

ANTHOLOGISING THE AUTHOR IN THE
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY *BEAUTIES* TRADITION

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of
Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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September 2002

Heather Elizabeth Larmour: Anthologising the Author in the Eighteenth-Century
Beauties Tradition

Abstract

The genre of the anthology was one which expanded and developed significantly during the course of the eighteenth century. Among the various literary collections published, the anthology of *Beauties* represents a strand of eighteenth-century anthologising which specialized in extracting and gathering the best pieces from the best writers, and arranging them under a variety of headings. Although such collections have been noted and discussed in recent studies of eighteenth-century anthologies, such as Barbara Benedict's *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), an in-depth examination of such collections has not been attempted. Extracts from the prefaces of *Beauties* collections are scattered throughout the *Critical Heritage* series and have been utilized by scholars such as A. T. Hazen and Alan B. Howes. This study, however, aims to retrieve the *Beauties* collection from the miscellaneous after-thoughts of bibliographical research, and to explore the growth of the tradition and its role within the development of the eighteenth-century anthology.

An examination of this tradition offers an insight into the anthologising practices of the eighteenth century and highlights the largely unexplored issues raised by the selection and editing processes utilized by anthologists and compilers. The first part of this study traces the early stages of the *Beauties* tradition's development, charting the forms of literary collection and critical discourse which directly influenced the practice of collecting literary 'beauties'. Examining collections such as William Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* (1752) and the *Beauties of Johnson* (1781), the study documents the significant stages in the anthologising of an individual author, and explores the ways in which ideas of authorship and authorial identity are appropriated and manipulated by the arrangement and editing of extracts within a collection.

The second part of the study follows the application of the anthologising processes highlighted in the *Beauties* of Shakespeare and Johnson, within the bookseller George Kearsley's series of *Beauties* collections. Drawing upon Kearsley's anthologies of Henry Fielding, Oliver Goldsmith, Laurence Sterne, and Jonathan Swift, as case studies, the thesis examines the way in which each author is represented and repackaged within the collection of their literary 'beauties'. The final section explores the influence of Kearsley's authorial *Beauties* collections upon the *Beauties* tradition as a whole and upon the continued anthologising of authors in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Through the examination of the development of the *Beauties* tradition the thesis offers an insight into the techniques employed within the eighteenth-century book trade to market authors for a changing society and readership. The editorial processes evident in these collections testify to the systematic appropriation of authorial identity and highlights the importance of such literary collections and their influence upon eighteenth-century readers and the authors they anthologise.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the University of Liverpool for the Postgraduate Studentship which made this study possible. I am grateful to the staff and postgraduate community of the University of Liverpool Department of English Language and Literature for their ongoing assistance and encouragement. In particular, thanks to Dr. Paul Baines, for whose supervision, support, and advice, I am most grateful, and to Professor Kelvin Everest and Professor Marcus Walsh. I also wish to thank the staff of the Sydney Jones Library, University of Liverpool, the library of The Queen's University of Belfast, the British Library, the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and the John Ryland's Library, Manchester. I am also grateful for the generosity and support of numerous individuals, including family and friends, who contributed to this work in a variety of ways. Thanks in particular to Kate and Craig Armstrong, Barbara Hinchliffe, David Leyland, June, Billy and Stephen Larmour, Melanie Law, and finally, Sarah and Alex Patton.

List of Short Titles and Abbreviations

- BJECS* *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*
- ECS* *Eighteenth-Century Studies*
- ELH* *English Literary History*
- Boswell, *Life of Johnson* Boswell, James, *Life of Johnson*, ed. by G. B. Hill and L. F. Powell, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934-1950)
- Boulton, *Critical Heritage* Boulton, James T., ed., *Johnson: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971)
- Goldsmith, *Works* Goldsmith, Oliver, *The Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. by Arthur Friedman, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966)
- Howes, *Critical Heritage* Howes, Alan B., ed., *Sterne: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974)
- Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Redford Johnson, Samuel, *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*, ed. by Bruce Redford, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992-1994)
- Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Chapman Johnson, Samuel, *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*, ed. by R. W. Chapman, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952)
- Johnson, *Works* Johnson, Samuel, *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson* General editor John H. Middendorf, 16 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958-)
- Sterne, *Letters* Curtis, Lewis P., ed., *The Letters of Laurence Sterne* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935)
- Swift, *Correspondence* Williams, Harold, ed., *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963-1965)
- Swift, *Prose Works* Davis, Herbert, ed., *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift*, 14 vols (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939)

PART I

EARLY AUTHORIAL ANTHOLOGISING: THE *BEAUTIES* OF SHAKESPEARE
AND JOHNSON

CHAPTER 1

FROM CRITICAL DISCOURSE TO COMPILATION: THE ORIGINS OF THE
BEAUTIES COLLECTION

I

Aspects of the Anthology in Eighteenth-Century Britain

The anthology and miscellany were both popular and diverse forms throughout the course of the eighteenth century. Alexander Pope remarked, in the preface to the Pope-Swift *Miscellanies* of 1727, that ‘There’s no end of making Books [...], and above all of making Miscellanies, which all men can make’.¹ Nor was there any sign of abatement in such publications one hundred and twenty years later. A reviewer in the *Athenaeum* for 31 March 1860 lamented:

It might have been fancied that the days of ‘Beauties, ‘Gems’, Anthologies’ were over having been brought to a period by the honest desire of readers for themselves to decide on what they should have or leave in the works of given authors. Yet it is not so.²

Both Pope and the anonymous nineteenth-century reviewer testify to the popularity of the genre of the anthology throughout the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, whilst simultaneously displaying their own disdain of its qualities and its influence on reading practices. Anthologies and miscellanies did not appear to require any talent to compile,

¹ *Pope-Swift Miscellanies*, 1727, cited in Barbara M. Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 140.

² *The Athenaeum*, 31 March 1860, pp. 441-442

nor did they demand any discernment on the part of their readers, who were apparently happy to read a mediated and pre-selected collection.

Such ambivalent attitudes to the genre have ensured that literary collections and their compilers are relegated to an undefined position on the margins of literary respectability. In today's modern sound-bite culture, where everything from books and television to compact discs, newspapers, and the internet, are indebted to the compiler's industry, the attitude that anyone can be an anthologist has ensured that the genre has been undervalued and under-researched. Even in scholarly circles where the genre has 'become central to our imagination of the canon', it is prevented by its size and other factors 'from entering that canon's most concrete material'.³ While the anthology's ability to help create and change canons is widely acknowledged, the genre itself is not regarded as canonical. The anthology is frequently viewed as a vehicle for housing literature, but it remains outside the boundaries which define that literature, and, despite the fact that it is widely used today in classrooms and universities, 'the profession that teaches anthologies has provided few theories of the genre'.⁴ The exclusion of anthologies from mainstream critical debates and theory is a result of many factors including the fact that 'the language of criticism' does not 'leave much room for anthologists'.⁵ The anthologist is a shadowy and often anonymous figure who 'cuts across the divisions of labor that make it possible to understand texts, or even to catalogue them'.⁶ Leah Price views the anthologist as a 'middleman' who exists between

³ Leah Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel: From Richardson to George Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 5.

⁴ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 2.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

the divisions of ‘writer and reader, writer and critic, writer and publisher, writer and censor’. The anthologist fulfils elements of all these roles yet embodies none of them completely — a jack of all trades, master of none.

This ambiguity which surrounds the figure of the compiler denies an anthology the figure of an author to fulfil our need to catalogue a work and attribute its value and context to a name or a location. As Price has observed, ‘anthologists have yet to become national heroes’, but recent interest in the genre and its development have ensured that anthologists and the collections they compiled receive some of the recognition they deserve.⁷ Barbara Benedict’s study, *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies* (1996), and Price’s *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel* (2000), have raised the profile both of anthologies and anthologists in the early modern period. Benedict traces the development of the genre from the Restoration period through to the end of the eighteenth century, highlighting the various manifestations that the form adopted in its bid to appeal to different readers in changing social and literary climates. Price’s study examines the anthology with particular stress on the novel, from that genre’s rise in the mid-eighteenth century through to the nineteenth. Both studies draw attention to the vast array of anthologies produced throughout this period, and the way in which anthologists utilised the form to respond to consumer demand, disseminate literary works to a burgeoning consumer market, and to educate and influence that market. Their respective concerns highlight the influence the genre exerted on reading practices and on the development of the novel and a number of novelists. Benedict states that ‘Literary collections became a powerful vehicle for defining both what and how to

⁷ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 1.

read in the eighteenth century'.⁸ Anthologies, in the ways in which they packaged and arranged their contents, could educate and 'train' their readers' responses to literature, and were, therefore, an influential literary form.⁹

Price has argued that anthologies 'determine not simply who gets published or what gets read, but who reads and how', echoing the view of T.J.D. Allot who, in his study of early French anthologies published in the 1960s, observes that 'For the modern critic, the choice of texts which such collections contained can be of great value in reflecting the current literary trends and in revealing the average level of taste during the period'.¹⁰ The contents of anthologies can provide a useful indication of the popularity of a particular genre, work, or author, giving the modern critic an insight into literary taste and expectations of a particular period or location. Eighteenth-century literary anthologies can therefore provide a unique glimpse into the reading habits and reading matter of the period; their selections governing what material was read and the way in which it was read. This reading experience is as potentially various as the kinds of literary collection published during the period, which included miscellanies and commonplace books, collections of maxims, aphorisms, and witticisms. Collections could contain a selection of poems, prose, or drama, and could reprint entire pieces or short extracts, arranged thematically or alphabetically, with headings or without. The terminology used to describe these forms of literary collection is equally various and is often ambiguous or indiscriminate. The terms 'miscellany' and 'anthology' are often used interchangeably, and, as Benedict states 'the forms are not fundamentally

⁸ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 212.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 198.

