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Author: George Dempster

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK CRITICAL STRICTURES ON THE NEW TRAGEDY OF ELVIRA, WRITTEN BY MR. DAVID MALLOCH ***

The Augustan Reprint Society

**JAMES BOSWELL, ANDREW ERSKINE, and
GEORGE DEMPSTER**

***Critical Strictures on the New Tragedy of
Elvira, Written by Mr. David Malloch (1763)***

With an Introduction by Frederick A. Pottle

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INTRODUCTION

"WEDNESDAY 19 JANUARY [1763]. This was a day eagerly expected by Dempster, Erskine, and I, as it was fixed as the period of our gratifying a whim proposed by me: which was that on the first day of the new Tragedy called *Elvira's* being acted, we three should walk from the one end of London to the other, dine at Dolly's, & be in the Theatre at night; & as the Play would probably be bad, and as Mr. David Malloch, the Author, who has changed his name to David Mallet, Esq., was an arrant Puppy, we determined to exert ourselves in damning it."^[1]

George Dempster, aged thirty, a Scots lawyer who by putting his fortune under severe strain had been elected Member of Parliament for the Forfar and Fife burghs, was in London in his official capacity. Andrew Erskine, aged twenty-two, younger son of an impoverished Scots earl, was waiting in London till the regiment in which he held a lieutenant's commission should be "broke," following the Peace. James Boswell, heir to the considerable estate of Auchinleck in Ayrshire, also aged twenty-two, had come to London in the previous November in an attempt to secure a commission in the Foot Guards. Dempster, Erskine, and Boswell had constituted themselves a triumvirate of wit in Edinburgh as early as the summer of 1761, and had already made more than one joint appearance in print.^[2]

David Mallet, now in his late fifties, was also a Scotsman. "It was remarked of him," wrote Dr. Johnson many years later, "that he was the only Scot whom Scotchmen did not commend."^[3] Scotsmen considered him a renegade. They felt that he had repudiated his country in changing his distinctively Scots name, perhaps also in learning to speak English so well that Johnson had never been able to catch him in a Scotch accent. They would have been willing to forget his humble origins if he had not shown that he was ashamed of them himself. But when he allowed himself to assume arrogant manners and to style himself "Esq." (a kind of behavior especially offensive to genuine men of family, like our trio), they chose to remember, and to remind the world, that he was the son of a tenant farmer (a Macgregor, at that), that as a boy he had been willing to run errands and to deliver legs of mutton, and that for a time in his youth he had held the menial post of Janitor in the High School of Edinburgh.

It was not merely the Scots who had their knives out for Mallet. He was generally unpopular, apparently for adequate reasons. He had accepted a large sum of money from the Duchess of Marlborough to write a life of the Duke, of which he never penned a line, though he pretended for years that he was worn out by his labors in connection with it. He courted Pope, accepted kindnesses from him, and then attacked him after he was dead. He published Bolingbroke's posthumous infidelities, causing Johnson to remark that Bolingbroke had charged "a blunderbuss against religion and morality" and had "left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman, to draw the trigger after his death."^[4] His behavior towards the memory of his friend and collaborator Thomson was thought to be less than candid. He had written a discreditable party pamphlet at the instigation of the Earl of Hardwicke against the unfortunate Admiral Byng, and had then deserted Hardwicke for the Earl of Bute, who had found him a sinecure of £300 a year. And even as early as 1763 people were saying that he was really not the author of the fine ballad *William and Margaret* which he had published as his own.

Boswell, at least, had meditated an attack on Mallet before *Critical Strictures* was written. In the large manuscript collection of his verses preserved in the Bodleian Library are two scraps of an unpublished satire imitating Churchill's *Rosciad* (1761), to be entitled *The Turnspitiad*, a canine contest of which Mallet is the hero:

If dogg'rel rhimes have aught to do with dog,

If kitchen smook resembles fog,
If changing sides from Hardwick to Lord B—t
Can with a turnspit's turning humour suit,
If to write verse immeasurably low,
Which Malloch's verse does so compleatly show,
Deserve the preference—Malloch, take the wheel,
Nor quit it till you bring as *gude a Chie!*^[5]

And the decision to damn *Elvira* was made in advance of the performance, as we have seen.

