's Muse, expatiating on the virtues of our gracious Sovereign; have we not beheld the best of Poets, in the best of verses, doing ample justice to the best of Kings? 2

Number Four of the volume contained a prayer to Whitehead to bequeath his gift Elijah-like to Sir Richard Hill:

Thou too, thou dread and awful shade, Of dear departed WILL WHITEHEAD, Look through the blue aethereal skies, And view me with propitious eyes! Whether thou most delight'st to loll On Sion's top, or near the Pole! Bend from thy mountains, and remembers till, The wants and wishes of a lesser Hill! Thou like Elijah, fled to realms above, To me, thy friend, bequeath thy hallow'd cloak, That by its virtue Richard may improve, And in thy habit preach, and pun, and joke! 3

George Colman the Elder, in <u>The Monthly Review</u>, considers the attack on the laureate "ill-natured and satirical," for <u>The Goat's Beard</u> is a "lively fable," He deems the portrait of the Ass "particularly invidious, and in our opinion uncandid and unjust." While Whitehead's New Year's songs and birthday odes are not equal to those of Pindar, Colman holds them "not ridiculous, like

- 1. R. C. Whitford, "On the Origin of <u>Probationary</u> <u>Odes</u> for the <u>Laureateship</u>." <u>Modern Language Notes</u>, XXXV (1920), 84.
- 2. <u>Probationary Odes for the Laureateship: with a</u> <u>Preliminary Discourse by Sir John Hawkins. Knt.</u> London: James Ridgway, 1785. p. xi.
- 3. Ibid., p. 22.

those of Shadwell and Cibber." In fact, says Colman, "the present Laureat, as Ophelia says, 'wears his rue with a difference, and you may call it <u>Herb o' Grace on</u> <u>Sundays.'"</u> Colman praises the fable, but finds fault with the length and the rhymes:

This little piece has, we think, a considerable degree of merit. It is easy and spirited. It might perhaps have been rather more comprest; and more attention should have been paid to the rhymes, the inaccuracies of which, in such short poems, is scarcely excusable. 2

While <u>The London Magazine</u> gives the argument of the <u>Fable</u> and calls Whitehead "too diffuse," although "the <u>3</u> poem hath merit," <u>The Critical Review</u> praises the "amplification of one of Phaedrus's Fables" for its "easy and lively manner," its simple narrative, and pictur-4 esque description.

How do <u>Variety</u> and the <u>Beard</u> compare? In a letter of Feb. 17, 1777, Horace Walpole writes Mason that he has "read <u>The Goat's Beard</u>: the lines on Charles II are very good, and there is true humour here and there." However, Walpole thinks "the whole much too long--it is far inferior to <u>Variety</u>." While <u>The Goat's Beard</u> was "less familiar and less popular" than <u>Variety</u>, it "is

1.	The Monthly Review,	LVI	(1777),	194.	Cf.	Hamlet.
	IV, V.					
2.	Ibid., 192.					
3.	The London Magazine	. XLI	II (May.	1777)	. 268	3.
4.	The Critical Review	, XL	III (Feb	., 177	7).	158.
5.	The Letters of Hora	ce Wa	alpole (!	Foynbe	e), }	(, 15.

not inferior in moral tendency and just satire on del generated manners." The length and sprawling quality of the <u>Beard</u> is contrasted with the compactness and direct simplicity of <u>Variety</u>. But one can join Mrs. Elizabeth Montague in her enthusiasm for the <u>Beard</u>, as she writes to Viscount Nuneham:

'The Goatsbeard' is incomparable, I will send it to some of my friends at Paris, where ye women have beards political, atheistical, &c., and ye men no beards at all. There is infinite witt, humour, & good sense in this poem; if so sharp a lance does not make folly bleed I have no hope the age can be cured. By the by it is good nature turned satyrist. 2

And in our day Hugh Walker makes the very significant remark that Time "has added a new zest" to the flavor 3 of the Beard.

^{1.} Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century; comprizing Biographical Memoirs of William Bowyer, Printer, F.S.A. and many of his learned friends; an incidental view of the Progress and Advancement of literature in this kingdom during the last century; and Biographical anecdotes of a considerable number of eminent writers and ingenious artists. 6 vols. London: John Nichols, 1812. III, 196.

^{2.} The Harcourt Papers, VIII, 125.

Hugh Walker, English Satire and Satirists. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1925. p. 227.

VI. Miscellaneous Verse Forms

In addition to the definite influences discussed above, something should be said about a number of miscellaneous verse forms which Whitehead employed.

In the "Js ne scai quoi" of the 1754 edition he used the ballad stanza form (4343, <u>abab</u>) to good advantage. In this delightful song Whitehead pictured a young man under the influence of love, who did not know just how Caelia had entranced him, for her form, her shape, her air, her sense had in them little allure. The explanation must be:

In short, 'twas that provoking charm Of Caelia all together.

Bitter suggests that Burns "nicht unwahrscheinlich" received his inspiration for "It is na, Jean, thy bonnis face" from the second stanza of Whitehead's poem. Whitehead had written:

> 'Tis not her face which love creates, For there no graces revel;
> 'Tis not her shape, for there the Fates Have rather been uncivil.

Burns has the following:

1. Bitter, p. 42.

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It is na, Jean, thy bonnie face, Nor shape that I admire, Although thy beauty and thy grace Might well awake desire.

The freshness and lightness of the poem make it one of Whitehead's outstanding poems.

An unusual verse form (<u>ababccdedffe</u>) is found in "To Mr. Mason." Here Whitehead advises Mason not to withdraw from public life, but to remember that "man himself was made for all mankind," a sentiment from Pope. Whitehead looks back to the days when Mason preferred the life of indolence at Cambridge, away from fettering connections and near the forest with its unrestrained warblers:

"Here, here for ever let me stay, Here calmly loiter life away, Nor all those vain connections know Which fetter down the free-born mind, The slave of interest, or of show; While yon gay tenant of the grove, The happier heir of Nature's love, Can warble unconfin'd."

Whitehead is acquainted with romantic tendencies, but the call of duty, to fill "some stated void" made by Nature, urges him to say that man may not

. . . till the toilsome day is o'er Expect the night of peace.

A complicated verse form is found in "Ode to the Tiber. On Entering the Campania of Rome, at Otricoli, 1755":

ababcdcdeeffgghihijjkllk 444444434444565555443443

In this allusion-laden ode the post announces one of his favorite themes when he asks: "Is this the scene where Freedom breath'd?"

"In a Hermitage" and "The Double Conquest" employ alternate tetrameter rhyme. "In a Hermitage" contains Whitehead's advice to live under the restraints which "parent Nature," the equivalent of Reason, has fixed in order to teach content, "man's true bliss." "The Double Conquest," in a romantic strain, tells how Clarinda, an opera singer in Whitehead's day, had such beauty that

At once I listen'd, and I gaz'd; And heard, and look'd my soul away.

Whitehead used another verse form, anapestic tetrameters and trimeters alternately rhyming, in two poems, "To the Reverend Mr. Wright, 1751" and "Song for Ranelagh." In his lilting "Song," Whitehead preaches to the girls who frequent Ranelagh Garden, a place of public amusement, where people promenaded. He asks:

What means the cock'd hat, and the masculine zir, With each motion design'd to perplex? Bright eyes were intended to languish, not stare, And softness the test of your sex.

1. The Harcourt Papers, VII, 280.

Whitehead advises the girls that they

Should slily attack us with coyness, and wiles, Not with open, and insolent war. Then learn, [from Venus] with her beauty, to copy her air, Nor venture too much to reveal: Our fancies will paint what you cover with care, And double each charm you conceal.

Whitehead pays tribute to woman's power:

The blushes of morn, and the mildness of May, Are charms which no art can procure; O be but yourselves, and our homage we pay, And your empire is solid and sure.

Whitehead later expanded the theme of the "Song" in The Goat's Beard (1777).

Whitehead employed rhymed anapestic tetrameters in "On the Late Improvements at Nuneham, the Seat of the Earl of Harcourt," to compliment the artist who rivalled the work of Nature. Mason, while admitting that certain lines could be improved by transposition, holds that Whitehead "executed with much humour" the "idea of making her [Nature] behave herself like that most unnatural of all created beings, a modern fine lady." Walpole, in a letter to Mason of February 7, 1782, considers the lines "the best he [Whitehead] ever wrote except <u>Variety</u>," and says that he is "charmed with them."

1. Chalmers, 17, 248 fn.

2. The Letters of Horace Walpole (Cunningham), VIII, 150.

VII. Conclusion

Whitehead wrote generally in the neo-classic tradition, but occasionally revealed romantic interests in his poems, notably in his love of nature as shown in the first part of "The Enthusiast," and in his turning, like Gray, to Welch themes for poetry in "The Battle of Argoed Llwyfain." He was also somewhat romantic in his admiration for Milton and Spenser and in his occasional imitations of them.

Of Whitehead's poems a number deserve preservation. Of the verse in Popean couplets, <u>Atys and</u> <u>Adrastus</u> struck and held a fatalistic tone, and <u>A</u> <u>Charge to the Poets</u> prophesied a happier day for the rapturous bard, paid glowing tribute to Garrick's efforts in presenting Shakespeare, and provoked the vicious attacks of Charles Churchill. Whitehead employed the elegiac quatrain pattern of Gray in <u>On</u> <u>Friendship</u> and drew from his model, in addition to a negative criticism, also the positive judgment of its being Whitehead's best poem. "The Enthusiast" pictured Whitehead's life program and the conflicting

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neo-classicism and romanticism of the middle of the eighteenth century. The lyrical quality is evident in the two charming songs, "Je ne scai quoi" and "The Double Conquest." Blank verse is used to fair advantage in the rather lengthy <u>An Hymn to the Nymph of Bristol</u> <u>Spring</u>, while <u>Verses to the English People</u> serves as a sample of the jingoism of the period. The tales, <u>Variety</u> and <u>The Goat's Beard</u>, bear reading, the first for its compactness, and the second for its timelessness. If a choice of two best poems were to be made, the lot would fall to "The Enthusiast" and "Je ne scai quoi." As a poet, Whitehead

was far above mediocrity, yet neither his genius nor his writings were of that brilliant or interesting kind, which could long occupy the public attention, without some additional stimulus to awaken and keep it in action. 1

1. Dr. Burney in The Monthly Review, LXXVIII (1788), 177.

CHAPTER THREE

ODES

Colley Cibber, whom Whitehead succeeded as laurel ate, had worn the laurel from 1730 until his death on December 12, 1757. Cibber had set a comparatively low standard of literary excellence in his odes. His 1734 New Year's Ode began:

To George, to George, our Patriot King, The new and happy Season sing.

And England laughed and jeered. A casual perusal of the 1755 ode for the kingts birthday reveals his fawning adulation and insincerity:

Pierian sisters hail the morn That gave the world a Caesar born, Born to his people's love; the flower That best adorns the brows of power; Where'er this royal plant takes root, More glorious reaps the throne the fruit. What sweeter praise in realms above, What more divine can angels sing, Than that his grateful creatures love Their gracious lord, of kings the king? Such praises sung by truth may show How godlike kings are loved below. 2

 The laureates: Dryden, 1668-1688; Shadwell, 1688-1692; Tate, 1692-1715; Rowe, 1715-1718; Eusden, 1718-1730; Cibber, 1730-1757; Whitehead, 1757-1785.
 Quoted by William Connor Sydney, England and the

English in the Eighteenth Century. Chapters in the Social History of the Times. 2 vols. London: Ward & Downey, 1392. II, 125.

The unctuous flattery of the 1756 New Year's Ode added nothing to Cibber's fame:

Had the lyrist of old Had our Caesar to sing. More rapid his raptures had rolled, But--never had Greece such a king!

Chorus: No--never had Greece such a king! 1 An anonymous poem, "On Colley Cibber being made Laureate," reveals the low value placed upon Cibber both as man and as poet:

IN merry old England, it once was a rule, The King had his poet, and also his fool; But now we're grown frugal, I'd have you to know it, That Cibber can serve, both for fool, and for poet. 2

The eight lines below, also by an anonymous writer, give another sample of the unsparing ridicule heaped upon Cibber:

"Well, said Apollo, still 'tis mine To give the real Laurel; For that, my Pope, my son divine, Of rivals ends the guarrel.

Quoted in William Connor Sydney, England and the 1. English in the Eighteenth Century. Chapters in the

Social History of the Times. II, 125. The Most Agreeable Companion; or, A Choice Collec-tion of Detached and Most Approved Pieces, Serious, Moral, Hunourous and Diverting, in Prose and Verse. 2 vols. Compiled by John Moxon. Leeds: Griffith 2. Wright and Son, 1782. II, 87.

But guessing who should have the luck To be the Birth-day fibber I thought of Dennis, 1 Tibbald, 2 Duck, 3 But never dreamed of Cibber." 4

Pope, in his 1742 edition of the <u>Dunciad</u>, had crowned Cibber the King of Dulness to replace Theobald, whom he had first appointed to that office. Warburton looked askance at the <u>laureateship</u>:

"I will tell you [Garrick] my mind frankly. I think it [the Laureateship] as much below you, as some others, who have declined it, think it below them. The place, as Pope expressed it, has suffered an attainder and an interruption in the succession. And though civil places, of indispensable use in society, suffer nothing by unworthy possessors, and contract no stain thereby; yet I think it otherwise, in places only of ornament to society." 5

Walpole looked upon the office of laureate as a sinecure, and the poet as one "who only chants anniversaries, 6 whether glad or sorry."

- 1. John Dennis (1657-1734) wrote various poems "'in the Pindaric way'" (DNB).
- Lewis Tehobald (1688-1744) edited Shakespeare (1734).
- 3. Stephen Duck (1705-1756), poet, was the author of Thresher's Labour.
- 4. Quoted by Wiltshire Stanton Austin and John Ralph, <u>The Lives of the Poets-Laureate</u>. London: Richard Bentley, 1853. p. 274.
- 5. Quoted by Mrs. Clement Parsons, <u>Garrick</u> and <u>His</u> <u>Circle</u>. London: Methuen & Co., 1906. p. 276.
- 6. The Letters of Horace Walpole (Toynhee), XII (Dec. 18, 1781), 120.

Hurd felt that the successor of Cibber as laureate had "no great poetical dignity to sustain."

Whitehead also realized that the reputation of the office had fallen. Mason says that he "wished to retrieve the honours of that laurel which came to him from the head of Cibber, in a very shrivelled, or 2 rather blasted, state." Although many attacked the selection of Whitehead, some praised it. Cambridge, Whitehead's friend, viewed with satisfaction the selection:

Tis so, though we're surpris'd to hear it, The Laurel is bestowed on merit. How hush'd is every envious voice, Confounded by so just a choice, Though by prescriptive right prepar'd To libel the selected bard, 3

Whitehead sincerely desired to avoid the mistakes of Cibber and the possibility of being accused of lying for hire and flattering for reward. He wished to maintain his self-respect. Probably he had in mind Swift's description of a servile bard:

A prince, the moment he is crown'd Inherits all the virtues round,

 The Correspondence of Richard Hurd & William Mason and Letters of Richard Hurd to Thomas Gray. With Introduction & Notes by the late Ernest Harold Pearce. Edited with additional Notes by Leonard Whibley. Cambridge: The University Press, 1932. p. 42.

^{2.} Mason, pp. 89.90.

^{3.} Chalmers, 18, 292.3.

Then, poet, if you mean to thrive, Employ your muse on kings alive; With prudence gathering up a cluster Of all the virtues you can muster, Which, form'd into a garland sweet, Lay humbly at your monarch's feet: Who, as the odors reach his throne, Will smile and think them all his own, 1

Therefore his odes breathe a spirit different from those of Cibber. Whitehead, when he writes the birthday odes, is not thinking so much of the man as he is of the nation's king. He writes more of the king as the embodiment of laws and traditions than as an individual. The king's birthday is "Britain's natal 2 morn," and the birthday of the king "is our own." "The friend of man and freedom" Whitehead calls George II. The king's glory comes from "delegated 5 power." He is the "guardian of her [Britain's] laws." Albion, not George, is the subject of praise and idealization.

In Ode XV, however, Whitehead adds a further title for the king: "Friend to the poor!" When famine stalked the land and "Foul Riot's sons in torrents came,"

 "On Poetry, A Rhapsody." <u>The Works of Jonathan</u> <u>Swift</u>, D.D., I, 351.
 Ode X

- 3. Ode XXVI
- 4. Ode I
- 5. Ode XXVI
- 6. Ode XXXVII

Then George arose. His feeling heart Inspir'd the nation's better part With virtues like its own: His power control'd th' insatiate train, Whose avarice grasp'd at private gain, Regardless of a people's groan. 1

The king, even though Justice drew her sword, triumphed with Mercy; scarcely a single person was punished. And so Whitehead concludes:

Yes, Mercy triumph'd; Mercy shone confest In her own noblest sphere, a monarch's breast. Forcibly mild did Mercy shine, Like the sweet month in which we pay Our annual vows at Mercy's shrine, And hail our monarch's natal day. 2

Whitehead, who in his first ode had breathed a welcome to the house of Brunswick, possessed a high patriotism. During the Seven Years' War, when the funeral urn was raised very often, he saw "thousands, at the glorious call, aspire to equal praise." Since "the foes of Britain are the foes of man," myriads are prepared

To hurl just thunders on insulting foes, To guard, and not invade, the world's ropose. 5

Ode XV
 Ode XV
 Ode XV
 Ode XL
 Ode XXVII

In Ode VII Whitehead appeals to the rich, to "ye British dames," to "ye sons of freedom" that they "grasp the l sword." He reaches back into the past (1395) when

the ladies of Mecklenburgh, to support their duke Albert's pretensions to the crown of Sweden, and to redeem him when he was taken prisoner, gave up all their jewels to the public; for which they afterwards received great emoluments and privileges, particularly the right of succession in fiefs, which had before been appropriated to males only. 2

Whitehead sees "each indignant breast unite its flame" in order to save "the land of liberty and laws." In his zeal for a proper relationship between ruler and people, he pictures an ideal kinship:

"A people zealous to obey; A monarch whose parental sway Despises regal art; His shield, the laws which guard the land; His sword, each Briton's eager hand; His throne, each Briton's heart." 3

In addition to the theme that the king should be a symbol of his people and that the people should be ready to die for their country, Whitehead has another theme,--that England is the refuge of Freedom. England is the "land of freedom" where "freeborn men" are 6 fighting France, "the land of slaves." England is

- Ode VII
 Chalmers, 17, 256 fn.
 Ode IX
 Ode IV
- 5. Ode I
- 6. Ode IV

the "chosen race to freedom dear," "the land of liberty 2 and laws," "th' asylum of the world," where are united "Thrones, independence, laws, and liberty." In fact, says Whitehead, freedom and Britain are inseparable, "For Freedom dies if Britain falls."

Whitehead constantly speaks disparagingly of France and Spain, England's enemies. In 1759 he speaks of "haughty Gaul," and in 1780, in both New Year and Birthday Odes, he uses the epithets: "Vain-glorious France! deluded Spain!" He hopes that Belgia will wake "from her dreams of Gallic frauds, illusive schemes" and "know 8 her ancient friends again."