¹⁰ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 3; T.J.D. Allot, 'Jean Bertaut and the French Anthologies about 1600', in *The Library*, 5th series, XXII (1967), pp. 136-142, p. 142.

different'.¹¹ Although the basic distinction suggested by Johnson's definition of an anthology as primarily 'a collection of flowers', and the term *miscellane* as 'a dish of mixed corn' (both definitions stemming from their respective Greek and Latin roots) holds true, the terms were often interchangeable. Miscellanies were often characterised by the very 'mixed', miscellaneous nature of their contents (often contemporary material), while the anthology was often slightly more organised, having some kind of organising principle, be it a particular theme, subject or genre. Despite this, it is not unusual for miscellanies to focus on a particular subject, or for collections organised around a central theme to be treated and regarded as miscellaneous productions.¹²

Benedict makes a convincing case, based on the examinations of various collections, that 'anthologies and miscellanies constitute the same genre because they share means of material production, processes of compilation, audiences, and forms that define their cultural functions.'¹³ The miscellany blends into the anthology and vice versa. Indeed, any attempt to clearly define such forms is further complicated by numerous other related literary productions, which although distinct in their own processes of production, structure, and format, do, at times, overlap with those of the anthology or miscellany.

¹¹ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 3.

¹² A search under the word 'miscellany' on the *English Short Title Catalogue* (hereafter *ESTC*), provides some interesting examples of the diverse themes and subjects included in such collections in the early eighteenth century. For example, *The ladies miscellany* (London: for E. Curll, 1718); *The Court miscellany* (London: for E. Curll, 1719); *The lover's miscellany* (London: for J. Roberts, 1719); *The Edinburgh miscellany* (Edinburgh: printed and sold by J. Meuen and Company, 1720); Samuel Fuller's *A mathematical miscellany* (Dublin: for the author, 1730); *The London miscellany* (London: for A. Moore, 1730); *The gentleman's miscellany* (London: J. Purser, 1730); *The beau's miscellany* (London: for A. Moore, [1731?]); Daniel D. Bellamy's *The young ladies miscellany* (London: for the author, 1723); Mr. Bavius, [pseud.] *The Grub-Street miscellany* (London: for J. Wilford, 1731); Robert Tatersal, *The bricklayer's miscellany* second part (London: for the author, 1735); *Cibber and Sheridan; or, the Dublin miscellany* (Dublin: for Peter Wilson, 1743); *Little master's miscellany* (London: Jacob Robinson and Birmingham, T. Warren, 1746). Although there are fewer miscellanies in the second half of the century, *The children's miscellany* (London: for John Stockdale, 1788) is an interesting later example.

¹³ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 4.

These near relations include courtesy and commonplace books, books of maxims and witticisms, poetic dictionaries and manuals, as well as ‘books of aphorisms, epigrams, jests, riddles, and songs.’¹⁴ Benedict identifies such books as those that helped create the ‘form and ideology of the literary collection’ from medieval times through the Renaissance to the Restoration itself. These forms not only helped shape the anthology as it developed in its earliest manifestations, they also continued to influence and mould the genre throughout the eighteenth century. As the collections of Johnson and Swift, discussed in chapters three and five of this study reveal, the ongoing popularity of the book of maxims or aphorisms exerted an importance influence over the structure and orientation of the way in which these authors were anthologised. Finally, it is futile to try and distinguish between such early forms, as many of the early reviewers themselves failed to do so. Advertisements and reviews of many of the *Beauties* collections discussed in the following pages seem to defy categorisation and are relegated to the ‘Miscellaneous’ section of literary periodicals.

The present study follows Benedict in viewing both forms as similar and often indistinguishable, while also bearing in mind the distinctions raised by Johnson in his *Dictionary*. It will focus on one particular strand of eighteenth-century anthology, that of the collection of *Beauties*. Such collections first began to appear when Pope made his complaint regarding the endless making of miscellanies, and continued until the mid-nineteenth century when the *Athenaeum* reviewer commented on ‘the days of “Beauties”, “Gems”, “Anthologies”’. With its development spanning this period, the *Beauties* anthology provides a survey of the attitudes towards, and techniques employed in, the

¹⁴ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 34.

production of literary anthologies during the eighteenth century. While Benedict and Price consider a variety of literary collections in their studies, the present discussion will confine its scope to this particular sub-genre of anthology, offering a more detailed examination of anthologising methods within one particular tradition. In doing so, the study will explore the effects of such collections on their readers and consider the kind of reader and reading experience which the anthologies aim to promote. However, unlike Benedict, the main focus of this study is not the readers of the anthologies, but the subjects which they anthologise. The *Beauties* tradition was the first to offer an eighteenth-century anthology of Shakespeare, and went on to anthologise authors such as Henry Fielding, Oliver Goldsmith, Samuel Johnson, Laurence Sterne, and Jonathan Swift. In anthologising the works of one particular individual, these *Beauties* collections offer an insight into eighteenth-century attitudes to these authors, and provide unique bibliographical information regarding the continued reprinting and dissemination of their writings.

While scholars such as A. T. Hazen and Alan B. Howes have briefly discussed such collections in relation to the works of Johnson and Sterne, there has been little study undertaken in this area.¹⁵ Benedict's article, 'The "Beauties" of literature, 1750-1820: Tasteful Prose and Fine Rhyme for Private Consumption' is the only sustained critical attention the tradition has received.¹⁶ This study aims to expand on these brief discussions, tracing more fully the development of the tradition, and, via landmark

¹⁵ A. T. Hazen, 'The *Beauties* of Johnson', *Modern Philology*, 35 (1938), pp. 289-295; Alan B. Howes, *Yorick and the Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), especially chapter 3, pp. 61-80 on "'Beauties" and Bowdlerization (1780-92)'.

¹⁶ Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature, 1750-1820: Tasteful Prose and Fine Rhyme for Private Consumption', *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Period*, 1 (1994), pp. 317-346.

publications such as William Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* (1752), and George Kearsley's *Beauties of Johnson* (1781), to chart the gradual shift towards the anthologising of extracts from individual authors. A close examination of the contents of the series of author-orientated *Beauties* collections published by the bookseller George Kearsley in the 1780s reveals a previously neglected editorial approach towards the anthologising of authorship in the late-eighteenth century. In compiling their volumes from short passages extracted from longer works, Kearsley's collections highlight a preoccupation with revising and refashioning the authorial persona of their subject by means of a subtle and systematic editorial methodology.

The roots of this methodology and the practice of anthologising short extracts rather than complete works, emerge most directly from the commonplace books and miscellaneous productions of the Renaissance and seventeenth century. Eighteenth-century *Beauties* collections were predominantly viewed as digested literature, continuing 'a process of literary dissemination begun in the Restoration when a private library became a "social necessity", and publishing houses started to print book catalogues in smaller formats to be available to a widening readership.'¹⁷ Such collections were part of the miniaturisation of literature, when books became smaller and more portable, cheaper to print and therefore more affordable to the consumer. The practice of anthologising and desire to collect and compile extracts and passages, however, dates back at least to several centuries B.C. Some of the earliest forms of anthology known emerged from the development of the epigram, which became 'one of the most popular hellenistic art

¹⁷ Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p. 321.

forms', some time after c.300 B.C.¹⁸ As Alan Cameron comments: 'The epigram was in fact destined by its very nature to be anthologised', and 'poets began to publish collections of their own epigrams', known as 'epigrammata' (the word 'anthology', is according to Cameron, 'not attested before Diogenian' in his *Anthologion*, in the second century, and even here 'it may be a later lexicographer's description rather than Diogenian's own title').¹⁹ The earliest comprehensive collection of epigrams is thought to be Meleager's *Garland*, compiled not long after 100 B.C.; its title and structure echoing the idea of the anthology as a 'gathering of flowers'.²⁰ He assigned each of his authors a flower in the preface and states that he has 'entwined' the flowers into a 'garland'; an image, which, as Benedict observes in relation to the eighteenth-century collection, 'marks simultaneously the distinction and the unity of the contents, the flowers garlanded within the volume'.²¹ 'Like a true garland', states Cameron, 'Meleager's book was meant to be admired for itself, not just for its individual flowers'.²² Despite the miscellaneous 'flowers' which make up the anthology, the collection itself gains a unity imposed by the collation and arrangement of its contents. Here, 1800 years before the early modern literary anthology, the figure of the compiler is presented as the figure which provides the collection with its sense of value and unity. There is, it is implied, a sense of artistry involved in weaving a garland of literary flowers and a skill of selection and organisation which places the editor as mediator and literary arbiter, a concept which became increasingly important in the eighteenth century.

¹⁸ See Alan Cameron, *The Greek Anthology: From Meleager to Planudes* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1993), p. 3.