Having failed, in spite of shrill-sounding catcalls, to persuade the audience at Drury Lane to damn the play, our trio went to supper at the house of Erskine's sister, Lady Betty Macfarlane, in Leicester Street, and there found themselves so fertile in sallies of humour, wit, and satire on Mallet and his play that they determined to meet again and throw their sallies into order. Accordingly, they dined at Lady Betty's next day (20 January). After dinner Erskine produced a draft of their observations thrown into pamphlet size, they all three corrected it, Boswell copied it out, and they drove immediately in Lady Betty's coach to the shop of William Flexney, Churchill's publisher, and persuaded him to undertake the publication. Next day Boswell repented of the scurrility of what they had written and got Dempster to go with him to retrieve the copy. Erskine at first was sulky, but finally consented to help revise it again. It went back to Flexney in a day or two, and was published on 27 January.^[6]

Elvira was essentially a translation or adaptation of Lamotte-Houdar's French tragedy *Inès de Castro*, a piece published forty years before, but the English audience of 1763 saw in it a compliment to the King of Portugal, whose cause against Spain Great Britain had espoused towards the end of the Seven Years' War. The preliminaries of peace had already been signed, but the spirit of belligerency had not subsided; so that the making of the only odious person in the play (the Queen) a Spaniard, and having it end with a declaration of war against Spain, could not fail to please a patriotic audience. Since nobody reads *Elvira* any more, I shall venture to give an expanded version of Genest's outline of the plot, in order to make the comments in *Critical Strictures* more intelligible:

Don Pedro [son of Alonzo IV, King of Portugal] and Elvira [maid of honour to the Queen, who is the King's second wife, and is mother of the King of Spain] are privately married—the King insists that his son should marry Almeyda [the Queen's daughter, sister to the King of Spain]—he acknowledges his love for Elvira—she is committed to the custody of the Queen—Don Pedro takes up arms to rescue Elvira—he forces his way into the palace—she blames him for his rashness—the King enters, and Don Pedro throws away his sword—Don Pedro is first confined to his apartment, and then condemned to death—Almeyda, who is in love with Don Pedro, does her utmost to save him—she prevails on the King to give Elvira an audience—Elvira avows her marriage, and produces her two children—the King pardons his son—Elvira dies, having been poisoned by the Queen—Don Pedro offers to kill himself, but is prevented by his father.^[7]

The play had a respectable run, in spite of its colliding with the Half-Price Riots, but contemporary accounts appear to indicate that it was not highly thought of by the judicious. I extract the following terse criticism from a letter in the *St. James's Chronicle* for 20 January, the day after the play opened:

A Brief Criticism on the New Tragedy of Elvira

Act I. Indifferent.
Act II. Something better.
Act III. MIDDLING.
Act IV. Execrable.
Act V. Very Tolerable.

Dempster later regretted his share in *Critical Strictures* on the ground that neither he nor his collaborators could have written a tragedy nearly so good. *The Critical Review*, in which Mallet himself sometimes wrote, characterized the pamphlet as "the crude efforts of envy, petulance, and self-conceit." "There being thus three epithets," says Boswell, "we, the three authours, had a humourous contention how each should be appropriated."^[8] *The Monthly Review* was hardly less severe. It conceived the author of *Critical Structures* to be either a personal enemy of Mallet's or else a bitter enemy of Mallet's country, prejudiced against everything Scotch. The reviewer could not but look upon this author "as a man of more abilities than honesty, as the want of candour is certainly a species of dishonesty."^[9]

It was natural to infer that *Critical Strictures* was motivated by prejudice against Scotland. It appeared in the days of Wilkes's *North Briton* and shortly after Charles Churchill's *Prophecy of Famine*, that is, at the height of the violent anti-Scotch feeling which the opponents of Bute (a Scotsman by birth) had stirred up and were exploiting in order to force him out of office. But the critics might have remembered that the most savage criticism of any Scot generally comes from other Scots who think he has not remained Scotch enough; as witness, by what new appears to be retributive justice, the general Scots dislike of Boswell himself. At any rate, the pamphlet was the production, not of one Englishman imbued with a hatred of all things Scots, but of three warmly patriotic Scotsmen.