Love of peace and hatred of war appear frequently in the odes. Whitehead laments "bleeding war's tremen-9 dous sway." He looks for the day when "Smiling Peace," 11 "Fair Peace," "Soft-smiling Peace" "should triumph," and the king's rule may be "Unstain'd by widows' or by

Ode XI 1. 2. Ode VII 3. Ode XIV 4. Ode XXL Ode XLII (1782) 5. 6. Ode II 7. Odes XXXVIII and XXXIX 8. Ode XLIII 9. Ode II 10. Ode IV 11. Ode V Ode IX 12. Ode XIX 13.

orphans' tears." He abhors the "clanging trump" of the "God of slaughter," "the warrior's unrelenting 4 rage," "the rage of war." On the other hand, he looks upon the Seven Years! War as an occasion when

The land of freedom with the land of slaves, As Nature's friends, must wage illustrious war. 6

England's difficulties with the American colonies are also discussed in several odes. In the 1774 birthday ode Whitehead sees one crisis as having passed:

Hark! from yonder western main O'er the white wave echoing far, Vows of duty swell the strain, And drown the notes of war. The prodigal again returns, And on his parent's neck reclines; With honest shame his bosom burns, And in his eye affection shines; Shines through tears, at once that prove Grief, and joy, and filial love. 7

In this same poem the laureate links "just subjection" with "mutual love." With the gathering of the war clouds Whitehead hopes that "the untainted trunk" of Britain's empire may remain. He mentions "due subjection, mild command" in the same ode, and hopes that

1. Ode III and passim. 2. Ode V Ode VII 3. Ode IX 4. Ode XLI 5. Ode IV 6. 7. Ode XXVIII (June 4, 1774) 8. Ibid. Ode XXIX (June 4, 1775) 9.

mercy may "gild the ray" and "avert impending 1 fate."

In the year 1776, when actual warfare is imminent, Whitehead calls the colonists

. . "deceiv'd, mistaken men! Nor let your parent, o'er the flood, Send forth her voice in vain! Alas! no tyrant she, She courts you to be free: Submissive hear her soft command, Nor force unwilling vengeance from a parent's hand." 2 Whitehead appeals to the Americans not to follow "the madness of a few." They have sinned. "'To err is human'" says Whitehead; let England prove that "'Forgiveness is

divine!!" a Popean sentiment.

In 1777 Whitehead calls the colonists "Ye wayward children of a distant clime," "parricides." He sees them as the victims of fancy and suggests that only reason can save them:

What change would ye require? What form Ideal floats in fancy's sky? Ye fond enthusiasts, break the charm, And let cool reason clear the mental eye. 4

Whitehead places the blame upon the Americans: "We pity your misfortune, and your crime." Whitehead also touches upon this matter inca letter to Lord Nuneham, written on

Ode XXIX (June 4, 1775)
 Ode XXX (New Year, 1776)
 <u>Ibid</u>.
 Ode XXXII (New Year, 1777)
 Ibid.

August 30, 1777: "The Americans, very wisely, do not seem to intend to fight us if they can help it, but to l tire us out."

In another letter to Lord Nuneham, Whitehead sympathizes with the Indians, the "native Americans." In speaking of an ode he had read, he says that

the subject suited my politics & patriotism exactly. It was a kind of triumph of the poor native Americans over both England & its colonies, & looking upon their present disturbances as Heaven's vengeance upon them for invading real genuine liberty. Your colonists are full as vicious as we are, &, I am afraid, horribly cruel & tyrannical where they dare be so. 2

A year later he calls upon the "rebel tribes" to "obey 4 a father-king."

Whitehead's final ode is of some contemporary interest. The laureate looks into the future and sees how "Yon Scion" which had been "Torn rudely from its parent tree"

Will soon its genuine glory see, And court again the fostering breast. 6

When storms impend, the parent tree

The Harcourt Papers, VII, 330.
 Ibid., 323. No date is given.
 Ode XXXIV (1778)
 Ode XXXV (1778)
 Ode XLVIII
 Ibid.

Again his fostering aid shall lend; Nor hear the suppliant plead in vain; Shall stretch protecting branches round, Extend the shelter, and forget the wound. 1

Whitehead prophesies that

Two Britains through th' admiring world Shall wing their way with sails unfurl'd; Each from the other's kindred state Avert by turns the bolts of fate; And acts of mutual amity endear The Tyre and Carthage of a wider sphere.

Their manners and their arts the same, To the same tongue shall glowing themes afford, And British heroes act, and British bards record. 2

Whitehead, in the concluding lines of the 1777 New Year's Ode, longs for peace and harmony. In eight lines he pleads for a union between England and America, if not for a united mankind, in which error, passion, wicked conceptions, and folly "all lie buried in oblivion's flood. The one binding factor is to be "the public good":

United, let us all those blessings find, The God of Nature meant mankind, Whate'er of errour, ill redrest; Whate'er of passion, ill represt; Whate'er the wicked have conceiv'd. And folly's heedless sons believ'd. Let all lie buried in oblivion's flood, And our great cement be, -- the public good. 3

The New Year's Ode for 1781, as reprinted in The British Chronicle for Thursday, January 11, 1781, shows

1. Ode XLVIII 2. <u>Ibid</u>. 3. Ode XXXII the influence of the oratorio form. The first line of each new section is given:

Air Ask round the world, from age to age,

Recitative What power from Lusitania broke

Duet 'T was Britain!--Britain heard the nations groan.

Recitative Check'd and abash'd, and taught to fear,

Why then, when round her fair protectress! brow

Air Alas: her glory soars too high;

Recitative Then Britain, by experience wise,

Air and Chorus So as in great Eliza's days.

Whitehead's contemporaries are somewhat divided in their estimates of the odes, with the majority holding that they possess little literary value. Gray was, in general, favorable in his comments. He expressed his appreciation of the laureate's first ode when he wrote to Warton in December, 1758:

I do not dislike the Laureate at all. to me it is his best Ode, but I don't expect any one should find it out; for Otbert & Ateste are surely less known than Edw: the Ist & Mount

Snowden. it is no imitation of me; but a good one of Pastor cum traheret &c: 2 wch was falsely laid to my charge. 3

Gray liked also the second and third odes. In letters to Mason he wrote: "Do you know, I like both Whithed's Odes in great measure, but no body else does." and "Did I tell you how I liked Whitehead's two Odes? they are far better than anything he ever wrote."

A letter, signed J.D., appearing in The Gentleman's Magazine for March, 1780, holds that Whitehead "by his genius has rescued the laurel from contempt."

The Political Magazine comments favorably upon Whitehead's

prophecy, which has greatly enlightened the minds of the people .-- We hope that her pleasing predictions will be fulfilled; and that her oracular effusions will really prove to be the suggestions of Wisdom Divine. 8

- 1. Cf. "The Bard."
- 2. Horace, Odes, Book One, XV. Both Gray and Horace have prophecies of evil, while Whitehead looks for great things from George.
- 3.
- Correspondence of Thomas Gray, Letter 285. Whitehead's first two odes appeared in print in 4. America. Lyon N. Richardson, <u>A History of Early</u> <u>American Magazines</u>, 1741-1789. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1931. p. 134. Richardson states that "poems and excerpts were reprinted from the works of such men as . . . the recently appointed post-laureate, William Whitehead" in American magazines. p. 134 fn.
- 5.
- Correspondence of Thomas Gray, Letter 286. The Works of Thomas Gray in Prose and Verse. ed. Edmund Goose. 4 vols. London: Macmillan and Co., 6. 1884. II, 394.
- The Gentleman's Magazine, L (March, 1780), 122. 7.
- The Political Magazine, IX (Jan., 1785), 3. 8.

Mason prefixed to the June 4, 1776 Ode an advertisement which praises Whitehead's "'delicate manner of treating" the American Revolution. Mason is persuaded that he who reads all that Whitehead composed "'must agree with me in thinking, that no court poet ever had fewer courtly stains, and that his page is, at the least. as white as Addison's.""

On the other hand, Samuel Johnson considered "Cibber's familiar style" better than that which Whitehead assumed. In Johnson's eyes "grand nonsense is insupportable."

Horace Walpole, in speaking of Variety, writes that it contains "not more poetry than is necessary for a Laureate." Walpole asserts that when Whitehead in his New Year's Ode threatened dire vengeance upon any foeman who dared take advantage of England's intestine feuds and wage war on her, "there was a little too much of the vertere funeribus triumphos for a complimentary ode."

- 3.
- Boswell's Life of Johnson; I, 269. A Selection of the Letters of Horace Walpole. ed. W. S. Lewis. 2 vols. London: Oxford University 4. ed. Press, 1926. II. 291.
- The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Oxford. 5. ed. Peter Cunningham. 9 vols. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1861. VI (Aug. 3, 1775), 235.

Chalmers, 17, 264 fn. 1.

^{2.} Ibid., 265 fn.

Gibbon, who felt that "custom, rather than vanity, perpetuates" the laureateship in England, and who looked forward to the abolition of the post, admits that Whitehead "with some degree of courtly, and even poetic art has introduced the founder of the Brunswick "ace" in the first ode. But he points out "some geographical and historical errors of the mortal bard." Gibbon concludes his remarks about Whitehead's first laureate-ode with:

The post may deviate from the truth of history, but every deviation ought to be compensated by the superior beauties of fancy and fiction. 5

Whitehead as laureate was subjected to numerous attacks in the public press. John Wilkes, the founder of <u>The North Briton</u>, did not question the legality of Whitehead's appointment, but maintained that "the absurdity of the choice was the object of just ridicule $\frac{6}{6}$ with the public."

5. <u>Ibid</u>.

6. The North Briton, XX (October 16, 1762), 122.

Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. ed. J. B. Bury. 7 vols. London: Methuen & Co., 1923-32. VII, 256.
 Ibid.
 Miscellaneous Works of Edward Gibbon, Esq. with Memoirs of his life and writings, composed by himself: Illustrated from his letters with occasional notes and narrative, by John Lord Sheffield. 2 vols. London: 1796. II, 659.
 Ibid., 660.

One may wonder if Whitehead is meant in "The Dream," an anonymous poem in the Nov. 27, 1762 issue of <u>The North Briton</u>. The poet falls asleep and dreams that flowers like the Lily held regal power. The Lily

Banish'd the Laurel with disgrace, And what made many people sport, To fill the Laurel's vacant place, Came broad-leaf'd cousin Dock to court. 1

While Whitehead rejoiced in 1780 that

Still o'er the deep does Britain reign Her monarch still the trident bears, 2

the London Courant for Tuesday, June 6, 1780, printed a parody on the laureate's ode; this parody was reprinted in The Political Magazine for March, 1781:

STILL folly does o'er Britain reign, The cap and bells her -----wears; And sneering France, and scornful Spain, In fleets trimphant scour the main, Num'rous as glitt'ring stars when sable night appears. 3

Referring to the insurrection in the early days of June, the parody beholds how

• • The muse In tears the horrid prospect views; Sees the realm to ruin run, As the blood stain'd year rolls on; See, that slaughter of its own This once happy land shall drown; And, e'er this tawdry day again Returns to wake the courtly train,

1. Op. cit., pp. 165-6.

2. June 4, 1780 Ode.

3. The Political Magazine, I (March, 1781), 160.

Sees indignant foes Refuse a mean repose To humbled Britain, crouching to their yoke, Courting that peace, her own injustice broke. 1 But the parody ends on an optimistic note when it

prophesies that England will not be secure and happy

Till grasp'd the spear by ev'ry hand, Each heart with patriot union glow, Resolved in one associate band, To root out each domestic foe; She then, once more shall rule the main, Once more th' imperial trident bear, Nor breathe her awful menaces in vain, When British freedom bids the nations hear. 2

The anonymous "Johnson's Laurel on the Contest of the Poets" (London, 1785) dismisses the laureat with the couplet:

Next Whitehead came, his worth a pinch of snuff, But for a Laureate he was good enough. 3

The following satirical epitaph (anonymous), purporting to be intended for Whitehead's monument in Westminster Abbey, expresses an opinion of the laureate:

"Beneath this stone a Poet Laureate lies, Nor good, nor great, nor foolish, nor yet wise; Not meanly humble, nor yet swell'd with pride, He simply liv'd--and just as simply died;

1. The Political Magazine, I (March, 1781), 160.

2. Ibid.

^{3.} Walter Hamilton, The Poets Laureate of England. Being a History of the Office of Poet Laureate. Biographical Notices of its Holders, and a Collection of the Satires, Epigrams, and Lampoons Directed against them. London: Elliot Stock, 1879. p. 184.

Each year his Muse produced a Birth Day Ode, Compos'd with flattery in the usual mode: For this, and but for this, to George's praise, The Bard was pension'd, and receiv'd the Bays." 1 2 Peter Pindar does not envy Whitehead:

Nor really have I got the grace To wish for Laureat Whitehead's place; Whose odes Cibberian, sweet yet very manly, Are set with equal strength by Mister Stanley,-- 3

So little does Pindar think of Whitehead's odes that, were anyone to be found guilty of reading Pindar's rhymes, he would prescribe punishment, that penance to be:

To read, ye Gods, from morn to night, Will Whitehead's Birth-day Sonnets all their lives. 4

Pindar has an interesting footnote to these lines.

This Ode was written before a late Laureat resigned his <u>earthly</u> crown for a <u>heavenly</u> one. May Mr. Tom Warton be more successful in his Pindaric adulations and not verify the Latin adage--<u>Ex nihilo</u>, nihil fit. 5

Since the subjects of the odes "must" be "so damn'd dry," Pindar feels that "Whitehead's <u>hard-driven</u> Muse" deserves "Pity's tenderest sigh." In his "Ode on the Death of

3. The Works of Peter Pindar, Esq. 5 vols. London: J. Walker, 1812. 1, 52.

^{1.} Walter Hamilton, The Poets Laureate of England, p. 189. William Boyce and John Stanley set Whitehead's odes to music for court presentation.

^{2.} John Wolcot (1738-1319), who went by the pseudonym of Peter Pindar, began his career as a physician, but abandoned medicine for literature. His satirical <u>Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians</u> (1782-5) was followed by a mock-heroic poem, The Lousiad (1785).

^{4.} Ibid., 109.

^{5.} Ibid.

^{6.} Ibid., 110.

Whitehead" Pindar hopes that there will be no more birthday songs:

"WILL WHITEHEAD, Sire, hath wish'd the world <u>good night</u>, Pray who shall fabricate your <u>next year's Ode</u>? As I most laudably can <u>read</u> and write, Let me the line with GEORGE'S <u>virtues</u> load! "Sir, if you'll make me LAUREAT, I declare I'll chaunt you, if you do but take the air; And if it should your Royal humour suit, I'll sing your <u>horse</u> to boot.

"But <u>Sire</u>, perchance you've been <u>be-rhym'd</u> so <u>long</u>, Your <u>Royal Ear</u> is sick of BIRTH-DAY SONG! In this case, you'll be better serv'd by NONE; For, order me the SALARY and WINE, I'll whisper to APOLLO and the NINE, And so contrive to let the ODE ALONE." 1

George Colman, in his "The Laureat, An Ode," April 11, 1786, holds that Whitehead lacked the divine fire:

1. Hamilton, The Poets Laureate of England, p. 191.

Will Whitehead bad the reign commence
Of Birth-Day Odes and Common-Sense:
 And there his efforts rested:
 True Poetry, by Genius fir'd,
Billy's cold bosom ne'er inspir'd;
 For Bill was chicken-breasted. 1

Whitehead did not reply publicly to the attackers. According to Mason, he considered them "small fry." For the amusement of a few friends, however, he composed some years before his death <u>A Pathetic Apology for all</u> <u>Laureats, Past, Present, and to Come</u>. The motto, <u>Veniant</u> <u>ad Caesaris Aures</u>!" suggests that Whitehead wished to have the king take some action in regard to the two annual poems of the laureate, and to grant some consideration to the one who had to supply on demand a New Year's and a Birthday Ode. In his poem, which Mason calls an

1. George Colman, Prose on Several Occasions; Accompanied with Some Pieces in Verse. 5 vols. London: T. Cadel, 1787. III, 161. Whitehead's successor wrote the Birthday Ode for June 4, 1786, and Robert Burns read it in the public papers. Burns dreamt that he was carried away to the birthday levee and fancied he made an address, known as "A Dream." In "A Dream" Burns refers to the habit of writing odes in honor of the King: The poet's, too, a venal gang,

Wi' rhymes weel-turn'd and ready, Wad gar you trow ye ne'er do wrang, But aye unerring steady. On sic a day. <u>The Poetical Works of Robert Burns. With Memoir, Critical Dissertation, and Explanatory Notes, by the Rev. George Gilfillan. 2 vols. Edinburgh:</u> James Nichol, 1361. I, 64.

2. Mason, p. 93.

"effusion of smiling contempt," Whitehead defends the laureate of any age for

His Muse, obliged by sack and pension, Without a subject, or invention--Must certain words in order set, As innocent as a Gazette; Must some half-meaning half disguise, And utter neither truth nor lies. 2

In these words Whitehead suggested the restraints and limitations of the office. "In pity" "ye silly dogs," the attackers, ought to keep the peace and not disparage the laureate; they are "not oblig'd," they owe the public nothing. The laureate labors under a disadvantage, for the evening post or magazine will print his "Lay serene" and send it out into the world where it floats for an hour and sinks. Whitehead appealed to his critics:

Sure without envy you might see Such floundering immortality. Why will ye then, amidst the bogs, Thrust in your car?--ye silly dogs! 3

It is enough, says Whitehead, that Boyce, an accomplished musician, should waste his music and harmony on "many a worthless lay"; there is no need that the court odes "Should meet in print the public eye." The laureate's odes are given but one presentation and are

Mason, p. 93.
 Chalmers, 17, 277.
 Ibid.

no longer heard. On the other hand, the writers of the madrigals, "which live a whole half year," have the pleasure of knowing that

Each barber pastes you on his wall; Each cobler chants you in his stall, And Dolly, from her master's shop, Encores you, as she twirls her mop.

It seems that Whitehead envies those who May choose your subject, nay, your time, When genius prompts to sport in rhyme;

for they have not been "to the service prest." Therefore pity is due the laureates, because they are

Encumber'd with a thousand clogs? I'm very sure they pity you, --Ye silliest of all silly dogs.

In the <u>Pathetic Apology</u> Whitehead poured forth his real feelings. He realized the heavy burden placed upon him and did not relish the criticism he was forced to endure. When his odes are compared with those of Gibber, however, they are obviously better. At least they possess honesty and dignity. The task of turning out odes in the age of the Georges surely taxed the ingenuity and skill of the laureate, since the Georges did not possess characteristics which would inspire loving devotion and fervent poetry. George II, who reigned from 1727 to 1760, was a vain and pompous person, gave Hanoverian problems the precedence over the affairs of England, and took no very great interest in domestic affairs. George III, son of Frederick and the successor of George II, came to the throne in 1760 and with his exalted ideas of the royal prerogative determined to rule in his own way. His mother had told him: "George, be king." Feeling against George III ren 1 high.

 The London Courant for July 3, 1780 printed a "SONG from the ROYAL NURSERY," and The Political <u>Magazine</u> for March, 1781 reprinted it. It reveals the venom engendered by and against the king:

I. GEORGY was crying, if story says true, A few days ago upon Schwellenberg's* lap; To stop the boy's blubbering what could she do! Why thus she soft sung as she gave him his pap, Away on a cock horse To fam'd Charing Cross, To see a fine, very fine Master of Horse; Rings on his fingers, And bells at his toes, And he shall have music wherever he goes.

Here's a fine picture for Georgy my child; Better by far for my precious than pap; He bit it, he tore it, like any thing wild; Alas! oh alas! 'twas <u>America's map</u>. Then mount your cock-horse, Ne'er mind such a loss, Since 'tis my little sweet babe's <u>hobby-horse</u>; Rings on his fingers, And bells at his toes, And he shall have music wherever he goes.

* Mme. Schwellenberg was one of the Queen's attendants.

Under such handicaps and circumstances Whitehead labored. True, there is not much great poetry in his odes, but there are a few portions which ought to be rescued from oblivion. Ode XXXII (1777) pictures the conflict between romanticism and neo-classicism. In it Whitehead reaffirms the decision of his own "The Enthusiast," and stamps himself as a follower of the Popean school:

What change would ye require? What form Ideal floats in fancy's sky? Ye fond enthusiasts break the charm, And let cool reason clear the mental eye.

The ode in which he praised the King for his mercy deserves some consideration for its revelation of sympathy for the lower classes. In it Whitehead forgets the Stoic attitude and sincerely pours out his heart in thankfulness to the king who identified himself with his people in their misfortune. Whitehead's prophecy

Footnote continued from preceding page

III. Come take this gun with bayonet fixed, Which at once both for Prince and for people will do. He seiz'd it with joy, made an effort to smile, Shoulder'd his musket, and cried <u>giggen-goo</u>. He burns his cock-horse, No longer is cross, For Georgy the picus now mounts a live horse; Pavour to minions, And death to their foes, And he shall have popping wherever he goes.