¹⁹ Cameron, *The Greek Anthology*, pp. 4-5. The poets listed by Cameron include Callimachus, Mnasalces, Nicaenetus, Nicander, Philetas and Poisidippus.

²⁰ Cameron, *The Greek Anthology*, p. 5.

²¹ Cameron, *The Greek Anthology*, p. 5; Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 9.

²² *ibid.*

Meleager's *Garland* is not the only collection held to be the earliest such anthology. Scholars suggest that Meleager had a number of predecessors who differed from him in their sense of purpose. Although some texts aim to preserve 'a few of the writer's favourite texts', the majority have 'an avowedly didactic purpose, whether to improve the mind, the morals or literary style'.²³ This preoccupation with selecting extracts with the aim of producing a collection both didactic and improving is one that can be seen to originate in the early Greek collections and subsequently resonates as a justification for the genre throughout the centuries. Numerous other collections followed the early Greek anthologies. Until the nineteenth century, the Planudean Anthology was viewed as *the* Greek Anthology. This collection, however, was found to simply 'rearrange and bowdlerize an already abridged copy of the anthology of Cephalas', which was itself the 'largest and most comprehensive anthology of ancient epigrams ever compiled', dated to c. 900.²⁴ Anthologies, it appears, were themselves being anthologised long before the eighteenth century.

Without engaging in a complete historical survey of the development of the anthology from ancient times, it is clear from these few examples, that the desire to gather and collect material in an epigrammatic form is a long-standing one. Moreover, the use of the form as both a vessel for preserving unique or rare material, and as a means to educate and instruct as well as to entertain and divert, seem to be inherent to the genre and important to its literary function, before and after the invention of the printing press. These aspects continue to influence the ongoing development of the anthology and various similar forms throughout the history of the genre, only to come predominantly to

²³ Cameron, *The Greek Anthology*, p. 6.

²⁴ Cameron, *The Greek Anthology*, pp. 16-17, 343.

the fore during the Renaissance, when, significantly, the epigram was again an incredibly popular form. Benedict states, 'Elizabethan anthologies are the earliest precedent of the eighteenth-century anthology', an observation particularly applicable to the anthology of excerpts.²⁵ The Renaissance was a 'notebook culture' which attempted 'to make ancient wisdom accessible by excerpting it, classifying it under headings and sub-headings and memorising it'.²⁶ Excerpting epigrams and aphorisms was a popular means of collecting and memorising wisdom and, therefore, 'in addition to [their] purely stylistic attribute of pithiness' such forms enjoyed 'a reputation for intellectual profundity and educative force'.²⁷ Like the early Greek anthologies, seventeenth-century collections of epigrams, aphorisms, and maxims were seen to have a didactic purpose and educational value: 'The world of civil prudence, of books of advice to courtier and prince, was especially devoted to learning by maxims'.²⁸ Hence the rise of the commonplace book which encouraged readers to digest and collate knowledge from their own reading for easier reference, resulting in a miscellaneous collection of 'common place' ideas or passages. The 'mnemonic value' of such commonplace books was appreciated by many, including Francis Bacon who viewed the 'diligence and labour in the entry of common places to be a matter of great use and support in studying; as that which supplies matter to invention, and contracts the sight of the judgement to a point'.²⁹ The 'diligence and labour' involved in constructing a commonplace book needed to be sustained over a period of

²⁵ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 35.

²⁶ Stuart Clark, 'Wisdom Literature of the Seventeenth Century: A Guide to the Contents of the "Bacon-Tottel" Commonplace Books. Part I', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 6 (1972-1976), p. 291-305, p. 291.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ Quoted in Clark, 'Wisdom Literature of the Seventeenth Century', p. 292.

time and such patience emphasised an aspect of the anthology of extracts which distinguished it from those collections made up of complete poems.

‘Diligence and labour’, after all, did not characterise many literary collections, and were not qualities all compilers and booksellers possessed. Many literary collections provided booksellers with an opportunity to dispose of surplus stock, with only the expense of printing a new title page, if even that. Collections of poems gathered from surplus stock required little skill or judgement in their compilation and many were further tainted by suspicions of piracy. Numerous collections were themselves anonymous and the authors of the poems within them were not always identified. Of course, ‘before the revision of copyright practices, booksellers did not sell works by author as much as by topic and form, so advertising by name was not the best policy’.³⁰ However, booksellers may not have had permission to print authors’ names or even the works included, so the omission of such identifiers ‘facilitated piracy and dogged detection’.³¹ Indeed, Pope and Swift published their own *Miscellanies* (1727-1728) in an attempt to foil the piratical activities of the notorious Curll.³²

The anthology of excerpts, however, potentially differed from these roughly assembled collections. Although more time-consuming than stitching together a bundle of poems, anthologies of extracts were not particularly time or labour intensive compared to the publication of complete editions of texts composed, set, and printed from scratch, and so the anthology of extracts gained little immediate legitimacy. However, their form and structure demanded a level of thought, consideration, and even talent on the part of

³⁰ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 13.

³¹ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 14.

³² Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 131.

the editor or compiler. The very fact that such a figure, frequently a hack employed by a bookseller for the purpose (if not the bookseller himself), had to spend a considerable amount of time selecting and arranging the various passages, was important in the way such collections marketed themselves. The anthologist was still far below the poet in a society yet to appreciate the value of its authors, but by positioning himself as a literary mediator selecting passages for the benefit of the reader, the anthologist could aim to legitimise his activities and the resulting collection.

The anthology of excerpts, therefore, located its sense of purpose and value in the fact that its contents had been selected and mediated by the compiler himself. Such collections would save their reader from having to struggle through long and laborious texts and poems — such work was done by the anthologist — and thus, what one received was a carefully chosen selection demanding minimum input from the reader. In turn, the success of such collections rested largely on the manner in which the excerpts or selected passages were packaged for the consumer. Collections frequently concentrated on specific themes and genres, or, as was most common, boasted that their selections were the best and most choice extracts on a given theme or from a particular genre. Frequent recourse is made to the familiar image of the bouquet of flowers, despite the fact that very few texts actually make use of the term ‘anthology’ itself.³³ For example, *England's Parnassus: Or The Choysest Flowers of our Moderne Poets* (1600), is an early example of a collection which contains descriptions of ‘Beauties, Personages, Castles,

³³ The few examples highlighted in the *ESTC* were all published in the second half of the century. For example, two volumes of *The Annual Anthology* for 1799 and 1800 (Bristol: for T. N. Longman and O. Rees) and *The English Anthology* (London: for T. and J. Egerton, 1793-1794).

Pallaces, Mountaines, Groves, Seas, Springs, Rivers &c.’³⁴ Similarly, *The English Treasury of Wit and Language* (1655) advertised its contents as being ‘Collected Out of the most and best of our English Dramatick Poems’ which were furthermore, ‘digested in Common Places for General Use’.³⁵ Not only are the contents selected from the best sources, they play on a sense of national pride placing English poets alongside the Classics, stressing their value by portraying the collection as a treasury containing the literary equivalent of the crown jewels. Such collections address themselves to those who wish to be part of an elite coterie of readers who recognise, and are familiar with, the greatest passages from the greatest national poets. This coterie is, moreover, potentially accessible to all. The contents are digested and arranged in a manner easy to use, and selections are compacted into common places which appeal to a wide audience and are, most importantly, easy to memorise. The anthology of excerpts, therefore, through its selection of the ‘best’ passages, could market itself as an instructor; its contents the equivalent of maxims or common places which will educate the reader in matters of language enabling them to recognise and evaluate literary excellence. By exercising ‘diligence and labour’ in their compilation, by mediating between text and audience, and by positioning itself as an educator and treasury of literary excellence, the anthology of excerpts sought to define a legitimate role for itself within literary culture.

Many collections participated in this discourse, and marketed themselves in these terms, a process identified by Benedict as part of a wider strategy to redefine the readers’

³⁴ *England’s Parnassus* (Imprinted at London: for N.C.C.B. and T.H., 1600). See Arthur E. Case, *A Bibliography of English Poetical Miscellanies, 1521-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 24. Details of seventeenth-century collections listed in this section are drawn from this publication.

³⁵ *The English Treasury of Wit and Language* (London: for Humphrey Mosley, 1655); Case, *A Bibliography of English Poetical Miscellanies*, p. 70.

role in literary culture, towards 'aesthetic evaluation entailing social superiority'.³⁶ Some adopt the form of a handbook, poetic manual or dictionary, which includes a selection of the best poetry or drama as part of the overall guide to understanding and appreciating the finer parts of literary composition and evaluation. Joshua Poole produced one such text in 1657 entitled *The English Parnassus: or, a Helpe to English Poesie*.³⁷ Not only does Poole include a 'Short Institution of that Art', and a collection of 'all Rhyming Monosyllables', but also of 'The Choicest Epithets, and Phrases: With some General Forms upon all Occasions, Subjects, and Theams, Alphabetically digested'. The collection of choice epithets and phrases forms the final element of the 'help' afforded the reader through the text. After a discourse on the composition of poetry and a list of useful rhymes, the reader is faced with an assemblage of the best examples, which stand, not only as a model to be followed, but also as a standard by which the reader is encouraged to evaluate literature.