Critical Strictures is the merest of trifles, but at least three reasons can be given for publishing a facsimile of it. Scholars on occasion need to be able to read all the productions of great authors

no matter how trifling, and this one is excessively rare; so rare, indeed, that few of Boswell's editors have been able to get a sight of it. It makes a pleasant and useful footnote to *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-1765*, a work now being widely read, or at least widely circulated. And it contains a remark or two that should be of interest to historians of English drama in the middle of the eighteenth century.

Mr. C. Beecher Hogan has given me expert assistance in writing two of the notes.

The copy of *Critical Strictures* used for making this reproduction was given to the Library of Yale University by Professor Chauncey B. Tinker.

Frederick A. Pottle Yale University.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

- [1] *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-1763*, ed. F.A. Pottle, McGraw-Hill Book Co. (New York), William Heinemann (London), 1950, p. 152, quoted with permission of the McGraw-Hill Book Co. This edition (which will hereafter be referred to as LJ) prints the journal in a standardized and modernized text. In the passage above quoted I have restored the ampersands and capitals of Boswell's manuscript.
- [2] See F.A. Pottle, *The Literary Career of James Boswell*, Clarendon Press, 1929, pp. 6, 12.
- [3] "The Life of Mallet," in *Lives of the Poets*.
- [4] James Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*, ed. G.B. Hill and L.F. Powell, Clarendon Press, 6 vols., 1934-1950, i. 268. (Hereafter referred to as *Life*.)
- [5] Douce MS 193, 93^v, quoted with permission of the Curators of the Bodleian Library.
- [6] LJ, pp. 154-155, 162, 163-164, 172, partly paraphrased, partly quoted.
- [7] John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage from ... 1660 to 1830*, 10 vols., Bath, 1832, v.12-13.
- [8] *Life*, i. 409 n. 1; *The Critical Review*, xv (Feb. 1763). 160.
- [9] *The Monthly Review*. xxviii (Jan. 1763). 68, written by the editor, Ralph Griffiths (B.C. Nangle, *The Monthly Review, First Series 1749-1789*, Clarendon Press, 1934, p. 84, no. 995).

**CRITICAL
STRICTURES
ON THE
New TRAGEDY
OF
ELVIRA,
WRITTEN BY
Mr. DAVID MALLOCH.**

LONDON:
Printed for W. FLEXNEY, near Gray's Inn, Holborn.
MDCCLXIII.
(Price Sixpence.)

Advertisement.^[A]

We have followed the Authority of Sir *David Dalrymple*, and Mr. *Samuel Johnson*, in the Orthography of Mr. *Malloch's* Name; as we imagine the Decision of these Gentlemen will have

more weight in the World of Letters, than even that of the said Mr. *Malloch* himself.

CRITICAL STRICTURES, &c.

In our Strictures on the Tragedy of *Elvira*, we shall not hasten all at once into the midst of Things, according to the Rules of Epic Poetry; Heroic Poems and Remarks on New Plays, are things so essentially different, that they ought not to be written by the same Rules. Had Mr. *Malloch* been aware of these Distinctions in writing, which surely are not very nice, he probably would have discovered that Scenes admirably adapted for forming a Burlesque Tragedy, would never succeed in forming a serious Drama. In the Prologue the Author informs us, that the Preliminaries of Peace are signed, and the War now over and he humbly hopes, as we have spared the *French*, we will spare his Tragedy. But as the Principles of Restitution seem at present strong in this Nation, before we extend our Mercy to him, we insist that in imitation of his Superiors, he shall restore every thing valuable he has plunder'd from the *French* during the Course of his sad and tedious Composition.

In the first Scene of this Tragedy a Gentleman who has been abroad, during the Wars, requests his Friend to acquaint him with what has past at Court in the time of his Absence. We were equally surprized and delighted with this new Method of informing the Spectators of the Transactions prior to the Commencement of the Play; nothing can be more natural, for we imagine the Art of conveying Letters by Post was at that time undiscovered. We must indeed acknowledge, that during the time of the Roman Empire Letters were transmitted with the utmost Celerity from one Part to another of those immense Dominions; but we also know, that after the Subversion of that State by the Incursions of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, the first Act of Cruelty committed by these Barbarians was murdering all the Post-Boys in cold Blood: In like manner as our inhuman *Edward* upon his compleating the Conquest of *Wales* ordered all the Bards to be put to Death, amongst the Number of which had Mr. *Malloch* been included we had not now been tortured with his execrable Tragedy. Novelty of the same kind with this we have mentioned runs thro' the whole Play, almost every Scene being an Interview and a *tête a tête*. The King wants to see his Son, the Queen wants to see *Elvira*, *Elvira* wants to see the King, and so on thro' the Five Acts.