Ode XV (June 4, 1767).
 Ode XLVIII (New Year, 1785).

as to the future of America and England, while not exact, is of some interest. Whitehead would have shuddered at seeing that the "scion rising in the west," far from "court [ing] again the fostering breast," again warred on his Albion in 1812. He would have admitted that his prophecy was not altogether accurate, but would none the less have averred that the destinies of England and America have been linked together and that he was not merely dreaming when he wrote:

Two Britains through th' admiring world Shall wing their way with sails unfurl'd; Each from the other's kindred state Avert by turns the bolts of fate.

On the whole, the odes are not contemptible, but few have enough poetic or contemporary interest to warrant their being resurrected.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROSE

Whitehead published only four prose pieces; these were printed in two periodicals, The Museum and The World. The Museum; or, the Literary and Historical Register was published by Robert Dodsley and edited by Mark Akenside, who furnished an essay for each issue. Joseph Warton, William Collins, David Garrick and others. in addition to Whitehead, supplied "orthodox miscellany material." After a brief career of thirtynine numbers, it ceased publication on September 12, 1747. Another Dodsley venture (R. and J.) to which Whitehead contributed was The World, a weekly whose purpose, according to Editor Edward Moore ("Adam Fitz-Adam"), was "'to ridicule, with novelty and good humor, that part of the human species which calls itself the world, and to trace it through all its business, its pleasures, and its amusements." Moore. Joseph

 Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals. New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1930. p. 166.
 Ibid., p. 128. Warton, Lord Chesterfield, Horace Walpole, Cambridge and others furnished a total of 209 essays, which extended over a period of four years (January 4, 1753-December 30, 1756).

For The Museum Whitehead wrote an essay on "The Shield of Aeneas." which was published in three installments. The essay reveals his classical training. The three articles in The World, which contained criticism of contemporary manners and taste, show his conservatism and his tendency to moralize, as well as his literary indebtedness to Joseph Addison.

Whitehead's first published prose work was his "A Dissertation on the Shield of Aeneas," which appeared in three installments in Dodsley's The Museum, nos. I, III, V. 1746. Whitehead revised the essay, which Mason terms an "elegant piece of classical criticism," and Joseph Warton added it under the new title of "Observation etc." to the four-volume (1753) translation of Vergil which he and Christopher Pitt had made. The essay is a commentary on Vergil's description of the shield of Aeneas in Book VIII of the Aeneid, lines 626-728. The shield, as framed by the God of Fire Vulcan, contained a series of pictures of Alban and Roman affairs from the time of the exposed infant to the days of the universal monarch Augustus.

1.

Mason, p. 114. Pope's <u>Iliad</u>, XVIII, 537. 2.

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The idea of writing a running commentary on the contents of a shield was not new with Whitehead. According to Whitehead, Pope had written a similar work on the shield of Achilles as described in the <u>Iliad</u>. Whitehead confessed that he had wanted to do for the exploits of Aeneas what Pope had done for the deeds of Achilles. Pope himself had said that "the shield of Virgil is charted with a great deal more work than that of Homer." Taking "the shield of Achilles, as represented by Mr. Pope" as his model, Whitehead

would draw two concentric circles, the larger should mark the circumference of the shield, and the smaller be placed at pretty equal distances from the circumference and the centre. The space between the smaller and larger circle I would divide into twelve compartments; the space between the smaller circle and the centre, into four. In the twelve first I would comprize the ancient history, and appropriate the four inner entirely to the affair at Actium. 3

Whitehead admitted that he was "following Pope's method, and giving a literal translation of the several descriptions of the poet [Vergil], and adding some occasional remarks on each." Several of Whitehead's favorite topics are discussed in his "Observations." He remarks that Vergil, "in one nervous line,"

Mason, p. 149. I have not been able to find this.
 <u>Ibid.</u>
 <u>Ibid.</u>
 <u>Ibid.</u>
 <u>Ibid.</u>

Aeneadae in ferrum pro libertate ruebant, shows "the eager spirit of the Romans, and finely opposes their noble resolution in the cause of liberty to the insolent jubebat of Porsenna." Patriotism, another favorite theme of Whitehead, is stressed by the poet in his citing Cato the younger as "the noblest example of sincere patriotism." Augustus is considered "the defender of Rome and liberty, against a rebellious citizen sustained by a foreign power." Whitehead's moral bent is seen in his reference to the <u>castae</u> matres (11. 665-6 in Vergil), in which he feels that

there is some instruction couched under the epithet <u>castae</u>, and that the poet would insinuate that the violation of the marriage-bed is the bane of society, and a disregard or negligence on that head the sure forerunner of the destruction of a state. 4

In regard to religion, Whitehead seems to agree that "as religion was necessary to perfect his state, so was the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments full as necessary to perfect his religion."

Aside from the insight it gives into some of Whitehead's characteristics, the Observations, which the

1.	Mason,	p.	131.
2.	Ibid.,	p.	138.
3.	161d.,	p.	142.
4.	Ibid.,	P.	137.
5.	Ibid.		

European Magazine, and London Review calls "ingenious and classical," holds interest only for the one who is engaged in work on the Aeneid.

Of greater importance than the <u>Observations</u> are Whitehead's three prose pieces in <u>The World</u>. The issue of March 22, 1753 (No. XII), contains Whitehead's essay on "Taste." The essay reveals Whitehead's classicism: to him taste means following the strict rules of Aristotle. He laments that Grecian architecture, "that architecture, which was taught by nature and polished 2 by the graces, was totally neglected."

A few years before 1753, Whitehead writes, everything had been Gothic, including houses, beds, bookcases, and couches, "all copied from some parts or other of our old cathedrals." Whitehead thinks of this as a perversion of liberty, "which allows everyone the privilege of playing the fool, and of making himself ridiculous in whatever way he pleases." While there are still professors of the Gothic style in England, he goes on, the prevailing whim in everything now is Chinese:

1. European Magazine, and London Review, XIV (July, 1788), 35.

^{2.} The World, XII (March 22, 1753), 69.

^{3.} Cf. Martha Pike Conant, The Oriental Tale in England. New York: The Columbia University Press, 1908. pp. 223-225 for a discussion of the fad for Chinese Art in England.

Chairs, tables, chimney-pieces, frames for looking-glasses, and even our most vulgar utensils are all reduced to this new-fangled standard; and without doors so universally has it spread, that every gate to a cow-yard is in T's and Z's, and every hovel for the cows has bells hanging at the corners. 1

Whitehead proposes that Chinese architecture be tried out in charitable institutions, as in hospitals, where one might commodiously pass "from ward to ward by bridges adorned with triumphal arches." Whitehead would set at ease the minds of those who fear that Chinese religion and morals will vitiate and stagger the faith and morals of the English, for "on a moderable computation not one in a thousand of all the stiles, gates . . . which are called Chinese, has the least resemblance to anything that China ever saw." Therefore, Whitehead would quiet those who are alarmed by the fad and would remind them that the "Chinese ornaments are not only of our own manufacture, . . . but . . . of our own invention." The manifestly bantering

The World, XII (1753), 69. Ibid., p. 70. 1.

^{2.}

Ibid., p. 71. 3.

Ibid., p. 72. The Connoisseur II (1756), No. 135, 4. pp. 811-816, contains a poem about Sir Thrifty and his wife, the latter of whom wishes to have a country place, then changes it to Gothic or Chinese style with Greek statues, so that the place becomes a show-place for Sunday visitors:

tone of the essay places it in the field of light social satire.

Whitehead's views about the romances of the day are found in the May 10, 1753 issue, XIX, of <u>The</u> <u>World</u>. He laments the fact that the age is "over-run "with romances" in which "there is not even the least resemblance" of ourselves. Since the writers of heroic romances "professedly soar <u>above nature</u>," there is not much danger from them, because their unnaturalness is easily penetrated. Johnson, in No. 4 of <u>The Rambler</u>, published three years prior to Whitehead's articles, had expressed a similar sentiment:

(Footnote continued from preceding page)

NOW bricklayers, carpenters, and joiners, With <u>Chinese</u> artist and designers, Produce their schemes of alteration, To work this wondrous reformation. The useful dome, which secret stood Embosom'd in the yew-tree's wood, The trav'ler with amazement sees Chang'd to a Temple tout <u>Chinese</u>,* With many a bell and tawdry rag on, And crested with a sprawling dragon. *The reprint of 1826 here has "a temple, Gothic or Chinese." This poem might have been influenced by Whitehead. However, the theme was common at the time. <u>The World</u>, XIX (May 10, 1753), 111.

3. Ibid., 112.

1.

2.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself. 1

Whitehead admires Homer and Shakespeare as "those great masters of every movement of the human mind." for they drew really "from nature; and ages have felt and applauded the truth of their designs." But the modern artists have not studied the nature of the people and "seldom seem to have the least acquaintance with themselves:" they run into a different extreme. for they "dwell eternally upon orphan-beggars, and serving men of low degree." These "low writers" not only do not even afford amusement; they lack the utile et dulce. Furthermore, the writers are not acquainted with their subjects.

- Ibid., 112. 3.
- Ibid. 4.
- 5. Ibid., 113.

The Works of Samuel Johnson, LL.D., to Which is pre-fixed, An Essay on his Life and Genius, by Arthur Murphy. 12 vols. London: 1820. IV, 22. The World, XIX (May 10, 1753), 111. 1.

^{2.}

Ibid. Whitehead does not cite examples. Probably 6. he had in mind such novels as Moll Flanders (1722) and Roderick Random (1748).

But Whitehead is not complaining especially of the ignorance of the writers, but of their "extreme indecency," when they speak of

certain vices which the vulgar call fun, and the people of fashion gallantry; but the middle rank, and those of the gentry who continue to go to church, still stig-matize them by the opprobrious names of Cornication and adultery. 1

This sentiment echoes that of Johnson, who writes that

Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust; nor should the graces of galety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it. as to reconcile it to the mind. 2

Whitehead has a cure for this indecency. First he would banish "that inundation of obscenity which is daily pouring in from France." Secondly, he would ask Mr. Fitz-Adam -- to whom the essay is addressed -- to forbid his readers "even to attempt to open any novel, or romance, unlicensed by you; unless it should happen to be stamped FIELDING. &C." In the 1774 edition Whitehead ended the paragraph with "RICHARDSON or FIELD-ING." Whitehead asserts that his plan of allowing

- 1.
- The World, XIX (May 10, 1753), 114. The Rambler. The Works of Samuel Johnson, IV, 26. The World, XIX (May 10, 1753), 115. 2.
- 3.
- Ibid. 4.

Plays and Poems, II (1774). Richardson's Pamela (1740-41); Clarissa Harlowe (1747-8); Sir Charles 5. Grandison (1753-4). Fielding's Joseph Andrews (1742); Tom Jones (1749); Amelia (1751).

the public to read approved romances, as those of Richardson and Fielding, would furnish "a very pleasing way of conveying instruction to all parts of life."

The third of the three World essays, LVIII (Feb. 7, 1754), satirized the effeminacy of the age. Whitehead, in his "zeal for the public," berates the males of his day for their affectation. He takes to task those who while away their summers at Ranelagh, and who spend their winters in prattling scandal and at quadrille, and who in old age have neither honor and love nor obedience and troops of friends. Whitehead hopes that some projector will undertake to draw up "'a scheme for raising MEN for the service of the public." The poet admits that some youths take pains to appear manly, but says that the methods they pursue rather aggravate their effeminacy. Whitehead feels it perfectly permissible to laugh at "such incorrigible ideots," who lisp and amble, who display affectation, but whom "Nature certainly designed for men, and made, as Mr. Pope says, their souls bullet, and their bodies buff." In the paragraph of the essay, Whitehead satirically suggests

1.	Plays and Poems,	II (1774). 113.	
2.	The World, LVIII	(Feb. 7.	1754). 350	
3.	Ibid.			
4.	Ibid., 351.			
5.	Ibid., cf. Pope.	Satimas.	VITT 263	

that the opposite sex will supply the lack of manliness:

The assured look, the exalted voice, and theatrical step of our modern FEMALES, pretty sufficiently convince us that there is something MANLY still left amongst us. 1 Thus, while the male and female accomplishments are strangely scattered between the sexes, somehow or other they will be "jumbled together in that complicated ani-

mal, A MAN AND HIS WIFE."

This essay of Whitehead seems to be the embryo from which came "Ranelagh" and <u>The Goat's Beard</u>, the poet's plea for propriety among the sexes.

According to Walpole, Whitehead was ranked as a first writer in his own day, and his prose was regarded highly. The three essays which are known to us hardly offer enough material on which to base a critical estimate of his prose, but at least two of them contain reasonably successful satire. They are further interesting in revealing another instance of the influence of Addison on the later eighteenth-century essay.

4. Letters of Horace Walpole (Toynbee), III, 193. Of the seven mentioned by Walpole as first writers, Macaulay holds that "Whitehead was the lowest in station, but was the most accomplished tuft-hunter of his time" (The Works of Lord Macaulay Complete. ed. Lady Trevelyan. 8 vols. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1875. VI, 7).

^{1.} The World, LVIII (Feb. 7, 1754), 352.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{3.} Cf. pp. 97-103, Chapter II.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRAGEDIES

I. THE ROMAN FATHER

The first fifty years of the eighteenth century produced very few tragedies of great worth. Addison's <u>Cato</u> (1713) and Rowe's <u>Jane Shore</u> (1714) are the outstanding productions in the field of the serious drama. Whitehead with his <u>Roman Father</u> (1750) and <u>Creusa</u> (1754) was, like Addison in his <u>Cato</u>, to extol patriotism and love of fatherland. Thomson's <u>Sophonisba</u> appeared in 1730. In 1731 George Lillo's bourgeois tragedy <u>The History of George Barnwell</u>, or <u>The London</u> <u>Merchant</u>, for the first time presented everyday commercial life as a theme for tragedy. Sanuel Johnson saw his <u>Irene</u> die after nine performances in 1749, in spite of the efforts of his good friend, David Garrick.

Garrick, the chief actor and manager during the time when Whitehead wrote his dramas, dictatorially demanded that dramatists accede to his wishes, even if the play suffered thereby. Mason says that Garrick,

who was also a playwright, "wrote with a view to scenical effect only," and would "refuse admission upon the stage to any performance in which he could not display his principal, and almost unrivalled merits, the expression of strong, but sudden effects of passion." Mason believes that Garrick, had he lived in the days of Shakespeare, would not have admitted the soliloquies of Hamlet "without the most licentious pruning." Mason further says that Whitehead, in order to comply with Garrick's wishes, "was ever ready to alter or expunge any thing that might promote stage effect. even at the risque of hurting his own composition." For example. in 1762 Whitehead had prepared the prologue to The School for Lovers "as it was intended to have been spoken," and stated that he "confines his humbler Muse to rules" and "shifts no scenes to dazzle and surprise." But Garrick was not bound by rules, and a revised prologue said:

My constant friends above, around, below, Have English tastes, and love both change and show: Without such aids, even Shakespear would be flat--Our crouded Pantomimes are proofs of that. 5

Mason, p. 63.
 <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 63-4.
 <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 64.
 <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 65.
 <u>Prologue.</u> "As it is Spoken by Mr. GARRICK."

Garrick said that he knew the tastes of "gallery, boxes, pit," and would "indulge 'em too":

Change you shall have; so set your hearts at ease: Write as he will, we'll act it as you please. 1

In 1732 Rich had opened the first Covent Garden Theatre, and in 1747 Garrick and Lacy took over the bankrupt (1745) Drury Lane Theatre. In these two London theatres Whitehead's tragedies and comedies were presented.

His first dramatic production, <u>The Roman Father</u>, was staged at Drury Lane on February 24, 1750, with Garrick as the father, Barry as the young Horatius, and Mrs. Pritchard as Horatia.

Whitehead obviously used the <u>Horace</u> of Corneille as his major source for <u>The Roman Father</u>. Corneille, in turn, had utilized an incident from Livy. Book I of Livy recounts the Horatii-Curiatii episode, which tells how three brothers each from the Roman and Alban armies, the Horatii and Curiatii respectively, were to solve the deadlock between the two cities. In the strife two of the Roman Horatii were fatally wounded. The three Alban Curiatii, wounded, pursued

 Prologue. "As it is Spoken by Mr. GARRICK."
 Livy. 13 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919. I, XXV, 12.

the remaining Horatius in order to kill him. Horatius divided their attack by fleeing, thinking correctly that each Curiatius would pursue with whatever speed his strength permitted. Thus he was able to dispatch the Curiatii one by one so that "Romanus Albano On his way back to Rome he met his unimperet." wedded sister, who was engaged to one of the Curiatii. She recognized her betrothed's military cloak on her brother's shoulders, loosed her hair, and in tears called on her dead lover's name. Enraged, the fiery Horatius plunged his sword through her body with the words: "Sic eat quaecumque Romana lugebit hosten." The king, who did not wish to have the responsibility of pronouncing the death sentence, appointed duumvirs to pass judgment upon Horatius. When the duumvirs had condemned the hero and the lictor was fitting the noose, the father of Horatius appealed and declared that his daughter had been justly slain, since she had betrayed her country. Otherwise, he himself would have punished The father's tears and the son's courage his son. gained acquittal, and explatory rites cleansed the young Horatius of the flagrant murder.

1. <u>Livy</u>, I, XXV, 12. 2. <u>Ibid.</u>, I, XXVI, 5.

Corneille follows the story of Livy, but adds to the Livian characters Sabine, the beloved of Curiace and the sister of Horace; Valerius. the lover of Camille and the accuser of Horace; and three minor characters: Julie, the confidante of Sabine and Camille, and two soldiers, Flavian and Proculus. True to the neo-classic tradition, Corneille confines the scene to one room of the Roman home of old Horace. Corneille heightens the dramatic effectiveness of the story as he got it from Livy by presenting the wavering of Sabine's loyalties between her Alban king and her Roman husband, and the strife in Camille's heart between love and duty, as her fiance is an Alban, Curiace. Curiace and Horatius are contrasted. Curiace, offended because young Horace insists on fighting, would rather be more human and less Alban. So anti-Alban is Horace that he will not even leave Curiace alone with Camille. After the battle, when the incomplete news is brought in that young Horace has fled, old Horace utters the wish: "Qu'il mourutt" A few moments later old Horace rejoices over the fact that Rome has gained the victory over Alba. When young Horace returns, he is taunted by his sister and pierces her with his sword. She dies off-stage. In the final act Valerius accuses young Horace of

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murder. Sabine desires her own death as punishment for Horace:

Atone Camilla's angry Ghost, and save To Rome a man so fortunate and brave. (Cotton tr.) 1

Horace himself is ready to be put to death. But Tullus, after old Horace has pleaded for his son's life, pronounces the verdict: "Thy vertue sets thy glory 'bove thy Crime." Young Horace's love of Rome, his patriotism, his passion for the good of Rome, save him from death. Explatory rites are to be performed by the old Horatius.

That Corneille's <u>Horace</u> was popular in England is evidenced by the fact that three English translations of it were made in the seventeenth century. Sir William Lower published <u>Horatius</u>: <u>A Roman Tragedie</u> in 1656. On February 4, 1667-8, the translation by Mrs. Catherine Philips and Sir John Denham was acted at court. Evelyn tells of seeing it. The following year Pepys attended a performance and called it "a silly tragedy." In

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^{1. &}lt;u>Horace. A French Tragedy of Monsieur Corneille.</u> Englished by Charles Cotton, Esq. London: Henry Brome, 1671.

Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn, F.R.S.
 4 vols. London: George Bell and Sons, 1889.
 II, 35 & 41; IV, 14.

^{3.} Diary and Correspondence of Samuel Pepys, F.R.S. 4 vols. Philadelphia: David McKay, 1887. 4, 85.