This threefold format was one common to many similar poetic handbooks published throughout the eighteenth century; the earliest and most famous of these being Edward Bysshe's *The Art of English Poetry* (1702).³⁸ Bysshe was heavily influenced by Poole's collection and also divided the contents of his 'poetic toolbox'³⁹ into three similar sections: 'Rules for Making English Verse', a rhyming dictionary, and a 'Collection of the Most Natural, Agreeable, & Noble Thoughts'.⁴⁰ This collection or 'poetical commonplace book' occupies 'over four fifths of the entire work'; consisting of 2,693

³⁶ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 90.

³⁷ Joshua Poole, *The English Parnassus* (London: for Thomas Johnson, 1657); Case, *A Bibliography of English Poetical Miscellanies*, p. 75.

³⁸ Edward Bysshe, *The Art of English Poetry* (London: R. Knaplock, E. Castle, B. Tooker, 1702), reprinted (Menston: Scolar Press, 1968).

³⁹ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 41.

⁴⁰ See, A. Dwight Culler, 'Edward Bysshe and the Poet's Handbook', *PMLA*, 63 (1948), pp. 858-885.

quotations grouped under around five hundred headings and sub-headings, and was ‘the most popular part of the collection’.⁴¹ Like Poole, the headings are arranged alphabetically, providing ease of use and encouraging a ‘skipping and dipping’ approach to reading. As the dedication to Edmund Dunch states:

*The Melange of so many different Subjects, and such a Variety of Thoughts upon them [...] may not satisfie you so well as a Composition perfect in its kind on one intire Subject; but possibly it may divert and amuse you better, for here is no thread of Story, nor connexion of one Part with another, to keep the Mind intent, and constrain you to any length of Reading; This is a Book that may be taken up and laid down at Pleasure, and would rather choose to lye about in a With-drawing-Room, or a Grove, than to be set up in a Closet.*⁴²

Such a description serves not only as a pseudo-apology for the form and contents of *The Art of English Poetry* itself, but highlights some important aspects of the genre as a whole. Such collections not only remove the need for sustained reading, they positively deny it. Lack of story or connecting principle is here lauded as a cause for celebration, freeing the reader from the constraints of lengthy periods of time required for reading and the demand for constant concentration on the reading material itself. Any connections in the text are those made by the readers in their various excursions into the book; whether selecting the extracts which catch their eye, or by using the collection as a reference book indexed by the alphabetical headings. Collections of this nature are, moreover, not designed for the library shelf: they are portable books which can be transported and utilised anywhere.

⁴¹ Culler, ‘Edward Bysshe and the Poet’s Handbook’, p. 867; Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 105.

The Art of English Poetry, despite being ‘the first handbook intended for the serious poet’, also appeals to the less-skilled, casual reader for whom the text serves as a ready-made poetical commonplace, requiring no compilation or judgement on their part. Indeed, rather than requiring judgement, such a collection is an aid to acquiring literary judgement. That the reader ‘may judge of every Passage with due Deference for each Author’, the Names of the specific authors are included at the end of each extract. Readers and poets alike, whether ‘at a loss [...] for proper Epithets or Synonymes’ or not, can consult the ‘Alphabet for any Word under which the Subject of your Thought may most probably be rang’d’ and they will find ‘what have been employ’d, and in what manner, by our best Writers’.⁴³ The opening entry under the heading of ‘Absence’, for example, consists of seven extracts taken from Dryden, Otway, and Rochester, while the second heading, ‘Advice’, is followed by a single four-line passage from Dryden.

Although the preface encourages this reference approach to the collection, or what Swift among others termed ‘index-reading’, the very grouping together of passages on similar subjects, and the way in which they are arranged, creates a less accessible collection than might be imagined. Bysshe admits that the headings were introduced to preserve some sense of connection, to prevent obscurity, and that various passages are placed under heads ‘to which every part or line of them may not be thought properly to belong’. Not only does this create potential problems for the reader who can only be assured that if he does not find a thought where he expects it, ‘he certainly will in another

⁴² Bysshe, *The Art of English Poetry*, p. iii. Also cited in Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, pp. 105-106.

⁴³ Samuel Richardson of course is well known to have used Bysshe extensively, scattering quotations from the collections throughout *Pamela* and *Clarissa*. See Culler, ‘Edward Bysshe and the Poet’s Handbook’, pp. 870-871; Michael E. Connaughton, ‘Richardson’s Familiar Quotations: *Clarissa* and Bysshe’s *Art of English Poetry*’, *Philological Quarterly*, 60:2 (1981), pp. 183-195, and Leah Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, especially Chapter 1, ‘Richardson’s economies of scale’, pp. 13-66.

place', it raises various issues concerning context and expectation. Passages placed beneath a heading immediately gain a context different from that in which they existed originally. Moreover, that context is altered by the passages which immediately surround any given extract, and which make up the cluster of passages associated with the various topics. This is especially prominent in *The Art of English Poetry*, where the passages are printed one after the other in succession with no spacing between extracts, and only an abbreviation of the author's name in the margin to distinguish one piece from the next. This has the effect of creating within the collection what could be regarded as newly formed 'poems', each on a particular theme, formed from the very best writings of the best authors on that subject. The following passages form the first part of the material listed under the heading of 'Beauty':

Beauty thou wild fantastick Ape,

Which do'st in every Country change thy shape:

Here Black, there Brown, here Tawney, and there White:

Thou Flatterer who comply'st with ev'ry Sight.

Who has no certain what nor where,

But vary'st still, and do'st thy self declare

Inconstant as thy She-Professors are. Cowl.

The Cause of Love can never be assign'd,

'Tis in no Face but in the Lover's Mind. Dryd.

Beauty is seldom fortunate when Great;

A vast Estate, but overcharg'd with Debt. Dryd.

Beauty, like Ice, our footing does betray:

Who can tread sure on the smooth slipp'ry way?

Pleas'd with the passage we slide swiftly on,

And see the Dangers which we cannot shun. Dryd.

For Beauty, like white Powder, makes no noise,

And yet the silent Hypocrite destroys. Cleav.

Beauty, with a bloodless Conquest finds

A welcom Sov'raignty in rudest minds. Wall.⁴⁴

The couplet structure of the majority of the verses allows them to be placed alongside one another without disruption to the rhyme scheme, and the arrangement of the passages in this order allows for an almost-orderly thematic progression. The uncertain, indefinable and inconstant nature of beauty, highlighted by Cowley, is picked up in Dryden's lines which attribute such allusiveness to the fact that beauty only truly exists in the mind of the lover. Dryden's simile comparing beauty to ice is echoed in Cleveland's comparison with 'white powder'. The images of betrayal and danger introduced by Dryden are continued in Cleveland's image of destruction, and, finally, in Waller's 'bloodless Conquest'. The close proximity of the passages therefore establishes a new context in which new readings of the extracts can be made. New poems are constructed from the remnants of old ones.

Thus, while digesting extracts under suitable headings is regarded as making the best examples from the best poets accessible, the arrangement of passages in this way also sets up a possibility for the sustained reading of the clusters of extracts, stimulating comparison and a sense of intertextuality. These new hybrid 'poems' represent an idealistic version of the 'perfect' poem, formed, as they are, from the 'Most Natural, Agreeable, and Noble Thoughts of the Best English Poets'. Yet, while the contents of the

⁴⁴ Bysse, *The Art of English Poetry*, pp. 22-23.

collection may represent the choicest examples from the best writers, Bysshe is careful to distinguish between fine thoughts and moral thoughts, literary excellence and the sentiment expressed. As Benedict summarises it: 'In his role as mediator', Bysshe 'eschews his own moral judgement'.⁴⁵ He has not, the preface claims, 'always chosen what I most approv'd, but what carries in it the best strokes for Imitation'. Therefore the collection includes 'both *Pro* and *Con*' on every subject, and runs the risk of offending some readers with 'the Looseness of some of the Thoughts'. Bysshe's role as literary critic is concerned primarily with selecting the most eminent literary passages and does not extend to discerning the propriety of the morals contained within them:

it was not my Business to judge any farther than of the Vigour and Force of Thought, of the Purity of Language, of the Aptness and Propriety of Expression, and above all the Beauty of Colouring, in which consists chiefly the Poets Art: Nor, in short, would I have taken upon me to determine what things should have been said, but have shewn only what was said, and in what manner.

He positions himself as a mediator of literary value, distilling out only the best expressions and not the best morals; a situation which would be completely inverted by the end of the eighteenth century when literary excellence became synonymous with moral excellence or was even subject to it.

Indeed, as the criteria dictating what constituted literary excellence or beauty changed throughout the century, so did the way in which Bysshe's collection was marketed for the consumer, thereby highlighting the flexibility of the genre. The collection went through nine editions during the eighteenth century, and the poetical

⁴⁵ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 106.

commonplace collection was enlarged in the editions of 1702, 1705, 1708, and 1718.⁴⁶ Furthermore, while the first two of these editions described the commonplace as containing ‘the most Natural, Agreeable, and Noble Thoughts’, the 1708 edition, reflecting changing literary tastes, changed the description to: ‘the most Natural, Agreeable, and Sublime Thoughts’.⁴⁷ These titular alterations and additions emphasise the anthology’s ability to transform and reinvent itself, and its contents, in line with changing social and literary expectations.