No new Thoughts or Sentiments are to be found in this Performance, we meet only with old ones absurdly expressed. *Dryden* said that *Ben Johnson* was every where to be traced in the Snow of the Ancients. We may say that *Malloch* is every where to be traced in the Puddle of the Moderns. Instead of selecting the Beauties, he has pick'd out whatever is despicable in *Shakespeare*, *Otway*, *Dryden*, and *Rowe*, like a Pick-Pocket who dives for Handkerchiefs, not for Gold; and contents himself with what he finds in our Great Coat Pocket, without attempting our Watch or your Purse. Tho' Mr. *Malloch* may only mean to borrow, yet as he possesses no Fund of Original Genius from whence he can pay his Debts, borrowing, we are afraid is an inadequate Expression, the harsher one of stealing we must therefore, tho' reluctantly, substitute in its room. In the Prologue he acknowledges himself a Culprit, but as the Loss of what he has pilfered is insignificant to the Owners, we shall bring him in guilty only of Petty Larcenary: We believe he has been driven, like poor People in this severe Weather by dire Necessity, to such dishonest Shifts.

In this Play the Author has introduced a Rebellion unparalleled in any History, Ancient or Modern. He raises his Rebellions as a skilful Gardener does his Mushrooms, in a Moment; and like an artful Nurse, he lulls in a Moment the fretful Child asleep. The Prince enters an Appartment of the Palace with a drawn Sword; this forms the Rebellion. The King enters the same Appartment without a drawn Sword. This quashes the Rebellion. How to credit this Story, or to pardon this poetical Licence, we are greatly at a Loss; for we know in the Year 1745 three thousand Mountaineers actually appeared at *Derby*. *Cataline*, we are credibly informed, had a Gang of at least a Dozen stout Fellows; and it is pretty certain that *Bedemar*, when going to inslave *Venice*, had provided Pistols and Battle Powder for more than fifteen fighting Men. We are almost tempted to think, that Mr. *Malloch* gets his Rebellions ready made, like his *Scotch Tobacco*, cut and dry, at the Sign of the Valiant Highlander.

Our great Author possesses, in its utmost Perfection, the happy Art of uniting rival Ladies, and of setting at Variance a virtuous Father and Son. How intimate his Acquaintance with Human Nature! How deep his Knowledge of the Passions! No less exquisite and refined in his Morality, like a true Disciple of Lord *Bolingbroke*, he unites Vice and Virtue most lovingly together; witness this memorable Line of the King's, addressed to *Elvira*;

'Midst all your Guilt I must admire your Virtue.

Let us invert this Line,

'Midst all your Virtue I must abhor your Guilt.

Let us parody it;

O Mr. *David Malloch!* 'midst all your Dullness I must admire your Genius.

We heard it once asserted by *David Hume*, Esq;^[B] that Mr. *Malloch* was destitute of the Pathetic. In this Observation however we beg leave to differ with him. In the fourth Act the whole Board of Portuguese Privy Counsellors are melted into Tears. The Trial of the Prince moves the Hearts of those Monsters of Iniquity, those Members of Inquisition, when the less humane Audience are in Danger, from the Tediousness of two insipid Harangues of falling fast asleep. This majestic Scene is too exactly copied from a Trial at the *Old Bailey*, to have even the Merit of Originality. And indeed it is to the Lenity of the King of *Portugal* that we owe by far the greater Part of this amazing Play. The good Man lets his rebellious Subjects out of Prison to chat with him, when a wiser Monarch would have kept them close confined in *Newgate*. The incomparable Action of that universal Genius Mr. *Garrick* alone, saved this Act from the Damnation it deserved. Had not he, like a second *Aeneas*, carried the old doating and decrepid Father on his Back, he must have lain by the Way. Tho' we must observe another Character in this Play seemed better suited to the Impetuosity and Fire of this Actor. We could not but smile at the Humour of a merry Wag in the Pit, who at the Conclusion of one of the most tiresome Pleadings, with some Degree of Impatience and Emotion called out, *Encore, encore*.