1671 appeared Horace; A French Tragedy of Monsieur Corneille, which had been "englished" by Charles Cotton.

Whitehead in his Advertisement confesses his indebtedness to Corneille:

I think it necessary to acquaint the Public, that I should never have thought of writing a Play on the following Subject, if I had not first read the justly celebrated <u>Horace</u> of Mr. <u>Corneille</u>, and admired his Management of some Parts of the Story. They will find me tracing him very closely (with some few Alterations) in the latter End of the Third Act, and in the Beginning of the Fourth. In the other Acts I am hardly conscious to myself of having borrowed even a Thought from him; tho' I might have been proud to have translated whole Scenes, if my Plan and Characters would have admitted of it.

Whitehead followed Corneille's general plan, but made some significant changes. The cast of characters was cut from ten to six. Not only were the two soldiers omitted, but Curiace and his sister Sabine as well. Curiace is only mentioned as the beloved of Horatia. To compensate for these omissions Whitehead heightened the character of Horatia, so that she becomes one of the chief characters, if not the chief one. In Corneille's play Camille (Horatia) is stabbed off-stage and does not appear on the stage after the fatal stabbing. In Whitehead's drama Horatia is brought back to the stage and harangues her brother. She tears off her bandages and assists in her own death, thus

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removing from her brother some of the guilt for her death. Whitehead shortened the last act by cutting down the length of the speeches. Corneille's final scene consists of four speeches, one by Sabine of 36 lines, one by old Horace of 98 lines, one by Tullus of $53\frac{1}{2}$ lines, and one by Valere of one-half a line. The longest speech in the final scene in <u>The Roman</u> <u>Father</u> consists of $26\frac{1}{2}$ lines and is made by Tullus.

Whitehead's speeches in the last scene of <u>The</u> <u>Roman Father</u>, like those in Corneille's <u>Horace</u>, glorify patriotism and love of country.

In The Country Journal or the Craftsman for March 24, 1750 (No. 1133), one who signed himself Jonathan Irony disputed Whitehead's assertion of indebtedness to Corneille. Irony claimed that an English play by the name of <u>Staffordshire Father</u> is responsible for the "chief Merit" of the Roman Father.

I was some time since at the Theatre in <u>Drury-Lane</u>, to see the justly applauded <u>Roman Father</u>, and the Pleasure it afforded <u>me was inexpressible</u>. Mr. <u>Garrick</u> gave such Emotions to every Heart, that the Spectators were surprized at themselves for feeling in so exquisite a manner, and Mr. <u>Whitehead's Conduct in the Management of</u> his Plot, was generally approved of. He has certainly made a very correct Piece of it, but what extreamly surprizes me is, that he should give the Honour of the most applauded Scenes to a Frenchman, at the same time that he is indebted for the chief Merit of it to an old Play of our own. It is called the <u>Staffordshire</u> Father, and is to be found in Mr. <u>Dodsley's</u> Collection.

The portion of the play given in the <u>Country Jour-</u> <u>nal</u> dealt with the episode of an election. The father is listening to reports about an election to the House. The news is brought that his son has lost the election, but later it is announced that certain groups have been bribed and that his son has consequently been elected. This, claims Irony, is the manifest source from which Whitehead secured the material for his scene in which the bad news of the son's "cowardice" is converted into the good news of his skill in killing his three adversaries. It is quite evident that the claim of the <u>Country Journal</u> has no real basis. There is, however, one similarity between <u>The Staffordshire Father</u> and <u>The Roman Father</u>; the theme of patriotism runs through both.

In 1750 appeared three pamphlets, all anonymous, dealing with <u>The Roman Father</u>. <u>The Story on which the</u> <u>new tragedy call'd The Roman Father is founded</u> was published the same day the play was first presented. The writer of the <u>Story</u> says that

As the expectation of the town is much rais'd by the new tragedy of the <u>Roman</u> <u>Father</u>, which is to be acted this night at the theatre royal in Drury-Lane. 'twas judg'd the foregoing historical facts . . . would not be disagreeable to the gentlemen and ladies who are to be spectators of the play. 1

The <u>Story</u> states that "Mr. W--D is well known to the poetical world for his <u>essay on ridicule</u>" and other works, that he was "much esteem'd in that university [Cambridge]; and is now very deservedly belov'd, by all who know him, for his abilities, genius and ² modesty." The <u>Story</u> strikes an optimistic note when, in acknowledging the "most extraordinary success" of "Corneille, the Shakespear of the French," it adds that,

If what he said about Mr. W--D's play be true, viz. that there is much more of the pathetic introduc'd in it, than in the French tragedy, we may reasonably expect THE ROMAN FATHER will prove a very formidable rival to the HORACE of Corneille. 3

This advance advertising was followed by <u>Remarks</u> on the New Tragedy, call'd, The Roman Father. The Spectator, the author of this second pamphlet dealing with Whitehead's play, had seen the tragedy, and considered that this "very ingenius piece" needs correction and improvement so that in the next season the

 The Story on which the New Tragedy, call'd, The Roman Father, is Founded. With Some Account of the Author, and His Writings. London: W. Reeve and A. Dodd, 1750. p. 21.
 Ibid., pp. 21.22.
 Ibid., p. 22.

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"Roman Father may take a second race for glory." Much of the pamphlet consists of detailed criticism and naive suggestions for improvements in revision. The Spectator is of the opinion that Horatia, in the first act, lowers herself before the common soldier sent with a message to her father:

She hips after him, and endeavors to pump him, in order to learn what business he had been transacting with the old fellow.--Now this I think a piece of impertinence, that a Roman lady should be asham'd of being guilty of: besides which, she gives a hint, that she had been listening at the chamber door, during the soldier's conversation with her father; and was now inquiring what she had heard before, as not willing to trust her own ears.--I don't know how far a Roman might behave to his daughter, upon this occasion; but, I know, a citizen of London would have whipt miss for her curiosity. 2

The Spectator in his light vein would have the sword battle off-stage changed to a fist fight on-stage. This change would make the play "more entertaining to an English audience" and would add the three Curiatii and the other two Roman youths to the cast of characters. Furthermore, he would

have the virgins undressing the combatants, and adorning them with wreaths before the battle, and many other little ceremonies that might be introductd upon this occasion-- 4

3. Remarks, p. 16.

4. Ibid.

 <u>Remarks on the New Tragedy</u>, <u>call'd</u>, <u>The Roman Father</u>, <u>With a Word to the Author</u>. By a SPECTATOR. London: W. Reeve and A. Dodd, 1750, p. 5.
 <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 7.

If Whitehead would make this change, he would have the advantage that

Your play would some nights be a comedy, and some a tragedy, according to the disposition of your audience--On a holiday, when the vulgar attend the theatre, I don't doubt but a broken jaw, or a crack'd crown, will sufficiently supply them with mirth, and then it will be a comedy--when the better sort, and the fair sex are present, their concern for the batter'd heroes, will make it again a tragedy-- 1

In order not to give the audience the impression that Horatia died for lack of care, the Spectator would introduce half a dozen physicians, have the surgeon give a little description of the wound, and even call in a 2 brother of the faculty for consultation.

A Comparison between the Horace of Corneille and The Roman Father of Whitehead (1750), the third pamphlet treating the tragedy, compares the two plays in a dialogue between two men, Bromley and Freeman. While the <u>Comparison</u> shows great attention to detail and quotes extensively from Corneille, its reader will conclude that the author showed his nationalistic prejudice in preferring the English drama to the French

^{1.} Remarks, p. 17.

^{2.} The Monthly Review rejects Foote as "the father of this miserable brat," the Remarks, II (1750) 408.

^{3. &}lt;u>A Comparison Between the Horace of Corneille and</u> the Roman Father of Whitehead. London: M. Cooper, 1750.

tragedy, and that the minute criticism led to wordiness and confusion. The Monthly Review, in looking over the three pamphlets, states in all fairness that the first informed "the curious and inquisitive" of the nature and story of the Roman Father; that the second, the <u>Remarks</u>, was but "an insignificantly illmanner'd censure" of the tragedy; and that the <u>Com-</u> <u>parison</u> was minus wit and brevity and was a "long, spiritless, insipid panegyrick."

The reviews were generally very enthusiastic. Many critics openly preferred Whitehead to Corneille. <u>The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure</u> praised the play and was of the opinion that

though Mr. <u>Corneille</u> has given us some fine sketches, it is Mr. <u>Whitehead</u> that has finished them in so masterly a manner, that our judgments are satisfied, whilst our imaginations are pleased. 4

Scots Magazine for March lists "The Story of the 5 Roman Father," but offers no criticism.

The London Magazine for March, 1750, prints the prologue and asserts that the play was acted "with

- 2. Ibid., p. 408.
- 3. <u>Ibid</u>.
- 4. The Universal Magazine, VI (1750), 134.
- 5. Scots Magazine, XII (March, 1750), 139-140.

^{1.} The Monthly Review, II (1750), 407.

universal Applause." It commends the final speech

made by Tullus:

Learn hence, ye Romans, on how sure a base The patriot builds his happiness. No stroke, No keenest, deadliest shaft of adverse fate Can make his generous bosom quite despair, But that alone by which his country falls.

Grief may to grief in endless round succeed, And nature suffer when our children bleed; But still superior must that hero prove, Whose first, best passion, is his COUNTRY'S LOVE.

The London Magazine commends the manner in which Whitehead brings in Valerius and his subsequent accusation against Publius:

Then the accusation brought by Valerius against Publius arises naturally from our knowledge of his passionate love for Horatia, which by Mr. Whitehead we are fully apprised and kept in mind of, from the beginning to the end of the piece, whereas in Mr. Corneille's we hear nothing of it, except very slightly in the dialogue between Horatia, called by him Camilla, and Julia, in the third scene of the first act; so that the audience must have entirely forgot it, before it produces its effect in the second scene of the fifth act. And we must add to this, that Mr. Whitehead has most artfully made it the chief cause of saving Publius from the fury of the enraged populace. 2

The <u>Gentleman's Magazine</u> for March, 1750, printed in full the prologue and epilogue and gave an account of the historical incident which was the basis of the

- 1. The London Magazine, XIX (1750), 132.
- 2. Ibid., 102.

plot. The following poem appeared in the magazine, signed by W:

To the Author of the ROMAN FATHER By an unknown Hand.

As when brave <u>Publius--on</u> the verge of fate Preserv'd his country's freedom, and her state; The youths and virgins wreaths of flowrets bring, And round the hero grateful paeans sing; So now each lover of the tragick scene Shou'd offer laurels of unfading green To you, who in this dull, declining age, Revive the glory of the <u>British</u> stage!

Before your strokes each modern quits the field, Nay all, but <u>Shakespeare's</u> glorious self, must yield. Like him you draw soft nature's tender part, And in live colours paint the human heart, Such as it was ere vice began to reign, And spread her follies o'er our <u>Albion</u> plain: Such as it was when <u>Romans</u> durst be brave, When ev'ry <u>Briton</u> scorn's a fashion's slave! When honest satyr did not fear to lash That atom <u>Fribble</u>, 1 and that nothing <u>Flash</u>;²

3

What thinking man beholds the godlike fire, Whose bosom burns not with congenial fire? What fair one can refrain from streaming eyes, When warm in youth the lost Horatia dies! In each pathetick scene, who can refuse To hail with loud applause your virtuous muse?

In contrast to the commendatory reviews of the Universal Magazine and the London Magazine is the view of <u>The Monthly Review</u>, which says that the public sees the <u>Roman Father</u>, which

 Fribble--a weak-minded fop in Garrick's <u>Miss in</u> <u>her Teens</u>, a part played by Garrick himself.
 Flash--a cowardly braggart in the same play.
 The <u>Gentleman's Magazine</u>, XX (March, 1750), 181.
 The author of the article was John Hill, M.D. (1716-1775). does not please them, nay, that they find very little merit in, except that of its being well acted; yet it is still most vigorously patronis'd. 1

But, adds the Review, the public,

when we saw it acted, never gave one signal of their approbation, except where the masterly manner of the performer deserv'd it, but on passages that were translated from the French writer. 2

The <u>Review</u> considers Whitehead as "far from having all the qualifications essential to a dramatic poet" and holds that, in order to heighten "the noble spirit that author [Corneille] gave the father," he lapsed into bombast. The English magazine displays its preference for the French play when it remarks that

the two first acts, and the beginning of the third, are importinent, and the latter end of the fourth and the whole fifth, tedious: We have only the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth to bestow our praises upon; and cannot but observe. that the applause we are to give to these. as well as that which the audience bestowed upon them while acting, must, instead of elating the author, as applauses naturally cught to do, rather mortify him, when he remembers that these are mere translations of an author whom he has too much neglected in the rest of the play. We have already delivered our sentiments of the English post so freely, that we would only be understood to propose these scenes as an example of the merit of the original work. 5

5. <u>Ibid</u>., 412.

^{1.} The Monthly Review, II (1750), 407.

^{2.} Ibid., 409.

^{3.} Ibid.

^{4.} Ibid., 411.

The <u>Review</u> does not like Whitehead's translation of <u>Qu'il mourut</u>:

In the third act, when Valeria, confessing to the old Horatius that Publius is fled, and that the cause of his country is deserted by him, pleads in his excuse what could he do when three oppos'd him? The Frenchman makes the parent answer, with an impetuosity natu-ral to the rage and anguish of a father and a Roman--Have dy'd! The translator of the Horace of Corneille, or (if you please to call him so) the author of the Roman Father, for male dum recitat incipit esse suus, breaks all the force and majesty of the phrase in this place, by adding the sign of the mood and tense to it: it is true indeed, the sentiment could not but call forth a thunder of applause, when we heard He might have dy'd! pronounced with all the energy that the best player of the present, or perhaps of any age, could give' it; but on comparison with the French it must be acknowledged, that tho' the sublimity of the thought could not readily be impair'd by any hand, the sublime in the expression has been wholly cancell'd in the doing it into English. 1

Samuel Richardson in a letter of March 29, 1750, maintains that he himself "could have told him [Whitehead] how he might have made a better play over this very story, hideous and unnatural as it is, than he has done." Richardson reacts unfavorably to Horatia's emotionalism. He admits that her situation was distressful, but, he asks,

^{1.} The Monthly Review, II (1750), 409-410.

Catalogue of the Collection of Autograph Letters and Historical Documents. ed. Alfred Morrison. 13 vols. London: Strangeway & Sons, 1883-92. V, 253.

was not her distress as rampant, let me call it, before the combat of her 3 brothers with 3 Alban brothers (one of the latter her betrothed lover) was so much as thought of, and that only in a common, in a general case, where every woman's lover, husband, friend, brother, in the two contending nations were equally engaged, equally in danger. It was the poet's notion that she must whine, and be madly in love, to be a woman, and to set all the women in the boxes, pit, and galleries a sympathising with her. How many good officers' wives, I warrant, were provoked to shed tears for the distress of Horatia, who never shed one for the danger of their husbands when they set out for the war, so lately concluded by a peace with the French? Good reason, you'll say; the distress was here better acted than they could have acted it were they to have opened all the flood gates of their grief and rained showers at their eyes; and moreover Horatia's expectations were all alive and heightened -- the good soul was not married. But why did not the author make a noble scene indeed by bringing all the Roman wives, the Roman widows, Roman maidens, in one tumultuous mob into the Roman Forum, and another mob of Alban women (they were all equally concerned with Horatia before the combat of 3 to 3 was decided upon, to exclaim, to hollow, to rave as Horatia did, that a leap from the horrid Tarpeian rock or a plunge into the muddy Tyber (both which were in her power) would have been more eligible to her than what she felt? But, Madam, can you form any thing in your mind more contemptible, when you consider it rightly, than the idea of a young woman, when her country is in the utmost danger, running about complaining that her man may have his crown cracked, that she is in love up to the ears and cannot bear it; deaf-ening the ears of her father as well as brothers, zealous as they are for the public safety, with the confession of what she suffers from the stings of a private passion? Had he, as his master Corneille had set him the example.

which he had not the judgment to follow, brought together the two lovers, they might have poured out their silly souls into each other's bosoms, and called upon the celestial register to record their vows above, and all the souls in the playhouse might then have fanned away and sighed and sobbed and murmured respectively to their sighs, sobs, and murmurs, till the whole female audience had joined in one amorous.

'But to proclaim her passion to a father, and to such a father, how indecently, how unnaturally shocking. Do you think, Madam, that a modern girl could have done this to a father if she could to a mother? It is impossible to forbear treating this subject strongly. To decent, to reasonable, to worthily founded love, no one makes greater and more indulgent allowances than myself. Had I time and health, I would give the world a story which should show how favourably I think of such a love, and of an openness and sensibility of heart in your sex. 1

Nine years after the first appearance of the tragedy, Thomas Wilkes, in his <u>A General View of the</u> <u>Stage</u> (1759), noticed "the varieties of the Roman ² Father" and admired the manner in which is painted the father's

anger and concern for the suspected cowardice of his son, which is contrasted by the mixture of joy and surprise of

Pretended flight! and this succeeded, ha! Oh glorious boy!

in a manner that fully deserves that applause with which it is always crowned. 3

1+	Catalogue of t	ne Collection	of Autograph	Letters
	and Historical	Documents.	V. 253-4.	
2	Thomas Willkos	A Clanamal MA	and the fite	

 Thomas Wilkes, <u>A General View of the Stage</u>. London: J. Coote and W. Whetstone, 1759. p. 27.
 Ibid., p. 253. Words of commendation came also from Murphy, who mainlained that "the stage was enriched with the tragedy" of the <u>Roman Father</u>. Quite enthusiastic, Murphy credited Whitehead with discarding "all redundancies and superfluous characters" and with giving the play a "coherence that gives the appearance of regular unity."³ Murphy felt that the father binds the plot:

The action of his play hinges entirely on the Roman father. He is principally interested in every incident, and by that judicious conduct the whole is made a regular and well connected fable. The death of Horatia is managed with great skill. Towards the close of the fourth act, she pours her curses on her brother and the Roman name. Horatius draws his sword, and by her father's order she is forced away. But nothing can appease her fury. Her friend Valeria, in the fifth act, tells how she provoked her fate. (She desires to see her fat her and her brother: for that purpose she is brought on the stage, and a pathetic scene ensues.) The people crowd to the house, demanding justice on the murderer. She forgives her brother, and expires. The Roman Father becomes an advocate for his son, and saves his life. Upon the whole, it must be acknowledged, that what the original divided into three distinct actions, is by Mr. Whitehead carried on with a coherence that gives the appearance of regular unity. There are no detached scenes, no unnecessary characters; no ambitious ornaments, and no speeches for mere parade. 4

 Arthur Murphy, <u>The Life of David Garrick Esq.</u>, I, 178.
 <u>Ibid.</u>, 184-5.
 <u>Ibid.</u>, 186.

4. <u>Ibid.</u>, 185-6.

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Murphy found "intrinsic value" in The Roman Father.

A mixed tribute came from <u>The Companion to the</u> <u>Playhouse</u>, which took Whitehead to task for confining his story to the Horatian family and for depriving himself of exhibiting "a great Aggravation of the Distress." On the other hand, the <u>Companion</u> complimented Whitehead for shortening the "too long and Diffuse" declamations of Corneille, believed that there are "more poetical Beauties in the Language of Mr. <u>Whitehead's</u>, than in that of <u>Corneille's</u> Tragedy," and concluded that <u>The Roman Father</u> "may be rank'd among the best of the dramatic Pieces of this somewhat unprolific Age." This criticism is the same as that found in the 1812 edition of the <u>Companion</u> known as Biographia Dramatica.

Francis Gentleman, along with others, finds various faults in the <u>Father</u>. He holds that Whitehead's

^{1.} Arthur Murphy, The Life of David Garrick Esq., I, 187.

^{2.} The Companion to the Playhouse: or, An Historical Account of all the Dramatic Writers and their Works that have appeared in Great Britain and Ireland, from the Commencement of our Theatrical Exhibitions, down to the Present Year 1764. Composed in the Form of a Dictionary. 2 vols. London: 1764. II, sub "Whitehead." A slip of paper in this volume has the following: "The authorship has been attributed to Goldsmith," most likely a bookdealer's effort to sell the volume.