Of course, as Culler points out, collections such as Bysshe’s *Art of English Poetry* are not influenced merely by consumer tastes. They are also forced to change and reinvent themselves as a result of pressures and competition from other compilers and other collections. Editions of Bysshe published after 1718 were ‘called forth not merely by popular demand but in competition with rival handbooks, which were inspired by, and often stolen from, the *Art of English Poetry*’.⁴⁸ Among these was Charles Gildon’s *Complete Art of Poetry* (1718) which criticised Bysshe’s book, and, significantly, his choice of passages.⁴⁹ It was no longer enough for a collection of extracts to claim to assemble the best or choicest passages, since what was viewed as ‘best’ was wholly subjective. Collections began to boast their superiority over other collections and a process of anthologising previous anthologies increased competition. Gildon’s collection, for example, copies three-fifths of its contents from the *Art of English Poetry*, despite its critique of that collection.⁵⁰ Another competitor was the *Thesaurus*

⁴⁶ The nine editions appeared in 1702, 1705, 1708, 1710, 1714, 1718, 1724, 1737, and 1762. See Culler, ‘Edward Bysshe and the Poet’s Handbook’, p. 861, and Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 105.

⁴⁷ Culler, ‘Edward Bysshe and the Poet’s Handbook’, pp. 869-870.

⁴⁸ Culler, ‘Edward Bysshe and the Poet’s Handbook’, p. 862.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Culler, ‘Edward Bysshe and the Poet’s Handbook’, p. 868. Benedict estimates the proportion to be two thirds. See *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 106.

Dramaticus of 1724, ‘ninety-five per cent of which is merely a reprint of most, but not quite all, of the purely dramatic quotations in the 1718 editions of Bysshe’s two collections’(see plate 1).⁵¹ This text is significant for two reasons. Firstly, the collection is made up of dramatic rather than poetic extracts; secondly, it is an anthology rather than a poetic handbook or thesaurus. The second edition of 1737 was re-titled the *Beauties of the English Stage* and was the first important anthology in the development of the *Beauties* tradition. Along with the *Beauties of Poetry Display’d* (1757), the *Beauties of the English Stage* is listed by Culler among the poetical commonplace books published in the eighteenth century which not only followed the precedent set by Bysshe, but which also pilfered the contents of his collection.⁵² Unlike Gildon, who set his collection apart by naming it the *Complete Art of Poetry* (thereby implying that Bysshe’s collection was incomplete), these texts aim to distinguish their contents by identifying them as representing the ‘beauties’ of literature.

The titular use of ‘Beauties’ in literary collections became popular as a means to express the quality of the contents. Like collections which promised the best and choicest passages from the most eminent authors, the word ‘beauties’ suggested an elite selection packaged for an elite readership. As Benedict observes: ‘Whereas miscellanies advertise light, humorous, and fresh works, Beauties promise quality: the best pieces by the best authors’.⁵³ The editor of the first edition of the two volume *Thesaurus Dramaticus* draws attention to the ‘agreeable, tho’ laborious Amusement’ involved in making such a

⁵¹ Culler, ‘Edward Bysshe and the Poet’s Handbook’, p. 868.

⁵² *The Beauties of Poetry Display’d*, 2 vols (London: J. Hinton, 1757), containing ‘Observations on the different Species of Poetry, and the Rules of English Versification Exemplified by A large Collection of beautiful Passages, Similes, and Descriptions’.

⁵³ Benedict, ‘The “Beauties” of Literature’, p. 321.

selection, from which it is hoped ‘the Reader, who has any Taste of this kind of Poetry, may be delighted, and in some Measure instructed’.⁵⁴ The familiar eighteenth-century discourse of instruction-through-entertainment is here invoked in an attempt to market the collection as one which will be of use to the discerning or casual reader. Indeed, the contents are listed alphabetically and represent ‘all the Passions and Accidents of Life, or whatever may happen to the greatest, or other Mortals in lower Stations’. The universality of the themes covered suggests that the collection potentially offers something to every class of reader, from the learned gentleman to the uneducated child. The second edition of the *Beauties of the English Stage* (1737), declares that the collection will be of use in aiding ‘young Gentlemen’ to ‘avoid that common Error of making use of Similies which have been worn Threadbare by a succession of Authors’, and the third edition of 1756, is offered to ‘the Public’ at large as ‘not only more entertaining, but also more useful than either of the former impressions’.⁵⁵

These early dramatic *Beauties* positioned themselves in line with earlier poetical collections, aiming at similar audiences, and claiming to fill the same educational roles as a collection of maxims or aphorisms, or a poetic commonplace book. Like Bysse, the editor of the 1756 *Beauties of the English Stage* claims to be a literary and not moral judge, insisting that even from the worst performance there ‘may be gleaned a striking Sentiment, a pertinent Reflection, or an apposite Simile’. This claim gains even more

⁵⁴ *Thesaurus Dramaticus*, 2 vols (London: for Thomas Butler, 1724), preface.

⁵⁵ *The Beauties of the English Stage*, second edition (London: for Ward & Chandler, C. Corbett and E. Withers, 1737); third edition (London: for E. Withers and A. & C. Corbett, 1756). There was also a fourth edition in 1777, renamed once more as the *Beauties of the English Drama*, extended now to four volumes and published by G. Robinson. Culler shows that these collections also altered their contents to reflect changing tastes. The 1724 and 1737 editions consist of ‘all the Celebrated Passages, Soliloquies, Similes, Descriptions and other Poetical Beauties in the Body of English Plays, Antient and Modern’, altered in 1756 to ‘the most affecting and sentimental passages’. See also Culler, ‘Edward Bysse and the Poet’s Handbook’, p. 870.

significance here, as the collection's use of the epithet 'beauties' becomes much more than simply an expression of arbitrary and subjective literary quality. It is, in fact, a reflection of a larger critical discourse. The collections of extracts entitled *Beauties* were more than simply part of the overall trend of selecting choice passages for enjoyment, memorising, or instruction, and the title signified more than simply an attempt to sell the collection through an appeal to the quality of its contents.

Collections of *Beauties* developed from all the various books of extracts and commonplaces discussed in this section, yet another strand of literature also played an essential role in the application of the term 'beauties' in the titles of literary anthologies. What the editor of the *Beauties of the English Stage* termed 'raking in a Dunghill to find a Pearl', was more than a description of the process of an anthologist culling extracts for a collection; it was an accurate representation of a critical practice which was the focus of much debate in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. This discourse, although present in Bysshe, and implicit in collections which sought to assemble choice passages, was one which developed in tandem with the genre of the anthology from the Restoration onwards. The critical discourse which centred around the detection of 'beauties' and 'faults' in literary productions shares similarities with the ancestry of the anthology, but the two did not converge until the idea of the commonplace or thesaurus highlighted by the *Thesaurus Dramaticus* was repackaged as the *Beauties of the English Stage* in 1737.

II

'Praise and Blame': Balancing polarities in Critical Discourse

The terms 'beauty' and 'beauties' invoked a variety of meanings and connotations in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries and they figure predominantly in modern studies of aesthetics, taste, and gender, in the period.⁵⁶ The aim in this section is to focus on a few of these interpretations, and to chart how the terms were appropriated in a literary discourse which fed directly into the practice of extracting and culling passages commonly used by anthologists. Potentially, of course, anything may be termed 'beautiful', and, within the context of eighteenth-century society, these may include: 'the excellences of material objects; the attraction of beautiful women; painterly beauty; moral beauty; and theological and social graces'.⁵⁷ Of these, possibly the most frequent deployment of the term 'beauty' has been 'in relation to the role of women in cultural and social debate'.⁵⁸ Many early-eighteenth-century poems utilise the term to signify and flatter the female sex. *The Court Beauties*, a poem by Giles Jacob published in 1718, 'Humbly Inscrib'd to her Grace the Duchess of Bolton', celebrated famous beautiful women at court, and opens as follows:

I Sing of Beauty, O! ye Gods inspire

My Youthful Muse, raise high my tuneful lyre;

⁵⁶ For example, Robert W. Jones, *Gender and the Formation of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain: The Analysis of Beauty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Richard Terry, 'Literature, Aesthetics, and Canonicity in the Eighteenth Century', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 21 (1997), pp. 80-102; Laura L. Runge, *Gender and Language in British Literary Criticism 1660-1790* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁵⁷ Jones, *Gender and the Formation of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 36.

To trace the Beauties of our glorious clime
From early Annals, to this shining Time.⁵⁹

Female beauty is not only the subject; it is the muse for such productions, raising women and their aesthetic and moral attributes to epic status. The same is true in the anonymous poem, *The Celebrated Beauties* (1720), which purports to be ‘An Heroick Poem, made on the College Green and Queen’s Square Ladies’. Again the speaker of the poem elevates female attributes stating: ‘I no other lofty Theme shall chuse / Than Female Beauty for my winged Muse’.⁶⁰ Such references to women as ‘beauties’ is also to be found in texts aimed specifically at women. One of the earliest texts in the eighteenth century to employ the titular use of the word ‘Beauties’ was the *Beauties Treasury: or, Ladies Vade Mecum* of 1705, a handbook for women containing advice on cosmetic matters and potions and cures for all manner of complaints.⁶¹ The frontispiece to the book portrays a female, seated upon a throne, being crowned by cherubs and showered with gifts. The inscription beneath reads:

Beauty Obtains Wealth, Honour, Fame and Binds
With welcom [sic] Sovereignty the Rudest Minds.