In the fifth Act we were melted with the Sight of two young Children which the King embraced, which the Prince embraced, which *Elvira* embraced. Mr. *Addison* in the 44th No. of the *Spectator*, has some Remarks so judicious and lively on the Practice of introducing Children on the Stage, that we must beg leave to transcribe the Passage.

"A disconsolate Mother with a Child in her Hand, has frequently drawn Compassion from the Audience, and has therefore gained a Place in several Tragedies; a modern Writer who observed how this had taken in other Plays, being resolved to double the Distress, and melt his Audience twice as much as those before him had done, brought a Princess on the Stage with a little Boy in one Hand, and a Girl in the other. A third Poet being resolved to out-write all his Predecessors, a few Years ago introduced three Children with great Success; and as I am informed a young Gentleman who is fully determined to break the most obdurate Heart, has a Tragedy by him where the first Person that appears on the Stage is an afflicted Widow, in her mourning Weeds, with half a dozen fatherless Children attending her, like those that usually hang about the Figure of Charity. Thus several Incidents that are beautiful in a good Writer become ridiculous by falling into the Hands of a bad one."

We would suggest to Mr. *Malloch* the useful Hint of introducing in some of his future Productions, the whole Foundling Hospital, which with a well painted Scene of the Edifice itself would certainly call forth the warmest Tears of Pity, and the bitterest Emotions of Distress; especially when we consider that many of the Parents of these unfortunate Babes would probably be Spectators of this interesting Scene.

The Conclusion of the Piece is as abrupt as the other Parts of it are absurd. We should be much at a Loss to guess by whom the Poison is administered to *Elvira*, were we not aided in our Conjectures by the shrewd Suspicions which the King, tho' otherwise a very loving Husband, seems to entertain of his Wife. Upon my regretting that her Majesty, if guilty, should escape without poetical Justice at least, a Gentleman who sat behind me, a Friend as I supposed of the Author, assured me her Punishment was reserved for the Farce, which for that Purpose was, contrary to Custom, added to the Play.^[C]

Though in general this Tragedy is colder than the most extreme Parts of *Nova Zembla*,^[D] yet we now and then feel a Warmth, but it is such a Warmth or Glow rather, as is sometimes produced by the Handling of Snow.

Bad as this Play is, yet will the Author have the Profits of his Three Nights: Few on the First Night having either Taste or Spirit to express their Disapprobation. Like the Rascals who plundered *Lisbon* after the Earthquake, Mr. *David Malloch* will extract Guineas out of Rubbish.

We shall now give, in a few Words, the Quintessence of this Play. Monarchs ought to be just. Heroes are bad Men. Husbands ought to die for their Wives, Wives for their Husbands. We ought to govern our Passions. And the Sun shines on all alike. A few of these new Remarks form the Sum total of this contemptible Piece.

After the Play we were entertained with an Epilogue fraught with Humour, and spoken with Spirit. There was a Simile of a Bundle of Twigs formed into a Rod, which seemed to convey a delicate Allusion to Mr. *Malloch's* original Profession,^[E] and some of the Lines contained an exquisite and severe Criticism on the Play itself.

Amidst all the harshness inspired by a real Feeling of the Dulness of the Composition itself, it would be unjust not to bestow the highest Applause on the principal Performers, by the Energy of whose Action even Dulness was sometimes rendered respectable. We were sorry to find such great Talents so very ill employed. The melting Tones of a *Cibber* should make every Eye stream with Tears. *Pritchard* should always elevate. *Garrick* give Strength and Majesty to the Scene. Let us soften at the keen Distress of a *Belvidera*; let our Souls rise with the Dignity of an *Elizabeth*; let us tremble at the wild Madness of a *Lear*;^[F] but let us not Yawn at the Stupidity of uninteresting Characters.