^{3.} Ibid.

"tragic strains will never make anybody cry," and that while his "sentiments are just and commendable." "a dreadful soporific languor drowses over the whole, throwing both auditors and readers into a poppean lethargy." While Mason places the Father above the Horace, he points to the final act and maintains that "the fable still drags, not indeed in any degree as it does in the French tragedy, yet it still drags." Anderson, while holding that Whitehead's tragedy is "a great improvement on one of the great Corneille's best tragedies, and may be ranked among the best dramatic pieces of this age," echoes Mason's criticism when he says that the play limps at the end. The cause of this limping is identified by Campbell. who feels that the death of the heroine concludes the interest in the play, and that the tearing off of the bandages inspires instead of tragic commiseration "a sore physical shuddering."

In the twentieth century, Nicoll finds that the theme of patriotism causes disunity in the play:

- 3. The Works of the British Poets (Anderson), XI, 894. 4. Specimens of the British Poets (Campbell), VII, 5.
- 4. <u>Specimens of the British Poets</u> (Campbell), VII, 5. 5. <u>Ibid</u>.

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Francis Gentleman, The Dramatic Censor; or, Critical Companion. 2 vols. London: J. Bell, 1770. 11, 474.
 Mason, pp. 55-6.

The best scenes in the play are those in which Horatia inveighs against patriotism; but these after all tend to destroy the unity of the play, which at the close, extols the hero who thinks only of his fatherland. 1

But Cazamian maintains, on the other hand, that The Roman Father "still makes a lasting impression."

The independent Garrick took liberties in the presentation of The Roman Father. He felt that the play was too long and consequently, says Whitehead. in the cut copy for the Irish stage "there is a great deal left out, but nothing added." Whitehead himself had written to Garrick less than a month before that he was altering the fifth act for Garrick's winter season. Later in the same year. November 1. 1767, Whitehead wrote to Garrick about the changes:

. . . An hour or two will complete my alterations of "The Roman Father," and those two you shall have. But I beg nothing of mine may at all interrupt your other schemes for the public. The first four acts of "The R. F." will stand as they did, with only the change of a few lines or words in particular places. The lady will be entirely left out of the fifth act, any more than as a handsome corpse. 5

- 4.
- The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, I, 271. 5.

Allardyce Nicoll, A History of Early Eighteenth 1. Century Drama 1700-1750. Cambridge: University Press, 1925. p. 95. Emile Legouis and Louis Cazamian, <u>A History of</u>

^{2.} English Literature. II, 192.

The Harcourt Papers, VII (June 11, 1767), 270. Ibid., VII (May 23, 1767), 269. 3.

In the same letter Whitehead pointed out a "trifling" change of "woes to sorrows, in the last line of the second act, to avoid the rhime" and suggested that a l few words be changed for the sake of emphasis.

Except for changes to please Garrick, however, Whitehead kept his version intact. Despite criticisms of his translation of "Qu'il mourût," in the editions he supervised it remained "He might have died!" In a 1780 edition "Die!" replaces Whitehead's version, with the note that it is "altered from Mr. W. Whitehead." The editions of 1776, 1797, 1808, 1824-27, and the American version in <u>The British Drama</u>--all without Whitehead's imprimatur--have either "Die!," or "He might have died!," or both. The Inchbald 1808 version has Horatia cry, "Die!"--no doubt a printer's mistake. Whitehead included the "tearing off the bandages" stage direction in his own editions; editions by others omit it entirely.

By compiling from Genest, Bitter, Wilkinson, 4 and Macmillan, it was found that Whitehead's first

- The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, I, 272.
 John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage, from the RESTORATION in 1660 to 1830. 10 vols. Bath: H. E. Carrington, 1832.
- 3. Tate Wilkinson, <u>Memoirs of His Own Life.</u> 5 vols. Printed for the Author, 1790. <u>The Wandering Patentee</u>; or, a <u>History of the Yorkshire Theatres from 1770 to</u> the present time. 4 vols. York: Tate Wilkinson, 1795.
- 4. Drury Lane Calendar.

drama was presented a total of 47 times at Drury Lane, Covent Garden, Liverpool, Bath, Harrow, and Hull, as follows:

1749-50:	Feb. 24 to May 11	D.L.	12	times
1750-51:1	Mar. 11 to May 15	D.L.	3	
1752-53:	Dec. Harrow School	Room	1	
1757-58:	Jan. 28 to Apr. 14	D.L.	5	
1763-64:	Mar. 27 to May 8	D.L.	2	
1764-65:	Apr. 20	D.L.	1	
1767-68:	Nov. 18	C.G.	ì	
1768-69:	Feb. 3 to Mar. 14	C.G.	2	
1769-70:	n.d.	C.G.	1	
1774-77:	Sept. 29	Liverpool	1	
1775-76:	n.d.	C.G.	1	
1776-77:	Nov. 16	D.L.	1	
1777-78:2	Oct. 28	Hull	1	
1777-78:	n.d.	C.G.	1	
1784-85	Feb. 17	C.G.	1	
1785-86:3	Oct. 17 to Dec. 9	C.G.	5	

 Tate Wilkinson, <u>Memoirs of His Own Life</u>. I, 46-48.
 Of this performance Tate Wilkinson remarks that "my friend Mrs. Inchbald in the heroine Horatia, in Mr. Whitehead's tragedy of The Roman Father... was well received." (Tate Wilkinson, <u>The Wandering Patentee</u>; <u>or, a History of Yorkshire Theatres from 1770 to the</u> present time). I, 277.

3. Whitehead died April 14, 1785.

-	1	17	1	-
-		1	o	-

1786-87:	May 19	C.G.	l times
1787-88:	Dec. 3	C.G.	1
1791-92:	n.d.	C.G.	1
1794-95:	Nov.	D.L.	3
1797-98:	Nov. 7	Bath	1
1810-11:	Nov. 27	C.G.	1

The Roman Father was frequently presented outside England. Hitchcock mentions two instances of its being given in Ireland, the 1759-60 and 1772-73 seasons, both times by the Smock Alley Company. The Rev. S. C. Hughes, in his The Pre-Victorian Drama in Dublin, mentions twenty-three performances in Dublin.

In America The Roman Father experienced many pre-5 According to Seilhamer, Hornblow, Pollock, sentations.

- 1. Robert Hitchcock, An Historical View of the Irish Stage from the Earliest Period down to the Close of the Season 1788. 2 vols. Dublin: William Folds, 1794. II, 31.230. Rev. S. C. Hughes, The Pre-Victorian Drama in Dub-lin. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co., 1904. p. 62.
- 2.
- George O. Seilhamer, History of the American Theatre: During the Revolution and After. Philadelphia: 3. Globe Printing House, 1889. History of the American Theatre: New Foundations. Philadelphia: Globe Printing House, 1891.
- Arthur Hornblow, <u>A History of the Theatre in America</u> from its Beginning to the Present <u>Time</u>. 2 vols. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919. 4.
- Thomas Clark Pollock, The Philadelphia Theatre in the 5. Eighteenth Century. Together with the Day Book of the same period. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1933.

Wilson, Willis, and Odell, the following performances of <u>The Roman Father</u> were given in America:

City	Performances	Last Performance
Philadelphia	14	Dec. 22, 1854
New York	14	Oct. 8, 1849
Alexandria, Va.	1	Nov. 15, 1793
Annapolis, Md.	3	Feb. 18, 1784
Baltimore	1	March 28, 1783 ⁴
Charleston, S. C.	5	Jan. 18, 1800
Jamaica	1	April 8, 1780
Boston	1	Oct. 31, 1796

The close of the Revolutionary War was celebrated at the Annapolis Theatre by a presentation of <u>The Roman</u> <u>Father</u>, for which Heard wrote and recited a prologue, in which he pointed out the similarity between the Roman father and Washington (April 24, 1783):

^{1.} Arthur Herman Wilson, <u>A History of the Philadelphia</u> <u>Theatre 1835-1855</u>. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935.

^{2.} Eola Willis, The Charleston Stage in the XVIII Century with Social Settings of the Time. Columbia, S. C.: The State Company, 1924.

George C. D. Odell, <u>Annals of the New York Stage</u>.
 13 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1927.
 <u>The Roman Father</u> is named among "the pieces frequently played by the old American Company" (Baltimore). Seilhamer, <u>DR&A</u>, 88.

Ye brave assertors of your country's cause, Ye gallant champions to protect her laws, Children of Freedom, from oppression raised, Beloved by nations, by your foes e'en praised, Whose warlike deeds have raised your country's name, Equal at least to Greek or Roman fame, And prov'd as wonders in the distant climes, You dar'd be virtuous in the worst of times; Attend this night our author's tragic tale, And let the maxim in your hearts prevail: "He who can melt at sight of human woes Will fight the better 'gainst his country's foes."

By you encourag'd we attempt to prove Those varied passions, Honor, Duty, Love---A Roman maid demands the pitying sigh. What tender hearts can such a boon deny? A father to preserve the State from shame, Gives his own children to the public claim, The humble passions nobly he withstood, And conquered nature for his country's good.

O, could my poor, imperfect powers impart The poet's language to the feeling heart, Could I such well-wrote sentiments express, And paint the Roman patriot's distress, Then might your fancy judge the author drew A portrait of Columbia's father too.

When war surrounded us with dreadful rage, The State alone indulged our infant stage, Grateful to you our ardor will increase With glorious independency and peace. 1

Patriotism, the theme of the <u>Roman Father</u>, made the play a favorite in America in the early days of the independent state. The evening of March 28, 1785, the American Company presented the tragedy at Charleston, South Carolina, in honor of General George Washington. <u>The State Gazette</u> of South Carolina announced the play:

1. George O. Seilhamer, History of the American Theatre: During the Revolution and After. pp. 91.92.

By Permission This Evening, March 28, 1785 The Theatre in the City Exchange of Charleston Will be Opened by the American Company of Comedians With a Tragedy Inscribed to his Excellency, General Washington Called the ROMAN FATHER To conclude with a Transparent Scene and Procession In which will be introduced the much admired air "When Peace Waves her Ensign of Snow o'er the Land," By Miss Wall And the Allemande Dance By Mr. Patterson and Mrs. Kidd 1

The father of his country died on December 14, 1799, and the Charleston Theatre presented the Roman Father on January 18, 1800 in honor of "The Deliverer of His Country." The production filled the house to capacity, and a repeat performance was given on January 22.

In evaluating this tragedy, one is struck first by what seems to be a contradiction between its content and its title. Whitehead stressed the character of Horatia to such an extent that the reader's interest centers in her. Indeed, Elton would call the play The Roman Sister. Elton, however, forgets that Garrick

^{1.}

Quoted in Willis, pp. 89.90. Eola Willis, The Charleston Stage in the XVIII Century with Social Settings of the Time, p. 454. 2. 3.

Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature 1730-1780. 2 vols. London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1928. 1, 318.

played the part of old Horatius and certainly would not have permitted Mrs. Pritchard, who played the part of Horatia, to steal the spotlight. It must be admitted that the play lags after the death of Horatia, but it does not lag as much as it does in Corneille's version; Whitehead cut down the number of the speeches as well as their length. Those who altered Whitehead cut the play still more. Whitehead would have fared better if he had shortened the scenes following the death of Horatia or had found some method of bringing the play to an earlier conclusion. By omitting the character of Curiatius, Whitehead lessened the dramatic conflict. He missed the opportunity of pitting Curiatius against young Publius and of showing the humanity of Curiatius as opposed to the uncompromising patriotism of Publius. The matter of the translation of "Qu'il mourfit!" is minor; a good actor could have put as much into "Might have died!" as into "Die!" or "Have died!" Of greater importance is Whitehead's addition of the stage action of Horatia's tearing off the bandages in the editions he supervised. This makes Horatia almost guilty of suicide. At the same time, the tearing off of the bandages reveals her firm desire to be with her lover Curiatius. There is no

doubt that <u>The Roman Father</u> provided ample opportunity for display of declamatory and oratorial powers. This made it a favorite stock play for a number of years. The public taste, however, has changed; and <u>The Roman</u> <u>Father</u> is of interest today only as an example of the English patriotic drama of the eighteenth century and for its casual connection with American history in its having been presented twice in honor of the American Father.

II. CREUSA

Prior to the presentation of Whitehead's <u>Creusa</u>, several English playwrights had tried their hands at adaptations from the Greek drama. In 1699 John Dennis wrote his <u>Iphigenia</u>, modelled after the <u>Iphigenia in</u> <u>Tauris</u> of Euripides. In December of 1730 the <u>Medea</u> of Charles Johnson, based partly on Euripides and partly on Seneca, was staged at Drury Lane. In 1726 Richard ¹ West adapted the <u>Hecuba</u> of Euripides. In 1738 appeared the <u>Agamemmon</u> of James Thomson, drawn from Aeschylus. None of these, however, was noteworthy, as either stage or closet drama.

<u>Creusa</u>, which uses as its source material the <u>Ion</u> of Euripides, had its premiere at Drury Lane April 20, 1754, a few weeks prior to Whitehead's departure on the Grand Tour.

2

In the opening scene of the <u>Ion</u>, Hermes tells of the seduction of Creuse by Apollo and Creuse's abandonment of her child, Ion, in the cave where the god had

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 [&]quot;On the first night a full audience would not listen to it [West's Hecuba]; on the next two nights there was no audience" (DNB, sub "Richard West").

^{2.} In the nineteenth century Thomas Noon Talfourd wrote Ion (1835), also a tragedy.

embraced her. Before leaving the child, she had fastened tokens to him and placed him in a cradle. Apollo had then ordered Hermes to take Ion to the temple steps at Delphi, where the Pythia befriended him. In the meantime Creusa had wedded Xuthus of Euboea. As the play opens, the childless Xuthus and Creusa are on the way to Delphi to consult the oracle about their childlessness. Apollo does not intend to reveal the truth about Ion's birth, but wishes Xuthus to believe that Ion, now an adult, is his illegitimate child. Xuthus will then take Ion; only Creusa and Ion will know the truth. Thus Hermes lays the groundwork of the play.

When Ion and Creusa meet at Delphi for the first time, Creusa, not knowing that Ion is her son, lays before him the case of herself and a pretended friend, in reality the story of herself and Apollo. Meanwhile Xuthus arrives to consult the oracle. When he emerges from the temple, he greets Ion as his son. Ion, though wounded at the realization of "two defects, my sire an alien, myself a bastard!" (11. 591.2, Verrall tr.), agrees to Xuthus's proposal to celebrate the event with a feast. The identity of Ion, however, is to be withheld

^{1.} The Ion of Euripides. With a Translation Into English Verse and An Introduction and Notes by A. W. Verrall. Cambridge: The University Press, 1890.

from Creusa--Xuthus commands some female slaves, who have witnessed the scene between him and Ion, not to reveal Ion's identity to her. But the servants do tell Creusa, who curses Apollo. Her ancient guardian proposes the murder of Ion as revenge. The slave places in Ion's cup at the feast a poison which Creusa carries in her bosom.

Creusa's plot fails when, at the feast, a dove drinks of the cup and dies. Creusa's part in the murderous plot is revealed, and she is sentenced to death. She escapes to the altar for refuge. While Ion and the crowd hesitate to pull her away from the sacred ground, the Pythia brings from the temple the cradle and the tokens. Ion is united to his mother, who tells him that not Xuthus, but Apollo is his real father. Ion is overjoyed, but remains somewhat skeptical at first. Creusa emphatically calls Apollo her lover, upon which Ion asks, "Are his revelations true, or false?" (1. 1537, Verrall tr.).

Before Ion can enter the temple to receive an answer from the Pythia, the Goddess Athena appears. She ignores his question and tells him that she comes as spokesman for Apollo, who has saved Ion "by artifice" (1. 1565, Verrall tr.). She reveals that Ion will give his name to the Ionian race and Xuthus will not know the truth, but that Xuthus and Greusa will have offspring. Ion ends his part in the play with the statement:

TEIDomai S'Eirai Πατρός, Logiou και τήσδε-και πριν Τουτο S'our απιστονήν (I believe myself to be the son of Loxias¹ and Creusa, And previously this was

Creusa retracts her curses and blesses Apollo.

incredible.)

Whitehead followed the general plan of the <u>lon</u>, but made several significant changes in the plot. In rationalizing, he omitted the supernatural. In <u>Creusa</u> there is no god as father; Ilyssus is the natural son of Creusa and Nicander, a human being, who appears in the play under the name of Aletes, a name he had assumed when he ran away to Delphi. Creusa's father had banished him for seducing his daughter. Although Creusa believes him to be dead, he, however, had taken the child with him to Delphi.

Another example of Whitehead's rationalization of the story is to be found in his treatment of the oracle. In the prologue he voices his disbelief in the Pythia:

This Stage [is] the Temple of the Delphic God; Where Kings, and Chiefs, and Sages came of old, Like modern Fools, to have their Fortunes told; And Monarchs were enthron'd, or Nations freed, As an old Priest, or wither'd Maid decreed.

1. Apollo.

Yet think not all were equally deceiv'd, Some knew, more doubted, many more believ'd. In short, these Oracles, and witching Rhimes Were but the pious Frauds of ancient Times; Wisely contriv'd to keep Mankind in awe, When Faith was Wonder, and Religion Law!

Later, in a scene between Aletes and the Pythia, Whitehead has Aletes frankly claim credit for the oracle's fame:

. . . And now If, as thou say'st, my secret kind Advice, And worn Experience in the Ways of Men, Have gain'd thy Altars Credit, and with Gifts Loaded thy Shrines, now, by one grateful Act Thou may'st replay me all. 1

In <u>Creuse</u> Aletes has become the oracle. Thus Whitehead makes Pythia, the honourable high-priestess of the <u>Ion</u>, nothing more than a fortune-teller, a tool of Aletes.

Whitehead omitted, furthermore, the <u>deus ex machina</u> device of Euripides. There is no Athena appearing above the temple as the spokesman for Apollo; there is no need for this phenomenon in Whitehead's plot.

Whitehead also altered the conclusion of the play. In the <u>lon</u> there is a happy ending, with lon, Creusa, and Xuthus returning to Euboea. In Whitehead's version, on the other hand, the deaths of Phorbas, Aletes, and Creusa bring a definitely tragic end.

1. Act II.

Whitehead reverted to his favorite theme of patriotism in <u>Greusa</u>. Phorbas, the aged counsellor of Greusa, endeavors to rouse Greusa against Xuthus. Phorbas has heard that Xuthus intends to bring Ilyssus to Greece as an adopted son and heir to the throne, and, in his desire not to have foreigners rule his native land, asks the queen:

Shall Aliens sport With thy Misfortunes? Shall insulting Spoilers Smile o'er the Ruins of thy hapless State, While all the golden Harvest is their own? Shall Xuthus triumph? shall his Race succeed? While thine, I mean not to provoke thy Tears, Thy tender Blossoms are torn rudely off Almost or ere they bloom. 1

Phorbas reminds the queen that the patriots must act quickly:

Athens yet Has honest Hearts. Yes, Phorbas yet has Friends Who dare be Patriots, and prefer their Country To Xuthus' kindest Smile. Some such are here Ev'n now at Delphi. But, illustrious Queen, We must with Caution act. The Name of Heaven, Howe'er usurp'd, adds Vigour to their Cause, And weakens ours. We might in secret find A sure Revenge. 2

The following passage reveals Creusa's confusion as well as her love for her native country:

1. Act II. 2. Act III.

Ilyssus: Kneeling. Gracious Queen! What have I done which should estrange thee to me? Am I the unhappy Cause of these Dissentions? Creusa: Kneel not to me, Ilyssus. Xuthus: Kneel not to her: 'Tis I am thy Protector, and thy Friend, Nay now thy Father. Ilyssus: Yet, O mighty King, Permit me at her Royal Feet to pay My humblest Duty. If I call thee Father, She sure must be a Mother. (She turns away disorder'd. Xuthus: Rise, Ilyssus, Thou seest she stands unmovid. Ilyasus: No, now she softens. I see it in her Eyes. Creusa: I will, I will Be Mistress of my Soul .-- Why kneel'st thou, Youth, I blame not thee. Xuthus: Me then thou blam'st, Creusa, I am the Object of thy Rage. 'Tis Xuthus Thou think'st unworthy of th' Athenian Throne. Athens might well have spar'd a foreign Lustre, Creusa: Secure of Fame, had Xuthus never been born. Xuthus: Ungrateful Queen, had Xuthus ne'er been born What now had Athens been? Creusa: Perhaps in Ruins. And better so than to become the Prey Of Needy wand'ring Strangers. Xuthus: Earth, and Heaveni This the Return?--I knew thou never loved'st me, Yet, witness Heav'n, I ravish'd not thy Hand, Thou gav'dst it sullenly, but yet thou gav'dst it; And I well hop'd thy Female Sense of Honour, Of Duty to thy Lord, might have securid At least my future Peace. Thy tend'rer Thoughts, The Wife's best Ornament, I knew were buried

1. Act III.

In a Plebeian Grave. 1

Because Creusa thinks Ilyssus is a foreigner and because no other foreigner must rule in Athens, Ilyssus must die.