Beauty is here presented as the female’s key to success in all areas of life; an attribute desired by women, desirable to men, and a means of gaining power and superiority. The preface speaks to women that ‘want Beauty’ in terms which echo the male-dominated

⁵⁸ Jones, *Gender and the Formation of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 1.

⁵⁹ G. Jacob, *The Court Beauties* (London: Thomas Warner, 1718).

⁶⁰ *The Celebrated Beauties* (Bristol: printed by Joseph Penn, 1720), p. 3.

⁶¹ *Beauties Treasury: or, the Ladies Vade Mecum* (London: S. Malthus, 1705).

domain of literary criticism. They, the text states, 'will not be displeas'd to find that Art can relieve that Defect [of wanting beauty], and procure many of those Excellencies, which acquire Admiration and Affectation'. This language, juxtaposing excellencies and beauty with defects and faults, can also be observed in poems of the period which take literature, and not women, as their subject. For example, John Sheffield's 'An Essay upon Poetry' (1682), states:

For as in rows of richest Pearl there lyes
 Many a blemish that escapes our Eyes,
 The least of which Defects is plainly shewn
 In some small Ring, and brings the value down.⁶²

Literature, like women, contains faults, defects, and blemishes, which can affect the beauty of the whole. Even Dryden has his faults, but, as Rochester observed, 'His Excellencies more than faults abound'.⁶³ The use of overtly feminine terms such as 'beauties' in critical discourse is not particularly surprising. As Runge points out: 'gender is a constitutive element of eighteenth-century literary criticism'.⁶⁴ Beauty continued to be regarded as quintessentially feminine throughout the century, and Burke in his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), defined beauty as possessing softer feminine attributes such as 'a sense of

⁶² John Sheffield, 'An Essay on Poetry' (1682), in *Critical essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. by J.E. Spingarn, 3 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), ii, p. 288.

⁶³ John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, 'An Allusion to the Tenth Satyr of the First Book of Horace', l. 20-21, in *Critical essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ii, p. 284.

⁶⁴ Runge, *Gender and Language in British Literary Criticism 1660-1790*, p. 3.

affection and tenderness', in contrast with the more masculine sublime.⁶⁵ What is particularly interesting is the implications which the use of such a term within critical discourse raises. If 'beauties' are equated with the feminine, is their opposite, the 'fault' or 'defect', then masculine? The titular use of 'Beauties' in literary anthologies may therefore suggest an implicit concern with marketing the collections for a female readership; the very language invoking the same audience as the *Beauties Treasury*. Many late eighteenth-century *Beauties* advertise their contents as suitable for 'all readers without distinction' as well as for the 'Youth of both sexes'.⁶⁶ Ostensibly, at least, these collections could bridge the gaps between the age, wealth, status, and gender of their readers; their preoccupation with deleting all indelicate material making their contents particularly suited for the young and for women. Thus, while the ability to 'discern a thing of beauty remained, throughout the century, a process of registration and approval' the term 'beauties' also, because of its inherent association with the female sex, carried feminine connotations which proved useful in the marketing of literary anthologies.⁶⁷

As well as its associations with femininity, in the discourses of early eighteenth-century literary criticism beauty was a term applied to, and utilised by, men. Runge notes Addison's praise of Milton's 'rational and manly beauties' in the *Spectator*, highlighting the fact that 'manly' was seen as a term of approbation, while 'effeminate' was considered a form of reproach within literary discourse.⁶⁸ The titular use of *Beauties* in

⁶⁵ Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 47. See Runge, *Gender and language in British Literary Criticism 1660-1790*, p. 170 for a discussion of the idea that 'the sublime and beautiful are coded as masculine and feminine'.

⁶⁶ Advertisement included at end of the *Beauties of Fielding* and the *Beauties of Swift* (London: G. Kearsley, 1782).

⁶⁷ Jones, *Gender and the Formation of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 9.

⁶⁸ Runge, *Gender and Language in British Literary Criticism 1660-1790*, p. 4.

literary anthologies, therefore, also appeals to the masculine audience who wish to be associated with the skill and perception commonly held to be requisite for the discernment of literary beauties. The importance attached to the literary beauty and its discernment in the early eighteenth century is, in part, a response to the predominantly negative criticism surrounding discussions of English drama in the second half of the seventeenth century. The tendency of critics such as Thomas Rymer to catalogue the defects, absurdities, and improbabilities observable in Jonson and Shakespeare, among others, in his *Tragedies of the Last Age* (1678) and *A Short View of Tragedy* (1693), prompted a variety of responses which argued that the beauties or excellencies of literature, and not simply the faults, should be the concern of the true critic. John Dennis in *The Impartial Critick* (1693), itself a response to Rymer's *Short View*, argues for the superiority of discerning beauties over Rymer's focus on faults and defects:

For it is much more easie to find Faults, than it is to discern Beauties. To do the first requires but common Sense, but to do the last a Man must have Genius.⁶⁹

While Dennis's remark is aimed to prove Rymer an unjust and undiscerning critic, his attack is itself validated by classical precepts. Horace set the precedent in his *Art of Poetry* when he declared that: 'when most features of a poem are brilliant, I shan't be offended by a few blemishes thrown around by carelessness or human negligence'.⁷⁰ But perhaps the most influential voice on the topic was that of Longinus.

⁶⁹ John Dennis, *The Impartial Critick* (New York and London: Garland, 1973), 'A Letter to a Friend', sheet marked a2.

⁷⁰ Horace, *The Art of Poetry*, trans. by D. A. Russell, in *Classical Literary Criticism*, ed. by D. A. Russell and Michael Winterbottom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 107, l. 350-352. This comment is frequently quoted throughout the eighteenth century; Dryden cites it in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668)

The treatise *On the Sublime* attributed to Longinus was immensely influential in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. Dating originally to somewhere between the first and third centuries A.D., it was first translated into English in 1652 by John Hall. This was followed by a French translation by Boileau in 1674, an anonymous edition of 1698, Leonard Welsted's translation of Boileau's text into English in 1712, and William Smith's edition of 1739, which reviewed the earlier texts and became the standard version, regularly used in male education by the second half of the century.⁷¹ The treatise is significant for two main reasons. Firstly, Longinus echoed Horace in considering the question of

Whether we ought to give the preference, in poems and prose writings, to grandeur with some attendant faults, or to success which is moderate but altogether sound and free from error? Aye, and further, whether a greater number of excellences, or excellences higher in quality, would in literature rightly bear away the palm?⁷²

Moreover, he arrived at the same conclusion, stating that:

Excellences higher in quality, even if not sustained throughout, should always on a comparison be voted the first place, because of their sheer elevation of spirit if for no other reason.⁷³

Beauties and faults may co-exist, but the former should always take precedence; a point

and it is invoked by Henry Fielding in his discussion of the subject in *Tom Jones*. See chapter 5 p. 211 below.

⁷¹ See Runge, *Gender and language in British Literary Criticism 1660-1790*, p. 178.

⁷² W. Rhys Roberts, *Longinus on the Sublime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899), xxxiii, p. 127.

⁷³ Roberts, *Longinus on the Sublime*, p. 129.

frequently stressed by eighteenth-century critics in an attempt to create a positive and optimistic critical climate.⁷⁴ Secondly, Longinus illustrated his arguments throughout the treatise by the inclusion of quotations from classical writers who exemplified his observations. Few other writers (Plutarch is one exception) included quotation in this way, and Longinus's technique of interspersing his critical narrative with extracted passages creates 'a veritable storehouse of quotations illustrating excellencies and defects'.⁷⁵ The treatise is itself a form of anthology, including extracts from up to fifty writers including Homer, Herodotus, Plato, Sappho, Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles.

From these two elements — the discourse of beauties and faults and the use of extracted passages — 'may be traced the ancestry of the "school of taste" which emphasised the "beauties" of a work of literature rather than its defects' that emerged following the publication of Longinus in the seventeenth century.⁷⁶ Not only did the treatise validate the view that beauties should be valued over faults, but the very structure of the work provided a format for critical essays. John Dennis, John Dryden, Charles Gildon, and even Thomas Rymer began to incorporate quotations within their criticism to illustrate the beauties, faults, and other literary techniques under consideration. The practice became so widespread, that by the time Rymer was discussing *Othello* in his *Short View* in 1693, an extracted passage could stand alone within the narrative without explanation. As Zimansky observes, Rymer 'feels that merely quoting a speech without analysis will be enough to show its absurdity'.⁷⁷ Moreover, the terms 'beauties', 'faults',

⁷⁴ As Runge points out, Longinus and the idea of the sublime offered, 'an alternative set of aims and methods for criticism, with an accent on the subjective insights of the author rather than on the formal content of the work', *Gender and language in British Literary Criticism 1660-1790*, p. 140.

⁷⁵ W. Rhys Roberts, *Longinus on the Sublime*, p. 26.

⁷⁶ Austin Warren, *Pope as Critic and Humanist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1929), p.11.