NOTES ON CRITICAL STRICTURES

- [A] (P. 5) Advertisement. Johnson's dictum first appeared in the abridgment of his dictionary, 1756, under *Alias*, which he defined as "A Latin word signifying otherwise; as Mallet *alias* Mallock; that is, *otherwise* Mallock." In four places in his *Memorials and Letters Relating to the History of Britain in the Reign of James the First* (1762) Dalrymple had given Mallet "his real name"; he had repented after the sheets were printed and had inserted a corrigendum, "For Malloch, r. Mallet," which only made matters worse. See *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, iv. 78 n. 17. Dalrymple chided the authors of *Critical Strictures* gently for using his name, and said he was sorry for having thus yielded to a private pique (LJ, p. 190 n. 6). But the matter remained of interest to him, for as late as 1783 he sent Johnson a copy of one of Mallet's earliest productions, the title-page of which bore the name in its original spelling (*Life*, iv. 216-217; see also *Private Papers of James Boswell ... in the Collection of ... R.H. Isham*, ed. Geoffrey Scott and F.A. Pottle, 18 vols., Privately Printed, 1928-1934, xv. 208).
- [B] (P. 15) "We heard it once asserted by *David Hume, Esq.*" On 4 November 1762, in Hume's house in James's Court, Edinburgh. "Mr. Mallet has written bad Tragedies because he is deficient in the pathetic, and hence it is doubted if he is the Author of *William and Margaret*. Mr. Hume said he knew people who had seen it before Mallet was born. Erskine gave another proof, viz. that he has written *Edwin and Emma*, a Ballad in the same stile, not near so good." See *Private Papers* (as in the note preceding this), i. 126-127, or the Limited Edition of *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-1763*, McGraw-Hill and Heinemann, 1951, p. 101. Hume protested vigorously, though with good humor, at this breach of confidence, and Boswell wrote a flippant reply (LJ, pp. 206-207, 208-209).
- [C] (P. 20) "... her Punishment was reserved for the Farce, which for that Purpose was, contrary to Custom, added to the Play." Stock plays were always followed by an afterpiece, but the afterpiece was in most cases omitted during the first run of a new play. For example, Mrs. Sheridan's *Discovery* opened 3 February 1763 and ran for ten nights before an afterpiece was added. The afterpieces presented with *Elvira* up to 27 January were as follows: 19 January, *The Male Coquette* (Garrick); 20 January, *High Life Below Stairs* (Townley); 21 January, *Old Maid* (Murphy); 22 January, *Catharine and Petruccio* (Garrick's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*; 24 January, *High Life Below Stairs*; 26 January, *Catharine and Petruccio*; 27 January, *Edgar and Emmeline* (Hawkesworth). But Mrs. Pritchard, who played the Queen in *Elvira*, seems not to have appeared in any of these afterpieces, and no one of them contains a queen (Dougald MacMillan, *Drury Lane Calendar, 1747-1776*, Clarendon Press, 1938, pp. 94, 217, 239, 260, 282, 297). Furthermore, if the jest could be understood only with reference to a particular farce, that farce would surely have been named. This is no doubt a case where less is meant than meets the ear. The authors are merely saying that Mallet's play is badly constructed, and is so ridiculous generally that no one will know when the tragedy ends and the farce begins.
- [D] (P. 21) "Though in general this Tragedy is colder than the most extreme Parts of *Nova Zembla* ..." This is perhaps the only passage in *Critical Strictures* that can be attributed with certainty to one of the three authors. The remark is Dempster's, and had been made some time before *Elvira* was presented; in fact, he had applied it originally to Johnson's *Irene*. See LJ, pp. 69, 306.
- [E] (P. 22) "... a Simile of a Bundle of Twigs formed into a Rod ... Mr. *Malloch's* original Profession ..." Garrick's epilogue to *Elvira* contains the following lines:

A single critick will not frown, look big,
Harmless and pliant as a single twig,
But crowd'd *here* they change, and 'tis not odd,
For twigs when bundled up, become a rod.

One of Mallet's duties, when he was janitor of the High School of Edinburgh, had been to assist in the floggings, either by applying the instrument of punishment himself (see LJ, p. 209) or by lifting the boys up on his back at the command of *tollatur* and exposing the proper portion of their anatomy to the master's birch (John Ramsay, *Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, Blackwood, Edinburgh and London, 1888, i. 24 n.)