There may be some connection between the fact that Xuthus was a foreigner upon the throne of Athens and the fact that at the time <u>Creusa</u> was presented, a Hanoverian, a foreign-born king, was on the British throne. In the concluding act, Creusa repudiates her patriotism, refers to the goodness of Xuthus, and confesses that Phorbas has misled her:

Phorbas has been the curse of me and mine, I might have known to what his impious rage Would urge him on, and should have first inform'd him.

Whitehead, therefore, goes back to the theme of welcome to the Hanoverian family, the theme of his early (1736) poem celebrating the marriage of George's son.

Whitehead's concept of duty is revealed in a speech of advice to rulers, which he puts into the mouth of Aletes, and which may be a hint to the Hanoverian monarch to live up to the responsibilities of his office:

Whate'er becomes of me, when thou shall reach That envied Pinacle of earthly Greatness, Where faithful Monitors but rarely follow, Ev'n there, amidst the kindest Smiles of Fortune, Forget not thou wert once distress'd and friendless. Be strictly just; but yet, like Heaven, with Mercy Temper thy Justice. From thy purged Ear Banish base Flattery, and spurn the Wretch Who would persuade thee thou art more than Man; Weak, erring, selfish Man, endued with Power To be the Minister of public Good; If Conquest charm thee, and the Pride of War Blaze on thy Sight, remember thou art placed The Guardian of Mankind, nor build thy Fame On Rapines, and on Murders. Should soft Peace Invite to Luxury, the pleasing Bane Of happy Kingdoms, know from thy Example The Bliss or Woe of nameless Millions springs, Their Virtue, or their Vice. Nor think by Laws To curb licentious Man; those Laws alone Can bend the headstrong Many to their Yoke, Which make it present Int'rest to obey them. 1

Creusa, like The Roman Father, is written in blank verse and observes the unities. Like Whitehead's other tragedy, it introduces no element of comedy.

In regard to the manner in which the play was received by the play-going public, conflicting accounts are given. It was given nine times the first season, three times the second, and twice in each of the next

But duty-free import our blonds and laces, French hoops, French silks, French cambricks, and--French faces.*

*Cf. The Dunciad, I, 88: "Glad chains, warm furs, broad banners, and broad faces."

Act IV, pp. 56-57. This speech is somewhat reminiscent of the advice of Polonius to his son Laertes in <u>Hamlet</u>, Act I, sc. iii.

^{2.} Whitehead wrote an epilogue for Mrs. Pritchard on the occasion of a general election, during the time when "the men you know are gone." Whitehead sketches a House of Commons made up solely of women. The female lawmakers would legislate every man into marriage before the age of twenty-five, bring about the end of gaming, "deep destructive midnight play," and provide for the taxing of wines. The femininity of the lawmakers reveals itself:

three seasons. This record of continuing performances marks it as at least a mild stage success, and stamps it as the first fairly effective English adaptation of Greek tragedy. The Monthly Review remarks that "the appearance the boxes made was sufficient to keep both the poet and the players in countenance," a sentiment echoed by The Companion to the Playhouse (1764). Murphy and Davies differ in their accounts of <u>Creusa's</u> reception. Murphy says that Garrick "delivered his moral precepts in the finest poetical vein of elocution, and in the pathetic situations he penetrated every heart." Davies, on the other hand, notes:

In vain did the author strive to force a tear for Creusa's misfortunes. Mrs. Pritchard fainted, and Mr. Garrick discovered himself to be her husband, without any effect. However, the latter displayed a skill in delivering didactics, which proved him to be a perfect master of elocution. 3

Publisher Dodsley wrote to Whitehead at Leipzig that Garrick had revived Creusa. Whitehead wrote in reply:

'I still find the <u>Pythia</u> does not please; tho' she plays the part sensibly, yet every body tells me she seems to have no idea of the fury and vehemence of her character where she is to assume an air of inspiration. You will make my compliments to Mr. Garrick & thank him for the revival. 4

4. Ralph Straus, Robert Dodsley, III (April 1, 1755).

^{1.} The Monthly Review, X (1754), 374.

^{2.} Arthur Murphy, The Life of David Garrick, Esq., I, 260.

^{3.} Thomas Davies, <u>Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick</u>. Esq., 1, 176.

It is not difficult to account for the fact that <u>Creusa</u> did not experience a long run in the theatre. The taste of the playgoing public had changed; they had little desire to see plays with Latin or Greek backgrounds. Whitehead recognized this state of affairs. Five years after <u>Creusa</u> appeared, he referred to the change in the public taste, when he wrote in the prologue to The Orphan of China:

ENOUGH of Greece and Rome. Th' exhausted store Of either nation now can charm no more: Ev'n adventitious helps in vain we try, Our triumphs languish in the public eye; And grave processions, musically slow, Here pass unheeded--as a lord mayor's show.

<u>Creusa</u> met with favorable and adverse criticism at the hands of the reviews. Theophilus Cibber, in <u>The</u> <u>Monthly Review</u>, notes that Whitehead has taken "romantic" material and wishes that the dramatist

had made his whole story more probable, and not, from his too great regard to antiquity, bestowed his labour on a subject where the improbable and the romantic have so great a share. 1

It considers Phorbas's coming alone and asking the way to the well-known temple "absurd." Furthermore, Cibber deems the choice of Ilyssus's companions rather poor:

^{1.} The Monthly Review, X (1754), 374. 2. Ibid., 376.

What should we think of a young man being left, at his years, among a sisterhood of nuns? Might we not, without being chargeable with unnatural suspicion, be fearful of the consequences? It certainly would have been more prudent in his dad to have . kept him in his own cottage, on the mountain brow, than have exposed him to such tempting trials of his virtue. 1

This adverse criticism, however, is rather completely offset by the conclusion:

But whatever may be the faults of this piece in general, the incidents of the fourth and fifth acts are well conducted, and become so interesting, that we forget any extravagance, improbability, or other imperfections in the three preceding ones. 2

The Gentleman's Magazine finds a few minor faults: Whitehead uses occasional vulgar or barbarous idioms. piles up synonyms for the sake of energy, and here and there employs language not sufficiently elevated or pure for dramatic poetry. However, it praises the sudden discovery of identities, with the resultant solicitude on the part of Creusa and Aletes.

2.

The Monthly Review, X (1754), 380. The Review praises 1. the "pathetic energy, expressive feeling, and spiritual action" of Garrick and Pritchard, although it considers the appearance of Miss Macklin in the role of Ilyssus merely "a piece of playhouse policy, to help the play, by exciting the curiosity of the public, to see an agreeable female in a young man's part" (<u>Ibid</u>., 383-4). <u>Ibid</u>., 380.

The Gentleman's Magazine, XXIV (April, 1754), 229. 3.

The London Magazine for May, 1754, gives the prologue, the epilogue, and account of the "new Tragedy," but no criticism.

Much of the later criticism of <u>Creusa</u> is decidedly adverse. Lessing (1767) defends Euripides's method of creating "Schrecken und Mitleid" through the use of Mercury's informative prologue and berates Whitehead for omitting the god's speech:

Immerhin gefalle euch Whitehead's <u>Kreusa</u>, wo euch kein Gott etwas foraussagt, wo ihr alles von einem alten plauderhaften Vertrauten erfahrt, den eine verschlagne Zigeunerin ausfragt, immerhin gefalle sie euch besser als des Euripides <u>Ion</u>: und ich werde euch nie beneiden! 2

Francis Gentleman, in <u>The Dramatic Censor</u>, writes that Whitehead's "tragic strains will never make any body ory." Davies holds that the plot of <u>Creusa</u> is "ill adapted to the taste of a modern audience." While Davies praises Whitehead for his excellent lessons of politics and morals, "the chief merit of <u>Creusa</u>," he deems

Lessings Werke, herausgegeben von Georg Witkowski, Sieben Bände. Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, [1911]. Neunundvierzigstes Stück der Hamburgische Dramaturgie. V. 125.

Dramaturgie. V, 125. 2. <u>Ibid.</u> A footnote calls <u>Creusa</u> "ein unbedeutendes Drama" (<u>Ibid.</u>).

^{3.} Francis Gentleman, The Dramatic Censor, II, 474.

^{4.} Thomas Davies, <u>Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick</u>, Esq., I, 176.

Creusa's contempt of Xuthus is as unwarrantable as disgusting; and her minister Phorbas is little better than a politician run mad. 1

Dibdin calls Creusa "too lofty and classical for general effect." Genest is of the opinion that, while Creusa "is not absolutely a bad play," it is "wretchedly inferior to the Greek Tragedy." Knight terms Creusa "stilted tragedy." Chambers calls Whitehead's two tragedies "indifferent plays." Elton briefly mentions "the stiff Creuse."

There are others, however, who are more favorably disposed to Creusa. Horace Walpole (1754) praised Crousa highly. The only thing which offended him was "the lisping Miss Haughton," who played the part of the Pythia. His remarks are found in a letter of April 30, 1754. to John Chute:

- Thomas Davies, Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick, 1. Esq., I, 176.
- Charles Dibdin, A Complete History of the English 2. Stage. 5 vols. London: C. Dibdin, n.d. V, 176.
- John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage, 3. IV. 390.
- Joseph Knight, David Garrick. London: Kegan Paul, 4. Trench, Trübner & Co., 1894. p. 143.
- 5. Chambers' Cyclopaedia of English Literature. New Edition by David Patrick. 3 vols. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1923. II, 357. Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature, 1730-
- 6. 1780, I, 309.

I have seen 'Creusa,' and more than agree with you: it is the only new tragedy that I ever saw and really liked. The plot is most interesting, and though so complicated, quite clear and natural. The circumstance of so much distress being brought on by characters, every one good, yet acting consistently with their principles towards the misfortunes of the drama, is quite new and pleasing. 1

Mason joins Walpole in praising the tragedy. Especially does Mason acclaim the fact that the plot was lifted into probability and says that

whoever compares the two dramas, will readily allow, that to alter a story of so very fabulous a kind, in which the intervention of Pagan divinities appear so necessary, into a probable action, and also where a connected train of natural circumstances resulting one from another, leads to an affecting catastrophe, must have been a work of supreme difficulty. And this, I think, Mr. Whitehead has very successfully atchieved, though without receiving so much applause for his labours as the piece merited. 2

Mason regrets that <u>Creusa</u> has seldom been "repeated, or rather revived," for "in my own opinion, it shows the dramatic powers of its author to more advantage than the Roman Father." According to Mason, the language of <u>Creusa</u> is "more elevated than that of the Roman Father." But he blames Whitehead for permitting the queen to suffer so severely:

1. The Letters of Horace Walpole Earl of Oxford (Cunningham), 11, 382.

- 2. Mason, p. 73.
- 3. Ibid., p. 74.
- 4. Ibid., p. 75.

Her crime, as she so very unwillingly consents to the poisoning of Ilissus, seems hardly great enough to merit capital punishment. 1

Still he confesses that if Whitehead had left Creusa alive at the end of the play, "the preceding plot of the whole piece must have been very differently con-2 stituted."

The Companion to the Playhouse (1764) as well as its continuation, <u>Biographia</u> <u>Dramatica</u> (1812), is of the opinion that

the Plot is extremely heightened, and admirably conducted by the Author, nor has there, perhaps, even been a more genuine and native Simplicity introduced into dramatic Writing, than that of the Youth <u>llyssus</u>, bred up in the Service of the Gods, and kept unacquainted with the Vices of Mankind. 3

Anderson enthusiastically maintains that <u>Creusa</u> showed "the dramatic powers of Whitehead to more ad-4 vantage than the <u>Roman Father</u>." He asserts with Mason

3. The Companion to the Playhouse, I, sub "CREUSA, QUEEN OF ATHENS." Biographia Dramatica; or, A Companion to the Playhouse: originally compiled to the year 1764, by David Erskine Baker. Continued thence to 1782, by Isaac Ried, F.A.S. And brought down to the end of November, 1811, by Stephen Jones. 3 vols. London: 1812. II, 141.

^{1.} Mason, p. 76.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 77. <u>The Universal Magazine</u>, LXXXII (1788), 118, echoes Mason's verdict.

^{4.} The Works of the British Poets (Anderson), XI, 893. This is an exact quotation from Mason, p. 74.

that Whitehead, in changing the Ion to meet the recuirements of a probable action where "a connected train of natural circumstances resulting one from another. lead to an affecting catastrophe." has achieved very successfully a work of extreme difficulty. Anderson also repeats Mason's verdict about Whitehead's change of conclusion.

Murphy is favorably impressed by Creusa. He praises Whitehead's "great judgment" because the dramatist

discarded the romantic circumstances, and moulded his plot with such due regard to probability, that what was in Euripides incredible fiction, has, by his contrivance, an air of historical truth. 2

So highly does Murphy regard Creusa, that he thinks it

a model of dramatic fable, which our modern writers would do well to take into consideration, if they wish to form a regular, a probable, and coherent, plot.

Murphy's hope that it "will be revived, whenever the public taste shall undergo a thorough reform," has not been fulfilled.

The Works of the British Poets (Anderson), XI, 893. 1. Mason, p. 73. Arthur Murphy, The Life of David Garrick, Esq., 2. I, 254.

- Ibid., 259, 260. Ibid., 260. 3.
- 4.

Campbell holds that <u>Creusa</u> is "by no means destitute of dramatic feeling and conception," that it fixed his attention from beginning to end, that the

pure and holy character of the young Ilyssus is brought out, I have no hesitation to say, more interestingly than in Euripides, by the display of his reverential gratitude to the queen, upon the first tenderness which she shows him, and by the agony of his ingenuous spirit, on beholding it withdrawn. And, though Creusa's character is not unspotted, she draws our sympathy to some of the deepest conceivable agonies of human nature. 2

While he admits that the play has many defects, he also maintains that "it does not deserve to be consigned to oblivion."

Austin and Ralph, on the one hand, hold that Whitehead, by discarding all supernatural aid, "has robbed the subject of much of its poetry," and even go so far as to say that the

treatment of the subject, though the play was meant for an English, and not a Greek audience, does not seem to be artistic. If the matter of the plot be drawn from Greek history or mythology, should it not be essentially Greek in plot, incident, thought, feeling, indeed, in everything but the language? Would an ancient dramatist have dared to represent the utterances from the tripod as influenced by such a man as Aletes? 5

 <u>Specimens of the British Poets</u> (Campbell), VII, 5-6.
 <u>Ibid.</u>
 <u>Ibid.</u>
 Austin and Ralph, <u>The Lives of the Poets Laureate</u>, p. 301.

5. Ibid., p. 295.

In spite of this adverse criticism, they maintain that Creusa "very much exceeds" The Roman Father in merit.

Doran thinks that as "a reading play" <u>Creusa</u> "is the greatest success Whitehead has achieved."

Allardyce Nicoll is of the opinion that <u>Creusa</u> "is by way of being an excellent tragedy," and states that Whitehead's

treatment is throughout intelligent and occasionally imaginative. This attempt to rationalise Euripides' legendary drama must be accounted one of the decided successes of the period. 3

Selections from <u>Creusa</u> have appeared in various anthologies. <u>The Beauties of the English Stage</u> (1756) has ten selections, while volume three of the <u>Poetical</u> <u>Dictionary</u> (1761) contains two. It is no surprise that Goldsmith, in his <u>The Beauties of English Poetry</u> (1767), makes no mention of Whitehead's works. Volume three of <u>The Beauties of the English Drama</u> (1777), on the other hand, includes two selections, while <u>The Theatrical</u> <u>Bouquet</u> (1778) prints the prologue and the epilogue.

- 2. Dr. Doran, F.S.A., "Their Majesties' Servants." <u>Annals of the English Stage, from Thomas Betterton</u> <u>to Edmund Kean.</u> 2 vols. London: Wm. H. Allen & <u>Co.</u>, 1864. I, 567.
- 3. Allardyce Nicoll, <u>A History of Late Eighteenth</u> <u>Century Drama</u>, <u>1750-1800</u>. Cambridge: University Press, 1927. p. 80.

Austin and Ralph, <u>The Lives of the Poets Laureate</u>, p. 295.

Although Creuse experienced but a brief existence upon the English stage and had fewer showings than The Roman Father, a comparison of Whitehead's two tragedies may well lead a modern reader to prefer Creusa. Whitehead had tried his wings on the former. Profiting by this experience, he produced in Creuse a well-knit play, whose plot, properly motivated, leads consistently to the final catastrophe. Creuse also has scenes, especially in the latter portion of the play, which move the reader strongly, such as that in Act III. where Xuthus and Creusa vie for the affections of the youth and thus set the stage for the final catastrophe. Act IV further reveals Whitehead's ability to paint a tender scene. Ilyssus is trying to worm the secret of his birth out of Aletes; the manly Aletes, sensing the approaching tragedy, bursts into tears. Furthermore, Whitehead must be credited with courage for his attempt to outrationalize the rationalist Euripides. Probably if Whitehead had shifted the time to the eighteenth century, had altered a few scenes, and had laid the scene in England. he might have converted his drama into a modern tragedy dealing with mother-love and revenge.

^{1.} Eight years after <u>Creusa</u> was given, Whitehead employed his talent for portraying intense feeling in the sentimental <u>The School for Lovers</u>.

III. FATAL CONSTANCY

Mention must also be made of a burlesque plan for a tragedy in the 1754 edition of Whitehead's poems. Fatal Constancy, or Love in Tears, a blank verse "sketch of a Tragedy in the heroic taste," is a satire on the sentiment and melodrama in contemporary drama. The nominal plot concerns the love of the hero for his Refused consent by the king, her father. Lindamira. the lovers meet in a palmy grove that night. Guards surprise them, and the young man is cast into prison. to which Lindamira comes with the message that the king would have her marry another. The final scene shows Lindamira as she stabs herself after she has confessed that another has forced himself upon her. Her lover asks as a final boon:

Be kind and lay me in the same cold grave Thus with my love; one winding sheet shall hold Our wretched reliques, and one marble tomb Tell our sad story to the weeping world.

The moral of the play is:

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^{1.} Fielding's Joseph Andrews has a character by the name of Lindamira, "the extreme delicacy" of whose "virtue was cruelly hurt by those freedoms which Leonora allowed herself." p. 121.

Let cruel fathers loarn from woes like these To wed their daughters where those daughters please. Nor erring mortals hope true joys to prove, Where such dire ills attend on virtuous love.

This burlesque was plagiarized by Samuel Foote in his revenge on Churchill and Lloyd. Robert Lloyd's <u>The</u> <u>Actor</u> (1760) and Churchill's <u>Rosciad</u> (March, 1761) had harshly attacked the contemporary actors, Garrick excepted. The actor Foote showed his resentment by his attack on Churchill and Lloyd in the 1761 version of <u>Taste</u>, in the second act of which he borrowed freely from Whitehead's <u>Fatal Constancy</u> to poke fun at his attackers. Lloyd and Churchill are represented under the characters of Fustian and Manly, respectively.