⁷⁷ Curt A. Zimansky, ed., *The Critical Works of Thomas Rymer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), p. xxv.

‘excellencies’, and ‘defects’, litter critical essays of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries and became the keywords in a ‘revised critical method’ which was the focus of lively and often controversial debate.⁷⁸ This ‘mode of analysis’ is characterised by Runge as one of ““praise and blame”” and is identified by Richard Terry as part of a process which led to the acquirement of taste. Critics were to ‘adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the works they criticized’:

Instead of carping at a work’s shortcomings, the critic should ideally try to pinpoint both its strengths and weaknesses. Once critics were required to be appreciative, and once the literary felicities subject to such appreciation became seen as subtle and rarefied, a specialized brand of discernment was required: this was taste.⁷⁹

Significant in Terry’s account is the stress on ‘both’ strengths and weaknesses. While literary beauties were more valuable and required greater skill to discern, critics, including Dennis, did not subscribe to a discourse which merely reversed Rymer’s focus on faults. The resulting method was one of compromise, or more correctly, one of balance.

Just as Dennis had railed against Rymer’s stress on the faults of Shakespeare arguing that ‘it does not follow, because *Shakespear* has Faults, that therefore he has no Beauties’, Nicholas Rowe, in the preface to his edition of Shakespeare laments that, although Rymer:

⁷⁸ Terry, ‘Literature, Aesthetics, and Canonicity in the Eighteenth Century’, p. 87.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

Has certainly pointed out some Faults very judiciously, and indeed they are such as most People will agree, with him, to be Faults: But I wish he would likewise have observ'd some of the Beauties too; as I think it became an Exact and Equal Critique to do.⁸⁰

An equal balance between beauties and faults is the aim of all just and 'exact' critics, especially so, as a bias towards one facet or the other is not just unjust and 'unworthy of an honest Man': it sets a dangerous literary precedent. Faults are regarded as all the more dangerous 'on the account of [the] Excellencies' which can, and have, according to Dennis, caused young writers to mistake 'the very faults of famous Poets for Beauties'.⁸¹ Only a method of analysis taking into account both elements will teach the reader 'to distinguish between [...] Beauties and Defects, that while they imitate the one, they may with Caution avoid the other'.⁸² A balanced appraisal of beauties and faults is more than a conciliatory attitude to the writer and work in question. It is necessary in order to instruct readers in the correct method of criticism and in the true evaluation of literary beauty. As Sheffield summarises the matter with reference to Shakespeare and Fletcher: 'Their Beauties Imitate, avoid their faults'.⁸³

Dryden, hailed by Samuel Johnson as 'the father of English criticism' attempted to balance these polarities in his critical writings.⁸⁴ Unlike Rymer's method of criticism, characterised as possessing the 'ferocity of a tyrant', Dryden offers a 'gay and vigorous dissection' which attempts to show the reader 'some part of [an author's] defects and

⁸⁰Dennis, *The Impartial Critick*, p. 52; Nicholas Rowe, 'Some Account of the Life &c. of Mr. William Shakespear', in *Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare*, ed. by D. Nichol Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 19. Rowe is also responding to Rymer's *Short View of Tragedy*.

⁸¹ Dennis, *The Impartial Critick*, p. 27.

⁸² Dennis, 'On the Genius and Writings of Shakespear', in Smith, *Essays on Shakespeare*, p. 42.

⁸³ Sheffield, *An Essay Upon Poetry* (1682), in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ii, p. 292.

⁸⁴ Samuel Johnson, 'Life of Dryden' in *The Lives of the English Poets*, ed. by L. Archer-Hind, 2 vols (London: Everyman, 1925), i, p. 225.

some few excellencies'.⁸⁵ Indeed Dryden's *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), in which this aim is stated, is one of the earliest pieces of criticism to reflect the beauties/defects discourse, preceding Rymer's *Short View* and Dennis's *Impartial Critick* by twenty-five years. His later Preface to *Fables Ancient and Modern* (1700), is also littered with the familiar terms of beauties and faults and includes some extracted passages from Chaucer who is interestingly portrayed as possessing the judgement to discern 'the beauties and faults of other poets'.⁸⁶ It is hardly surprising, then, that by the time Rymer was quoting so freely from *Othello*, the practice of including quotation and categorising literary elements as beautiful or blemished was common, and that the terminology had permeated poems such as those by Rochester and Sheffield highlighted above. Indeed most seventeenth and eighteenth-century critics and writers can be seen to enter into this critical dialogue at some point. Charles Gildon, who was to publish the aforementioned *Complete Art of Poetry* in 1718, argued that 'the less perfect ought not to be Rob'd of their Merits, because they have defects', and pointed out that Shakespeare had many 'Beauties and Perfections'.⁸⁷ Similarly, Robert Wolseley, in commenting on Rochester's poetry, remarks that his 'Excellencies are too many and too masterly; on the other side the Faults are few', while the opening sentence of Sir William Temple's

⁸⁵ Johnson, 'Life of Dryden', *The Lives of the English Poets*, i, pp. 226-227; John Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), in *John Dryden: Poems and Prose*, selected by Douglas Grant (London: Penguin, 1985), p. 162.

⁸⁶ Dryden, Preface to *Fables Ancient and Modern*, in *John Dryden: Poems and Prose*, p. 238.

⁸⁷ Charles Gildon, 'Some Reflections on Mr. Rymer's *Short View of Tragedy*, and an Attempt at a Vindication of SHAKESPEAR, in an Essay directed to JOHN DRYDEN Esq;', in *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on several Subjects* (1694), ed. by Arthur Freeman (New York and London: Garland, 1973), p. 65.

famous 'Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning', declares that old books as well as the new have 'their Beauties as well as their Defaults'.⁸⁸

One of the most celebrated manifestations of the discourse was to be found in Joseph Addison's *Spectator* essays upon Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which appeared between 31 December 1711 and 3 May 1712. His criticisms set about discovering any 'Beauties or Imperfections which others have not attended to', within the great English epic poem, although with a distinct bias towards the beauties.⁸⁹ Addison devotes one essay to Milton's faults — 'very ungrateful work' — and twelve to 'the many particular beauties in Milton', one paper for each book.⁹⁰ These essays are significant as they mark a subtle shift in the balance between beauties and faults as the 'praise and blame' method developed in the early-eighteenth century. Although Addison evaluates both beauties and faults, his bias highlights the preference for the former over the latter. Indeed, he admits that much of his previous criticism was intended 'rather to discover the beauties and excellencies of my own time, rather than to publish any of their faults and imperfections'.⁹¹ Addison thus stands in opposition to Rymer, the optimistic antithesis to his tyranny and pessimism. Addison's definition of a 'true critic' is one 'who ought to dwell rather upon excellencies than the imperfections, to discover the concealed beauties of a writer, and communicate to the world such things as are worth their observation'.⁹² No doubt this is, in part, a reflection of the belief voiced by Dennis that the discernment

⁸⁸ Robert Wolseley, 'Preface to *Valentinian, A tragedy, as 'tis altered by the Late Earl of Rochester* (1685), in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, iii, p. 7; Sir William Temple, 'An essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning' (1690), in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, iii, p. 32.

⁸⁹ Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 262, in *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison*, ed. by Henry G. Bohn, 6 vols (London: George Bell & Sons, 1882), iii, p. 173.

⁹⁰ Addison, *The Spectator*, Nos. 291 and 297, in Bohn, *Works*, iii, pp. 197; 203.

⁹¹ Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 262, in Bohn, *Works*, iii, p.172.

⁹² Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 291, in Bohn, *Works*, iii, p. 196.

of beauties reveals the genius of the critic, while finding faults requires no more than common sense, yet Addison's 'true critic' is typical of an emerging trend which concentrated on beauties as the more valuable literary commodity, almost to the exclusion of faults.

The situation in which the 'praise and blame' dichotomy emerges in the early-eighteenth century is perhaps best summed up by two works, both entitled 'An Essay on Criticism', and the views of their respective authors. The first is the poetic *Essay on Criticism* (1711), written by Pope, who engaged in the discourse himself and saw his writings critiqued by its precepts.⁹³ In his translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* Pope is often found reacting against the practice of cataloguing of faults and echoing Addison's preference for beauties:

It is equally an extreme, on the one hand to think *Homer* has no human defects; and on the other to dwell so much upon those defects, as to depreciate his beauties. The greater part of Criticks [sic] form a general character from the observation of particular errors, taken in their own oblique or imperfect views; which is as unjust, as to make a judgement of the beauty of a man's body from the shadow it happens to cast, in such or such a position.⁹⁴

Pope is part of an elite minority of critics, like Addison, who fought against the unjust tide of highlighting only a writer's faults and errors. Indeed the Scriblerian *Peri Bathous*, the treatise of Martinus Scriblerus on the 'Art of Sinking in Poetry', parodies the practice

⁹³ An example of a text which subjected Pope to the praise/blame discourse was Joseph Spence's *Essay on Pope's Odyssey: in which some particular beauties and blemishes of that work are consider'd* ([London]: James and J. Knapton et al., 1726-1727).