- [F] (Pp. 23-24) "... keen Distress of a *Belvidera*,... Dignity of an *Elizabeth*,... wild Madness of a *Lear*." The authors are listing what they conceive to be the most impressive tragic roles of Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, and Garrick, who played respectively *Elvira*, the Queen, and the King in *Elvira*. *Belvidera* in Otway's *Venice Preserved* was by all accounts one of Mrs. Cibber's best parts. It had been assigned to her in the majority of the Drury Lane performances since 1747, and she had appeared in it as recently as 16 November 1762. Mrs. Pritchard had played Queen Elizabeth in all the Drury Lane performances (1755-1760) of *The Earl of Essex* by Henry Jones and of the play of the same name by Henry Brooke (1761-), but had appeared in neither role more recently than 30 December 1761. A role of Elizabeth which she had presented more recently (18 December 1762) and had been appearing regularly in since 1748 was the Queen Elizabeth of Shakespeare's *Richard III* as altered by Cibber. It is probably this last named Elizabeth that the authors of *Critical Strictures* had in mind. The choice is unusual, critics generally having considered Lady Macbeth to be her finest tragic role. Garrick had played *Lear* on 31

PUBLICATIONS OF THE AUGUSTAN REPRINT SOCIETY

FIRST YEAR (1946-47)

Numbers 1-4 out of print.

5. Samuel Wesley's *Epistle to a Friend Concerning Poetry* (1700) and *Essay on Heroic Poetry* (1693).
6. *Representation of the Impiety and Immorality of the Stage* (1704) and *Some Thoughts Concerning the Stage* (1704).

SECOND YEAR (1947-1948)

7. John Gay's *The Present State of Wit* (1711); and a section on Wit from *The English Theophrastus* (1702).
8. Rapin's *De Carmine Pastoralis*, translated by Creech (1684).
9. T. Hanmer's (?) *Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet* (1736).
10. Corbyn Morris' *Essay towards Fixing the True Standards of Wit, etc.* (1744).
11. Thomas Purney's *Discourse on the Pastoral* (1717).
12. *Essays on the Stage*, selected, with an Introduction by Joseph Wood Krutch.

THIRD YEAR (1948-1949)

13. Sir John Falstaff (pseud.), *The Theatre* (1720).
14. Edward Moore's *The Gamester* (1753).
15. John Oldmixon's *Reflections on Dr. Swift's Letter to Harley* (1712); and Arthur Mainwaring's *The British Academy* (1712).
16. Nevil Payne's *Fatal Jealousy* (1673).
17. Nicholas Rowe's *Some Account of the Life of Mr. William Shakespeare* (1709).
18. "Of Genius," in *The Occasional Paper*, Vol. III, No. 10 (1719); and Aaron Hill's Preface to *The Creation* (1720).

FOURTH YEAR (1949-1950)

19. Susanna Centlivre's *The Busie Body* (1709).
20. Lewis Theobald's *Preface to The Works of Shakespeare* (1734).
21. *Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa, and Pamela* (1754).
22. Samuel Johnson's *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749) and *Two Rambler papers* (1750).
23. John Dryden's *His Majesties Declaration Defended* (1681).
24. Pierre Nicole's *An Essay on True and Apparent Beauty in Which from Settled Principles is Rendered the Grounds for Choosing and Rejecting Epigrams*, translated by J.V. Cunningham.

FIFTH YEAR (1950-51)

25. Thomas Baker's *The Fine Lady's Airs* (1709).
26. Charles Macklin's *The Man of the World* (1792).
27. Frances Reynolds' *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Taste, and of the Origin of Our Ideas of Beauty, etc.* (1785).
28. John Evelyn's *An Apologie for the Royal Party* (1659); and *A Panegyric to Charles the Second* (1661).
29. Daniel Defoe's *A Vindication of the Press* (1718).
30. *Essays on Taste* from John Gilbert Cooper's *Letters Concerning Taste*, 3rd edition (1757), & John Armstrong's *Miscellanies* (1770).
31. Thomas Gray's *An Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard* (1751); and *The Eton College*

Manuscript.

32. Prefaces to Fiction; Georges de Scudéry's Preface to *Ibrahim* (1674), etc.

33. Henry Gally's *A Critical Essay* on Characteristic-Writings (1725).

34. Thomas Tyers' A Biographical Sketch of Dr. Samuel Johnson (1785).

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Publications for the sixth year [1951-1952]

(At least six items, most of them from the following list, will be reprinted.)

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An Essay on the New Species of Writing Founded by Mr. Fielding (1751). Introduction by James A. Work.

HENRY GALLY: *A Critical Essay on Characteristic Writing* (1725). Introduction by Alexander Chorney.

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