As Whitehead realized, "th' exhausted store" of Greece and Rome held little charm for the audiences of the mid-eighteenth century, which was interested in domestic tragedy as serious fare. No classics were produced in the field of tragedy, although adaptations of Shakespeare by Garrick and Cibber were popular. Whitehead's two tragedies, like Murphy's <u>The Orphan of</u> <u>China</u> and Lee's <u>The Rival Queens</u>, held the public interest for but a few seasons and then were dropt from the theatre's boards. Perhaps it is fair to say of them that they were acceptable tragedies in an age which produced no great tragic writing.

^{1.} Cf. Edward H. Weatherly, "Foote's Revenge on Churchill and Lloyd." <u>The Huntington Library Quarterly</u>, IX (Nov., 1945), I, 49-60.

CHAPTER SIX

COMEDIES

I. THE SCHOOL FOR LOVERS

English sentimental comedy probably had its inception in January, 1696, when Colley Cibber's Love's Last Shift, or The Fool in Fashion was presented to an audience which came to laugh but remained to weep. The sentimental comedy as a form contained a mixture of moralization and sentiment. Normally, it pictured a character drawn to the brink of tragedy by some moral flaw or weakness, but rescued at the last moment by some usually unmotivated circumstance. Thus it presented a moral lesson to the audience yet spared its feelings by allowing the character to escape at the last moment from the logical results of his own folly or vice. Steele's The Conscious Lovers (1722), based upon Terence's Andria, probably best exemplifies the spirit of sentimental comedy, for after the avoidance of tragedy.

^{1.} Whitehead is said to have acted while at Winchester a female part in the presentation of <u>Andria</u>. Cf. Chapter I, p. 2.

the play ends happily, with the elder Bevil stating the moral: "You have set the world a fair example. Your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit." The audience is given the plain hint to emulate the hero and heroine:

The nymph with Indiana's worth who vies, A nation will behold with Bevil's eyes. 1

Those who made up the greater portion of the audience were not only given moral advice but were shown the solutions of every-day problems. The themes of ordinary life were developed by the sentimental comedies, which from the bourgeois evoked tears instead of laughter, and pity instead of ridicule. The audience, mostly middle class, enjoyed a good cry while its prob-2 lems were being presented and solved for them.

Thus sentimental comedy followed the teachings of Pope and Shaftesbury with their emphasis on the ethical

Richard Steele, <u>The Conscious Lovers</u>. <u>Types of Eng-lish Drama 1660-1780</u>. ed. David Harrison Stevens. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1923. p. 521. Fielding, who had decided notions that comedy should be amusing, expressed his opinion of this play with sly sarcasm in <u>Joseph Andrews</u>, when he has Parson Adams remark that <u>The Conscious Lovers</u> contained "'some things almost solemn enough for a sermon!" (Henry Fielding, <u>The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews and his friend Mr. Abraham Adams</u>, p. 261).
 Cf. Ernest Bernbaum, <u>The Drama of Sensibility</u>. <u>A</u> <u>Sketch of the History of English Sentimental Comedy</u> and <u>Domestic Tragedy 1696-1780</u>. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1915.

side of literature. Whitehead, with his pronounced moral bent, followed much of the tradition of sentimental comedy in the first of his two comedies, <u>The</u> <u>School for Lovers</u>. In the prologue he tells his audience how he

Would play politely with your hopes and fears, And sometimes smiles provoke, and sometimes <u>tears</u>. 2 On February 10, 1762, Whitehead's <u>The School for</u> <u>Lovers</u> was given its première with Garrick as Sir John Dorilant, Mrs. Clive as Lady Beverley, Mrs. Yates as Araminta, and Mrs. Cibber as Caelia.

Whitehead confessed that his "comedy is formed on a plan of Monsieur de Fontenelle's," which was never intended for the stage. The scene of Fontenelle's <u>Le</u> <u>Testament</u>, a closet drama, is laid in Greece. The comedy deals with the love problems of Philonoe, an heiress recently orphaned, and Eudamidas, the trusted friend of her late father and the executor of his will. This theme had been previously treated sentimentally by Christophe Fagan in his <u>La Pupille</u> (1734), and with a comic bias by Garrick in his <u>The Guardian</u> (1759). According to the stipulations of Philonoe's father's will, the guardian

^{1.} C. A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England." PMLA, XXXI (1916), 264-325.

^{2.} The italics are my own.

^{3.} MacMillan gives this date, but Whitehead's 1774 edition has February 11.

Eudamidas must marry the girl and her fortune. If she does not marry her guardian, the estate goes to him. But Eudamidas, somewhat older than the girl, does not desire to force the girl into marriage, much as he loves her. Outwardly there exists between them the relationship of father and daughter; they keep back their real feelings from each other. The lover of the sister of Eudamidas tries to win Philonce for himself and enlists the aid of Philonce's mother, the widow Lisidice, who wishes to have Eudamidas for herself. After a number of misunderstandings are righted, the girl confesses to her guardian her love for him, and thus Philonce and Eudamidas are happily joined together.

Whitehead followed the general plan of Fontenelle, but made a few alterations. He had learned from <u>Creusa</u> that contemporary audiences were not greatly interested in plays with a classic setting; in his <u>School</u> the scene is placed at an English estate instead of in Greece. The characters are also English. The guardian and his ward of <u>Le Testament</u> become Sir John Dorilant and Caelia, respectively, in <u>The School for Lovers</u>. The scheming Lisidice of Fontenelle is represented by Whitehead's Araminta, while the duplicitous lover of the French play becomes Modely in the English play. The parts of the two slave confidantes of Fontenelle are lessened in the steward and footman of the School.

To complicate the love story, Whitehead added a character, Belmour, the friend of Modely. Sir John Dorilant accuses Modely of introducing Belmour for the purpose of breaking up the impending marriage of Sir John and Caelia. Modely, under the impression that his place with Caelia has been taken by Belmour, proposes marriage to Araminta. Caelia turns the tables on him by revealing to Araminta that he has been making love to her. Araminta no longer desires him. Sir John. still believing that Caelia looks upon him as a father and not as a possible husband, releases her from the will's obligations; the estate is hers. When Caelia tears up the release before Lady Beverley and Modely. the latter is surprised and vows that he will assist in bringing about the marriage of Caelia and Sir John. When the reformed Modely tries to win back Araminta, she spurns him; but Modely opens his penitent heart:

O never, Belmour, never.--I have sinned beyond a possibility of pardon. That she did love me, I have had a thousand proofs, which like a brainless ideot I wantonly trifled with. What a pitiful rascal have I made myself? 1

1. Act IV.

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And when Modely tells Belmour that Araminta has "taught me to blush," Belmour replies:

More miracles still! She has not only taught you to blush, but has absolutely made a man of honour of you! 1

Modely plays his trump card by telling Sir John that Caelia has torn up the release and is really in love with her guardian. Caelia is united to Sir John, who concludes the play:

A heart like mine its own distress contrives, And feels most sensibly the pain it gives; Then even its frailties candidly approve, For, if it errs, it errs from too much love.

In the epilogue before the dance Araminta gives the repentant Modely the hope that at another time, when she needs a spouse, "I may myself report it to the house." In the meantime, says the moralist Whitehead,

Let justice reign, at least upon the stage. Where the fair dames, who like to live by rule, May learn two lessons from the LOVER'S SCHOOL. While Caelia's choice instructs them how to chuse, And my refusal warns them to refuse.

Like Whitehead's other plays, <u>The School for Lovers</u> adhered strictly to the classical unities. It was written in prose, the normal vehicle for comic drama in the later eighteenth century.

The play had a reasonably successful stage history. It was presented thirteen times between February 10 and

1. Act IV.

March 11, 1762, and was acted in England as late as 1801. According to MacMillan, it was given thirty-two 1 times at Drury Lane between 1762 and 1776. The play had been in Garrick's hands for some time before its production, but he delayed presenting it because of 2 its similarity to his own The Guardian (1759).

In America The School for Lovers was presented at Philadelphia (three performances), New York (three), and Charleston (two).

J. C. Bode, the friend of Lessing, translated Whitehead's play into German with the title, <u>Die Schule</u> <u>der Liebhaber</u>. It was published in 1771 in Hamburg.

It is interesting to note that a number of <u>The</u> <u>School for</u> ----- plays followed Whitehead's <u>The School</u> <u>for Lovers</u>: Mrs. Griffith's <u>The School for Rakes</u> (Feb., 1769), Hugh Kelly's <u>The School for Wives</u> (Dec., 1773), and Sheridan's <u>The School for Scandal</u> (May, 1777).

The accounts of the reception of the <u>School</u> lean towards disapproval, and this in spite of its rather long run. While Campbell says that the play was well received "before it was the fashion to despise him

^{1.} Drury Lane Calendar, p. 321.

^{2.} The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, I, 139. The footnote to Garrick's letter gives Mrs. Cibber's age as 54.

^{3.} Acc. to Seilhamer, Pollock, Willis, Odell.

[Whitehead]," Murphy states that "those who expected laughter holding both his sides, were disappointed." On the one hand, Mason asserts that the play "received a just tribute of applause from the judicious few." Garrick's <u>The Farmer's Return from London</u>. An Interlude (1762), on the other hand, pictures the audience as prepared for laughter, but disappointed in their anticipated joy. The farmer is speaking:

I saw a new Pleay too--they call'd it The <u>School--</u> I thought it pure Stuff--but I thought like a Fool--'Twas The <u>School of--pize</u> on it!--my Mem'ry is naught--The Greaat ones dislik'd it--they heate to be taught: The <u>Cratticks</u> too grumbled--I'll tell you for whoy, They wanted to laugh--and were ready to croy. 5

The contemporary magazines and Gray are rather lukewarm in their attitude toward the <u>School</u>.

The London Magazine gives a summary of the plot and 6 finds the comedy "full of delicacy and sentiment."

1.	Specimens of the British Poets. ed. Thomas Campbell, VII. 11.
2.3.	Arthur Murphy, The Life of David Garrick, Esq., I, 366. Mason, p. 104.
4.	Garrick desired for comedy "a Comic interest, result-
	ing from y ^e varing humours of the Characters thrown into spirited action & brought into interesting Situa-
	tions, naturally ariseing from a well constructed fable or Plot This, with a good Moral, deducid from
	y ^e whole, is all I wish or look for in a <u>COMEDY</u> " (<u>Pineapples of Finest Flavour or A Selection of Sundry</u>
	Unpublished Letters of the English Roscius, DAVID
	GARRICK: Ed. with an Introduction and Notes by David Mason Little. Cambridge: Harvard University Press,
5.	1930). XXIV, 47. David Garrick, The Farmer's Return from London. An
	Interlude. London: J. and R. Tonson, 1762. p. 12.

6. The London Magazine, XXXI (1762), 64.

The Monthly Review ranks the drama "among those which are distinguished by the appellation of Genteel Comedy," entirely free of any charges of immorality, and treats it more as a "Conversation-piece than a Comedy." While the conversation is "natural, decent, and moral," says the Review, "the work does not abound with all that variety of business, plot, scenery, character and humour, which are requisite to gratify the taste of an English audience."

Scots Magazine finds the plot "not extremely intricate or full of incident." "easy and unforced." It maintains that Whitehead was not writing for the multitudes because the play, by being founded "on sentiment and the affections of the heart," had

more of the pathos than the vis comica; more of the delicate than the lively; and more of those elegant touches which enrapture the few, than those flashes of wit which catch the multitude .-- In a word it is what Hamlet calls "Caviare to the million." 5

The Gentleman's Magazine praises the comedy for its welldrawn and sustained characters, natural and spirited dialogue, chaste and elegant sentiments, and some tender

The Monthly Review, XXVI (1762), 158. 1.

<u>Ibid., 157 fn.</u> <u>Ibid., 158.</u> 2.

^{3.}

Scots Magazine, XXIV (1762), 86. 4.

Ibid., 88. Hamlet II, 11, 416-7: "'twas caviare to the general." 5.

and touching scenes. On the other hand, the <u>Magazine</u> is of the opinion that Whitehead is not proposing "the scrupulous honour and refined delicacy of Sir <u>John's</u> character" "as a standard" and "object of emulation," for the play concludes:

A heart like mine its own distress contrives And feels most sensibly the pain it gives; Then even its frailties candidly approve, For, if it errs, it errs from too much love. 2

The Critical Review notes the absence of humor and the simplicity of its plot:

The reader must not expect to meet with much witty repartee, or great violence of humour, in this performance. Nor will the eye be entertained with a variety of shifting scenes, nor the imagination transported by a hurry of business. 3

The <u>Review</u> holds that Whitehead has portrayed Caelia and Sir John as possessing "a very amiable and engaging sensibility," thus placing the <u>School</u> among sentimental comedies. <u>The Critical Review</u> objects to Modely's reconciliation with Araminta and wishes he

had made no impression on the heart of the delicate Caelia, which, we think, ought to have been kept sacred to him who was alone worthy to possess such an inestimable treasurs. 5

1. The Gentleman's Magazine, XXXII (1762), 161.

2. Ibid.

- 4. Ibid.
- 5. Ibid.

^{3.} The Critical Review, XIII (1762), 137.

A critic in Hugh Kelly's <u>Court Magazine</u> welcomes <u>The School for Lovers</u> on the basis of its being an excellently moral work, although the "execution of the lplan'" was another matter and did not reach the level of the moral.

Gray wrote to Mason in March, 1762, that he had received a copy of the comedy from Whitehead and had found the play "very middleing."

Criticism after 1762 is divided. Some is puzzled by the question of where to place the comedy; some is adverse; other criticism favors the production.

The <u>Biographia</u> <u>Dramatica</u>, puzzled by the comedy, asserts that it has "delicacy, sentiment, and the consequence of instruction," but complains that classification of this drama is difficult. It admits that <u>The</u> <u>School for Lovers</u> is "termed a comedy, but judges that "the risible faculties have much less opportunity of exertion than the tender feelings of the heart." The <u>Biographia</u> feels that Belmour and Araminta are treated rather shabbily in not being granted any concrete happiness, and that Modely did not possess "any badness of heart" and should have been restored to Araminta's arms.

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Charles Harold Gray, <u>Theatrical Criticism in London</u> to 1795. New York: Columbia University Press, 1931. p. 183.
 <u>Correspondence of Thomas Gray</u> (Toynbee), Letter 357.
 <u>Biographia Dramatica</u>, III. 245.

Victor, in his <u>History of the Theatres of London</u>, echoes the opinion of the <u>Scots Magazine</u> and considers the <u>School</u> an agreeable performance and

of that Species of the Drama which has more of the Pathos than the Vis comica, and calculated more to draw Tears than raise Laughter. 1

Mason praises the <u>School</u>, but also finds something missing. In the Memoirs he writes:

The ease and purity of the dialogue; the incidents that arise so naturally one from another; the delicate markings of the different characters; and the artful arrangement of the scenes, contribute to give this play a high station in the small list of our genteel comedies, at the same time that its want of

 Benjamin Victor, The History of the Theatres of London, From the Year 1760 to the Present Time. London: T. Becket, 1771. pp. 24-25. This criticism of 1771 is evidently taken from Scots Magazine, XXIV (1762), 88. In regard to Mrs. Cibber's acting, Victor states:

In the School for Lovers, she performed the Part of <u>Gaelia</u>, whose Age is mentioned in the Play to be Sixteen--and Mrs. <u>Cibber</u> was admitted to become the Character by the nicest Observers, though she was at that Time, approaching to Fifty! This strange, seeming Absurdity, was entirely owing to that uncommon Symmetry, and exact Proportion in her Form, that happily remained with her to her Death.

This verdict is also found in An Account of the Life of that Celebrated Actress, Mrs. Susannah Maria Cibber with Interesting and Amusing Anecdotes. Also the Two Remarkable and Romantic Trials between Theophilus Cibber and William Sloper (London: 1887), and J. Cradock's Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs, 4 vols. (London: B. B. Nichols, 1828). According to DNB, Mrs. Cibber was born in Feb., 1714.

smart repartee and broad humour, will ever prevent it from being much relished by a mixed audience. 1

Mason further asserts that if Hurd's definition of comedy be accepted,

'that it propose th for the ends of its representation, the <u>sensation</u> of <u>pleasure</u> arising from a view of the truth of CHARACTERS, more especially their specific differences, the School for Lovers might be called a perfect comedy. 2

He who accepted Hurd's definition would feel, as Mason did, that he was "no more entertained than I should have been by such a well-bred party." Mason, who found the comedy lacking in the Vis comica, which is basic to his idea of comedy, does not consider the play a sentimental comedy; he adds that those "who put this play on a footing with the Drames in France, and the sentimental Comedies in England, which have succeeded it, will do the author much injustice."

Anderson, while not classifying Whitehead's comedy among the sentimental comedies, does not know "what species of drama" this play "ought to be placed in." He holds that "the risible faculties have much less

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^{1.} Mason, pp. 103-4.

Ibid., p. 104. 2.

<u>Tbid.</u>, p. 105. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 106. 3.

The Works of the British Poets, ed. Robert Anderson, 5. XI. 897.

opportunity of exertion than the tender feelings of 1 the heart."

Dibdin deems the comedy "a respectable play,"

one of the first attempts at what was called sentimental comedy, which the French under the term drame have classed as superior in a moral sense to either tragedy or comedy. 2

but finds neither situation nor interest "sufficiently powerful, notwithstanding it was admirably acted, to onsure it permanence."

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries criticism has tended to be adverse. On the one hand, Genest terms it a good play, but finds the chief merit in the serious characters of Modely and Araminta. Austin and Ralph call it "a good sentimental comedy," which could not help succeeding with the acting of Garrick and Mrs. 5 Cibber.

On the other hand, Knight, in his <u>David Garrick</u>, speaks of the <u>School</u> as "a sertimental and pleasing, but rather heavy and lackadaisical comedy." Cazamian dismisses the play with a brief reference to the

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^{1.} The Works of the British Poets, ed. Robert Anderson, XI, 897.

^{2.} Charles Dibdin, <u>A</u> <u>Complete History of the English</u> Stage, V, 176.

^{3.} Ibid.

^{4.} John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage, IV, 640.

^{5.} Austin and Ralph, p. 307.

^{6.} Joseph Knight, David Garrick, p. 182.

"sentimental effusion to be found in Whitehead." Thirberville considers the characters "all remarkable for elegance of sentiment, purity of expression and propriety of manners," but in regard to laugh-producing qualities, he finds "not the slightest scintillation of wit or leaven of humour." Nettleton admits that Whitehead's first comedy

is not without some comic energy, but Sir John Dorilant, "A Man of nice Honour," and Caelia, who justifies the complaint that she talks at times "like a sentimental lady in a comedy," have a "nicety of sentiments" which brings them dangerously close to the pitfalls of sentimental drama. 3

Schirmer accuses Whitehead of "Verzerrung" (distortion) 4 of noble drama.

Whitehead in the prologue defined his intentions:

Plain comedy tonight, with strokes refined Would catch the coyest features of the mind; Would play politely with your hopes and fears, And sometimes smiles provoke, and sometimes tears.

He kept his promise by making Caelia and Sir John para-

gons of extreme refinement. Even Modely, Belmour, and

- A. S. Turberville, Johnson's England. An Account of 2. the Life & Manners of Mis Age. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933. II, 161.
- The Cambridge History of English Literature. ed. A. 3. W. Ward, A. R. Waller. 14 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913. X, 96.
- 4. Walter F. Schirmer, Geschichte der englischen Literature. Halle Saale: Max Niemeyer, 1937. p. 445.

Emile Legouis & Louis Cazamian, A History of English 1. Literature, II, 194.

Araminta have this quality, although they have less sensibility. Modely and Araminta are pictured as much nearer to nature and less restrained than Caelia and Sir John. But Modely is not the wild, dissipated prodigal or the grossly unfaithful husband of the typical sentimental comedy of the early part of the century. In the beginning of the play he is a fickle lover, but by the end of the play he has repented of his duplicity and earnestly has sought the welfare of Caelia and the hand of Araminta. Whitehead no doubt had the characters of <u>The School for Lovers</u> in mind when in his farce, <u>The Trip to Scotland</u> (1770), one of the characters (Sotherton) affirms that the sentimental comedies have "made the players men of honour,"

The fact that Araminta calls Sir John, "My dear 2 sentimental brother," and Modely speaks about Caelia: "I have heard her talk occasionally like a queen in a tragedy, or at least like a sentimental lady in a comedy," Bitter uses to back up his assertion that Whitehead was not writing a sentimental comedy, but rather a comedy of character, a comedy in which the source of the comic lies in "der typischen Gegensätzlichkeit der

1. <u>A Trip to Scotland</u>, p. 39. 2. Act II. 3. Act I.

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But Bitter goes too far. He fails to Charaktere." let Whitehead's own words have their due. In the prologue Whitehead said that he intended to "catch the coyest features of the mind," that is, to present a character study; but he also said that his portraval would "sometimes smiles provoke and sometimes tears" (Italics mine). Garrick's report about being "ready to croy" shows that the play did bring forth tears. The process of bringing forth smiles and tears would consist of polite play upon the hopes and fears of the audience, which is the aim of sentimental comedy. Whitehead set before himself a two-fold task: he wanted to write a sentimental comedy--with smiles and tears, not broad humour--but he also wanted to write a comedy of character. His graceful execution of his plan led Bernbaum to make the pertinent judgment:

To introduce such characters, to write the dialogue between them with a purity and grace corresponding to their fastidiousness, was an achievement for which Whitehead deserves more credit than he has received. 3

Perhaps it is fair to say that, although The School for Lovers is essentially in the tradition of sentimental comedy, it combined with reasonable skill and success two species of drama, the drama of sensibility and the drama of character.

- 1. Bitter, p. 96.
- 2. <u>V. supra</u>, p. 208.
- 3. Ernest Bernbaum, The Drama of Sensibility, A Sketch of the History of English Sentimental Comedy and Domestic Tragedy 1696-1780, p. 212.

A TRIP TO SCOTLAND II.

Whitehead's other venture into dramatic comedy was a prose farce, A Trip to Scotland, which, according to Mason, was begun about 1762. Whitehead had meant to adapt it to his favorite actress, Mrs. Clive. Since she left the stage before the piece was finished, it lay before him until 1770, when he made a present of it to Garrick. The latter stipulated that it be shown without giving the name of the author. Even though Churchill had been dead six years, the influence of his attacks on Whitehead still prevailed. Churchill's Ghost still haunted Whitehead. The fact that the farce appeared on the stage and in print anonymously, is no doubt responsible for the ascription of its authorship to Garrick in The Playhouse Pocket-Companion (1779). The piece was given its premiere Jan. 6, 1770, at Drury Lane, and was presented seventeen times the first season. Rowe's The Fair Penitent formed the other part of the twin bill the first night.

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^{1.} Mason, pp. 115-6.

^{2.} The Playhouse Pocket-Companion, or Theatrical Vade-London: 1779. Mecum. London: 1779. p. 174. Drury Lane Calendar, sub "A Trip to Scotland." Mocum.

^{3.}

A Trip to Scotland deals with the "fashionable mode of eloping to Scotland." In the first scene. Griskin is trying to prevent the marriage of his niece to Jemmie Twinkle. Mrs. Fillagree, housekeeper to Griskin and governess of the niece, manages to get Griskin out of the house by creating the false belief that the niece and her lover have left for Scotland. Actually the two young people are in the closet. After Griskin has left, the couple emerges and a new complication arises. The niece has doubts about the advisability of eloping with Jemmie. But he and Fillagree dispel her scruples, and she agrees to leave with him for Scotland. After the elopers have left, Griskin returns and announces that he is going in pursuit of the couple in order to prevent their marriage. Fillagree accumpanies him.

Cupid then appears as the chorus, and acquaints the audience, that they are to imagine the lovers had succeeded according to their warmest wishes at Edinburgh; that he hopes they will not expect a critical adherence to the rules of the drama, but suffer him to annihilate time and place, and then suppose the [next] scene to be at an inn in Yorkshire. 2

At the inn in Yorkshire, in the second and concluding scene of the play, the newlyweds have their first

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^{1.} The Town and Country Magazine, I (1769), 685. 2. Ibid., 686.

misunderstanding; she has grown more romantic, while he has become sober. When Griskin and Fillagree appear at the inn, the landlady embarrasses them by assuming them to be husband and wife. Finally Fillagree persuades Griskin to bless the young couple. She herself lives in the hope of becoming Mrs. Griskin.

The <u>Trip</u> gave Whitehead the opportunity to poke fun at the practice of eloping to Scotland and to give advice to those contemplating matrimony. While the two major characters, Miss Griskin and Jommie, succeed in eloping, two minor characters, Dolly Flack and Sotherton, a strolling player, do not go through with their plans for an elopement. On the way to the place of elopement Sotherton receives the news that Dolly Flack has not inherited ten thousand pounds, as he had imagined she would. His passion for her cools, and by pretended 111 usage he endeavors to put an end to her passion for him. Sotherton has not taken advantage of the girl. A chorus of young men approves this sentiment with "Very honourable, very honourable indeed;" Thereupon Sotherton mentions an effect of sentimental comedies:

So that you will perceive, Sir, at least the good company will perceive, that whatever effect the late run of sentimental comedies may have had upon their audience, they have at least made the players men of honour.

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Whitehead uses the Trip to give advice to those contemplating marriage. Dolly Flack has been carried away by her reading of romances:

Talk not of education: my education has undone me. Alas, Sir, from all my reading, I drew but one idea; 'twas that of love. Not formal mercenary love, which comes attended with settlements, and all the odious incumbrances of jointures and pin-money; but that resistless passion, that instantaneous emotion, that fascination of eyes which kindles into rapture even at the first approach --Such I thought this gentleman's affection for me. Can it be wondered at, then, that I should consent to elope with him?

Whitehead views this practice with alarm and, before the country dance at the end of the play, has Cupid offer the following advice:

Between ourselves, I cannot quite approve This modern bare-fac'd hurrying into love. My ancient chiefs, so fam'd for love and war, Besieg'd whole ages the obdurate fair. Now, e'er the lover wooes, the lady's won, And half the sex run post to be undone. Be wise, be cautious; keep this truth in view, Few hasty marriages are happy too. Approach with awe th' indissoluble bands, Try well your hearts before you yield your hands. Let each kind parent's voice compleat the plan, And blush consent even then, behind your fan.

"The Farce," according to the diary of William Hopkins, prompter at Drury Lane, "received great applause." Hurd wrote to Mason that "The trip to Scotland is Whitehead's. I have not seen it. But they say it is well received," a sentiment echoed by Victor in his The

^{1.}

Drury Lane Calendar, p. 145. The Correspondence of Richard Hurd & William Mason and Letters of Richard Hurd to Thomas Gray, p. 73. 2.

History of the Theatres of London. Both Mason and The Universal Magazine for March, 1780, state that the farce "met with its deserved applause."

The Trip was given seventeen times the first season, and a total of fifty-three times between the 1769/70 and 1775/1776 seasons, all at Drury Lane. The Trip also travelled to Bath for a performance in 1774.

According to Seilhamer, Pollock, Willis, and Odell. A Trip to Scotland did not have a long run in America. The four writers mention a total of four performances in Philadelphia, one in New York, in which Major Andre appeared, and one in Charleston, "with numerous scenes of . Gretna Green, to conclude with a country-dance of the characters, and couples passing to and from Gretna Green, led by Cupid."

The Trip fared well in general at the hands of reviewers. The Critical Review for March, 1770, praises it.

This is the first dramatical performance we have seen, that, without a character which has the smallest pretensions to sense, wit, or sentiment, is rendered passable, may pleasing, by its conduct. 6

Benjamin Victor, The History of the Theatres of Lon-1. don, p. 159.

Mason, p. 116. The Universal Magazine of Knowledge 2. and Pleasure, LXXXII (1788), 120.

Drury Lane Calendar, pp. 335-336. Bitter, p. 74. 3.

^{4.}

Willis. p. 219. 5.

The Critical Review, XXIX (1770), 235. 6.

In regard to the manner in which "the author of this farce has scrupulously preserved the unities of time and place," the Review states that Whitehead used

the most natural classical expedient in the world .-- He converts Cupid into a post-boy, and that post-boy into a chorus, who explains all that is to be understood; and perhaps no Greek post ever employed a chorus with greater probability or propriety, than our author does his little urchin. 1

The Town and Country Magazine, on the one hand, praises the Trip for the "merit in the thought and conduct of the piece," and considers the prologue "lively and apposite." On the other hand, it believes that

the stile and sentiment of the production itself are poor and insipid; the only attempts towards wit or humour, consisting of some very indelicate double entendres, that might have been successfully introduced in the London Cuckolds, 2 before it was banished from the stage for its obscenity. 3

The Monthly Review feels that Whitehead could have admitted "many more diverting incidents, and a greater variety of characters," and that "the plot is too contracted," but maintains that the characters which

^{1.}

The Critical Review, XXIX (1770), 236. A rollicking farce by Edward Ravenscroft (1682). 2. The Town and Country Magazine, I (1769), 687. The 3. Magazine errs when it ascribes the Trip to "Paul Whitehead, esq; poet Laureat." Paul Whitehead was a contemporary poet, but never a laureate. The Monthly Review, XLII (1770), 145. 4.

^{5.} Ibid.

do appear "are well enough supported," and that "the 2 dialogue is not dull."

Victor and others, with the exception of Dibdin, praise the <u>Trip</u>. Victor holds that "the Mischief it attacks is pleasantly ridiculed--the Satire is just, and the Design well executed, and original."

The Theatrical Review (1772) praises the farce, while finding some faults:

THIS singular Production hath great Merit, and is highly calculated to afford Entertainment, at the same time that the moral to be drawn from it is no bad lesson for the young Ladies of Great Britain. The episode of Southerton and Dolly Flack does not add to the Merit of the Piece, and there are some Parts of the Dialogue rather too nearly bordering on indelicacy. Upon the whole, it is extremely pleasing, to which the Merit of the Performers in the Representation contributes greatly. This little Piece is introduced with a Prologue spoken by Cupid, representing a Post Chaise Boy, in which a similitude is drawn between his whip, his spurs, his shoulder-knot, and the bow, arrows, and wings of the God of Love; with some lively satirical Strokes upon the present fashionable mode of eloping to Scotland. -4

Mason thinks "this Farce, as it stands, the only thing of the kind that can be put in competition with

1. The Monthly Review, XLII (1770), 145.

2. Ibid.

^{3.} The History of the Theatres of London, From the Year 1760 to the Present Time, pp. 159-160.

^{4.} The Theatrical Review: or, New Companion to the Play-House, I, 205.

the charming petites pieces of Marivaux." Anderson copies the above judgment of Mason and, also like Mason, maintains that "Whitehead had powers to write equally well in the manner of Molière, as of Terence."² But he holds that "had he [Whitehead] extended his plan to five acts, and exiled his Cupid, as too mythological a personage, it would have been deemed a good comedy."

Dibdin does not think highly of Whitehead's efforts in the field of comedy. He calls the <u>Trip</u> "a passable farce and that was all. WHITEHEAD could not write ill but his attempts at comedy are rather sketches than pic-4 tures."

Austin and Ralph are highly pleased with the <u>Trip;</u> they consider it a "clever little farce," in which there is "some broad humour."

In the twentieth century the <u>Trip</u> has its detractors and admirers. W. Forbes Gray has very little good to say about the <u>Trip</u>. He asserts:

In 1770 he [Whitehead] ended his dramatic career, as ignominiously as it had begun, with what he called a "little whimsical trifle," which Garrick accepted only on

^{1.} Mason, p. 117.

^{2.} The Works of the British Poets (Anderson), XI, 897-8.

^{3.} Ibid., 898.

^{4.} Charles Dibdin, <u>A Complete History of the English</u> Stage, V, 175.

^{5.} Austin and Ralph, The Lives of the Poets Laureate, p. 310.

condition that the author's name was not revealed. This was the Trip to Scotland, . . . ; but the humour is so coarse, the dialogue so inene, and the construction so poor, that the piece fairly responds to the author's own description. 1

Nicoll, on the other hand, feels that among the farces of intrigue A Trip to Scotland "deserves honourable mention." and that "it is a well-constructed piece and well merits the high commendation of the editors of the Biographia Dramatica." He maintains:

The story of Miss Griskin's elopement with Jemmy Tweedle, and the consequent pursuit by Griskin and his housekeeper Filigree is told with manifest zest and great good humour. 4

Whitehead adapted his Trip to Garrick's ideas about comedy. The robustness of the humour and the occasional rough language do not seem to be in Whitehead's usual manner. "The Dog" and the Trip are practically the only pieces in which Whitehead exposes himself to the charge of indelicacy. In addition to the scene in which the innkeeper embarrasses Griskin and Fillagree, there is

W. Forbes Gray, The Poets Laureate of England Their 1.

History and Their Odes, pp. 173-4. Allardyce Nicoll, A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama 1750-1800, p. 187. Ibid. The Biographia Dramatica holds that it is 2.

^{3.} "the only thing of the kind that can be put in comparison with the charming petites pieces of Marivaux" (III, 351). The judgment of the Biographia is a literal lifting from Mason, p. 117. 4. Ibid.

the half-whisper of the latter to Dolly Flack upon her rejection by Sotherton, "Hark you, Miss Flack, have you preserved your virtue?"

The audience seems to have enjoyed the farce. The action is swift, and the scheme employed by Whitehead to shift the time and scene is merrily carried out. Whitehead's Cupid says:

Since I saw you last Days have rolled on, and weary miles been pass'd; Without one seeming interval between, You're now in Yorkshire, and the scene an inn. Where couples throng like clustering bees in swarms, And all my rabble rout are up in arms. Harki Do you hear them? What a pleasing brawl! Bells jingle, chaises rattle, hostlers bawl, And lovers join in one great caterwawl!

Whitehead again admits that the public tasts has changed. English taste would no longer suffer the schemes of Greek tragedies:

Your Grecian bards in their immortal scenes Have deities descending in machines; And many a knotty point their Godships clear, Which you, bold sons of Britain, scarce would bear.

The latter of Whitehead's two comedies was very much more successful than the former. The comic element of the <u>Trip</u> and the play's intriguing story amused the audience much more than the <u>School</u> with its appeal to smiles and tears. The moderate success of Whitehead's two comedies does not warrant placing him in the ranks of such outstanding eighteenth century dramatists as Goldsmith and Sheridan with their <u>She Stoops to Conquer</u> and <u>The</u> <u>Rivals</u>, respectively. Whitehead ought rather to be considered in the company of minor dramatists like Murphy and Cumberland, who wrote comedies equally as popular as Whitehead's. Murphy and Cumberland actually occupy a more important niche in later eighteenth century dramatic history, if only because of their greater productivity.

SUMMARY

In closing this study of Whitehead's life and work, it may be well to present a summary of the conclusions reached.

In his own day Whitehead was a considerable figure in the literary and dramatic world. His poems frequently went into several editions, one of them into a fifth edition. He was appointed poet laureate in 1757 and held the position until his death in 1785. His plays were successful enough to make him one of the respected dramatic authors of his time, and his advice on the presentation of plays by other writers was sought and followed by Garrick.

His poetry reflects a number of contemporary literary trends; it shows the influence of Pope, Spenser, Gray, Milton, and perhaps Swift. Pope, whom he had met in the Winchester school-days, wielded the greatest influence over him. Whitehead used Popean heroic couplets extensively and agreed with Pope's general attitude toward the purpose and methods of literature. Like Pope, he was dominantly neo-classic, although minor traces of romanticism are discernible in his work. For his poems he borrowed themes and ideas from a number of other writers, among them Pope, Young, Akenside, Gray, Joseph Warton, Fielding, Addison, Herodotus, John Philips, Martial, Swift, and Phaedrus.

In <u>An Hymn to the Nymph of Bristol Spring</u> Whitehead gave his own estimate of his poetical achievement, a surprisingly accurate one:

. . . let mine My humbler weaker verse, from scantier rills Diffusing wholesome draughts, unheard, unseen, Glide gently on, and imitate thy spring.

Although he realized that he would not be ranked among the major poets, he felt that he had some poetical skill and insisted that he would use this ability. While he did not attain a high place in English poetry and while his works have been relegated almost to the state of being "unheard, unseen," nonetheless he merits some attention from students of English literature. Two of his poems, "The Enthusiast" and "Je ne scai quoi," deserve to be remembered, the first for its interesting portrayal of the current conflict between romanticism and neoclassicism, and the second for its sheer charm. Both poems have a lasting quality in them. Others of interest include <u>A Charge to the Poets</u> (1762, <u>Variety</u> (1776), and <u>The Goat's Beard</u> (1777).

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The odes, written as part of his duties as laureate, while not of any real brilliance and of little poetical value, have a certain sincerity and a tone of genuine patriotism that lift them above the low level of the adulatory odes of his predecessor in the laureateship, Golley Cibber.

With the exception of his two comedies, Whitehead published only a small amount of prose. His three essays in <u>The World</u> are in the general tradition of Addison's <u>Spectator</u> papers.

The dramas, especially The Roman Father and Creusa, deserve to be read by students of eighteenth-century literature, even though neither of them would be of much interest to a modern audience. Both enjoyed substantial popularity in their own time. The popularity of The Roman Father is attested by the fact that it was given about seventy-five performances in England and Ireland and at least forty in America. It is further interesting not only because, like Addison's Cato, it exalts patriotism, but also because it served incidentally as a vehicle of tribute to the American Father, George Washington. In Creusa Whitehead took a Greek play, the Ion of Euripides, stripped it of its supernatural elements, rationalized the story, and made it into a compact and motivated tragedy of mother-love and revenge. In

some ways it is Whitehead's most admirable work. <u>The</u> <u>School for Lovers</u>, Whitehead's first attempt at comedy, must be included in any discussion of eighteenth-century sentimental comedy. It reveals Whitehead's ability to delineate delicate feeling. One indication of its influence in the eighteenth-century is the number of "School for" plays that followed it, notably Sheridan's <u>School for Scandal</u>. <u>A Trip to Scotland</u> proved to be a successful farce in its own day. Garrick, who produced all of Whitehead's plays, also employed him as a reader of plays and accepted his critical judgments.

Whitehead will not be ranked among the great writers, but he does not, therefore, deserve to be cast aside as an insignificant one. Because of his dramatic achievement, primarily his authorship of <u>The Roman Father</u>, <u>Creusa</u>, and <u>The School for Lovers</u>, and because of the importance of a few of his poems, Whitehead merits classification as a writer, who, though of secondary importance, still deserves serious consideration in any study of eighteenth-century literature.

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Frederick Louis Neebe was born in New Haven, Connecticut, on July 22, 1901. When he was a few years old. his parents moved to Meriden, Connecticut, where he attended St. John's Lutheran School for eight years (1906-14). Upon graduation from the Meriden High School in 1918, he attended Concordia Collegiate Institute in Bronxville, New York. In 1921 he entered Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and graduated in 1925. The school year 1922/23 he spent as an instructor at Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois. His first charge was Faith Lutheran Church, St. Louis County, Missouri. He served this congregation as pastor from August, 1925, until December, 1930, when he accepted the call to Trinity Lutheran Church, Columbia, Missouri. He has resided in Columbia since 1930.

Besides a summer course at Harris Teachers' College, he attended Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, doing graduate work when he was called to Columbia. In 1937 he received the M.A. degree from the University of Missouri with Dr. H. M. Belden as his adviser, and in

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1947 he was presented the Ph.D. degree with Dr. E. H. Weatherly as his adviser.

In 1927 he married Julia Bade of St. Louis, Missouri. They have four children, Frederick, David, Joel, and Alice.



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