⁹⁴ Alexander Pope, *The Odyssey of Homer* (1725-1726) in, *The Poems of Alexander Pope* ed. by Maynard Mack, *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, General Editor: John Butt, 10 vols (London: Methuen, 1961-1969) ix, p. 25. See also *The Iliad of Homer*, in *The Poems of Alexander Pope*,

of cataloguing faults by structuring the treatise in imitation of Longinus. Not only is Pope's title an ironic subversion of *On the Sublime*, his text incorporates similar divisions and headings along with illustrative quotations which form a 'catalogue of bathetic excerpts'.⁹⁵ The *Peri Bathous*, itself published within the Pope-Swift *Miscellanies* (1728), is, in effect, an anthology of faults and defects which satirises figures such as Blackmore, Dennis, and Theobald, by exalting passages from their works as exemplifying the bathos. The treatise is also an attack on poetic handbooks such as Bysshe's *Art of English Poetry*; its opening paragraph declaring that 'whereas numberless Poets, Critics and Orators have compiled and digested the Art of ancient Posey, there hath not arisen among us one person so publick-spirited, as to perform the like for the Modern'.⁹⁶ Through the humorous parody of such handbooks and treatises, Pope presents the reverse of his own views and thus, his catalogue of defects actually supports the Longinian stress of the redeeming qualities of literary beauties.

It is within the *Essay on Criticism* that Pope's views on the beauties/defects debate are most clearly stated, and it is here, according to at least one critic, 'Pope has versified Longinus' precepts sufficiently neatly'.⁹⁷ His opinion that 'Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see, / Thinks what n'er was, nor is, nor e'r shall be', is one which resonates throughout the following chapters voiced by individuals such as Fielding, Goldsmith, Johnson, and Swift.⁹⁸ As an inherent and unavoidable element of any piece

vii, especially pp. 3, 17, 82 and the notes at the end of Book XVI, vol. viii, p. 824, where Pope cites Horace and Longinus.

⁹⁵ Alexander Pope, *Peri Bathous: or, Martinus Scriblerus, His Treatise of the Art of Sinking in Poetry* (1728), in *The Prose Works of Alexander Pope*, vol II: The Major Works, 1725-1744, ed. by Rosemary Cowler (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), p. 177. All further references are to this edition.

⁹⁶ Pope, *Peri Bathous*, p. 186.

⁹⁷ T. R. Henn, *Longinus and English Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), p. 105.

⁹⁸ Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, l. 253-254, *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, General Editor, John Butt, 6 vols (London: Methuen, 1969), i, pp. 266-267.

of written work, faults should be accepted and not made the focus of a critical evaluation.

Pope's 'perfect judge' should instead:

Survey the *WHOLE*, nor seek slight Faults to find
 Where *Nature* moves, and *Rapture* warms the Mind;
 Nor lose, for that malignant dull Delight,
 The *gen'rous Pleasure* to be charm'd with Wit.
 But in such lays as neither *ebb*, nor *flow*,
Correctly cold, and *regularly low*,
 That shunning Faults, one quiet *Tenour* keep;
 We cannot *blame* indeed – but we may *sleep*.⁹⁹

If one can find nothing to praise in a work the true critic should not resort to listing faults but submit to the literary equivalent of the proverb that if one has nothing good to say, then one should say nothing at all.

The same approach is echoed in John Oldmixon's prose *Essay on Criticism* (1728), a work which surveys critical trends of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century and critiques the writings of Addison and Pope within its pages. Although intended as an essay to 'prepare the public for his translation of Abbe Bouhours' *La Manière De Bien Penser*', Oldmixon's *Essay* is set at variance to the preceding *Essay on Criticism* through its titular association with Pope's poetic version.¹⁰⁰ This is hardly surprising when one notes that Oldmixon, along with Dennis and Gildon (whom Oldmixon views, along with Rymer as true critics by profession), is satirised as one of

⁹⁹ Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, l. 235-242.

¹⁰⁰ John Oldmixon, *An Essay on Criticism* (1728), introduced by R. J. Madden, Augustan Reprint Society, No. 107-108 (Los Angeles: University of California, 1964), p. i.

the ‘unwieldy’ porpoises in the sixth chapter of the *Peri Bathous*. Despite Oldmixon’s antipathy to Pope, however, his excursion through literary opinions ultimately subscribes to the opinions held by Addison and Pope. He too complains of the tendency to highlight faults, terming such individuals ‘straw Criticks’ whom he likens to ‘Ravens and Crows, who neglecting clean Food, are always searching after Carrion’.¹⁰¹ The influence of such critics, and their effect on literary criticism, is summarised by Oldmixon as follows:

Criticism is so far from being well understood by us *Englishmen*, that it is generally well mistaken to be an Effect of Envy, Jealousy, and Spleen; an invidious Desire to find Faults only to discredit the Author, and build a Reputation on the Ruin of his.

One has great Reason to think so, when the Critick looks only on one Side; when he hunts after little slips and Negligences, and will not, or cannot see, what is beautiful and praiseworthy.¹⁰²

Critical discourse was dominated by fault-finding to such an extent that the only way in which one critic could outdo another was to be even more malicious, building one’s reputation on the number of faults that could be picked from the carcass of an already mutilated author. By grounding his essay in the examples of Horace and Longinus, Oldmixon aims to invert this process and transform the game of critical one-upmanship to one which rests on the discovery of beauties, not of faults. Citing the Duke of Buckinghamshire’s opinion that ‘Praising is harder much than finding Fau’t’, Oldmixon peppers his essay with excerpted passages illustrating examples of the sublime in scripture and in Milton, of noble images from Milton, Rowe and Waller, along with

¹⁰¹ Oldmixon, *An Essay on Criticism*, p. 5.

¹⁰² Oldmixon, *An Essay on Criticism*, pp. 3-4.

examples of the 'grand', the 'pretty', and the 'Agreeable'.¹⁰³ While listing some of the faults of Dryden and others, the essay is predominantly a catalogue of beauties, a bias which, in turn, confirms its author's skill as a true critic and ensures that he is not 'guilty of the Fault [he] blame[s] in others, the neglecting of Beauties, and falling unmercifully upon the Blemishes of Authors'.¹⁰⁴ Oldmixon is not preoccupied with the idea of balance, but subscribes to the opinion that beauties are the more valuable quality, and, being harder to discern will elevate the critic who devotes his time to the discovery of them. Indeed, he criticises the *Guardian* and *Spectator* on this basis, commenting that although most of their criticisms are just, he 'would not have been the Author of them, without taking notice of Beauties, as well as finding of Faults, there being much more Room for the former than the latter'.¹⁰⁵

Oldmixon's *Essay on Criticism* therefore echoes the shift detected in Addison and Pope towards focusing on literary beauties as both a reaction against the vicious critical battles which dominated literary discourse, and as a means of promoting their own individual critical abilities. In its survey of critical attitudes, it stands at the end of a trajectory traceable from Dryden, Rymer, Dennis, and Gildon, in the seventeenth century, through to Addison and Pope in the early-eighteenth century. The discourse by no means ends here, but the developments in the critical dialogue in this period illustrate a gradual swing from the fault finding of Rymer, through a balance of both beauties and faults, to the ultimate preference of beauties expressed by Addison.

¹⁰³ Oldmixon, *An Essay on Criticism*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Oldmixon, *An Essay on Criticism*, pp. 16-17. Oldmixon also subscribes to Addison's definition of a true critic, terming it 'very just', p. 16.

¹⁰⁵ Oldmixon, *An Essay on Criticism*, p. 14.

Some voices of dissent naturally still remained. Edward Young in his *Two Epistles to Mr. Pope, Concerning the Authors of the Age* (1730), argues that faults should not be neglected as one fault causes more harm than any number of beauties can rectify, and identifies the bias towards highlighting beauties with Addison and Pope:

Excuse no fault; though beautiful, 'twill harm;
 One fault shocks more than twenty beauties charm.
 Our age demands correctness; Addison
 And you this commendable hurt have done.
 Now writers find, as one Achilles found
 The whole is mortal, if a part's unsound.¹⁰⁶

Despite such opposition, the preference for distinguishing beauties gained critical validity and influenced, in turn, the emphasis on culling and extracting such literary beauties, which intermingled with critical narrative in imitation of Longinus. This culling of literary beauties developed in tandem with the poetical handbooks and anthologies highlighted in the previous section, and influenced the titular use of the term 'beauties' in such collections and the varying connotations it implied. 'Beauties', while suggesting the contents were the most beautiful and therefore the choicest examples, was, in the early decades of the eighteenth century, a term loaded with critical implications resulting from this praise/blame debate. An anthology of 'beauties' indicated not only the status of the contents, or the value of those contents to the reader, it also emphasised the skill and discernment of its editor who exercised his critical judgement in their assembly.

¹⁰⁶ Edward Young, *Two Epistles to Mr. Pope*, in *The Poetical Works of Edward Young*, 2 vols (London: George Bell & Sons, 1896), ii, p. 321.

The renaming of the *Thesaurus Dramaticus* as the *Beauties of the English Stage* therefore represents a significant moment in the development of the literary anthology when the traditions of the anthology and literary discourse converge, forming a sub-genre which differs from other anthologies of extracts due to its critical affiliations. *Beauties* collections went a stage beyond the educational and evaluative instruction afforded by Bysshe. They involved the reader in current critical debate, and offered them a means by which they too could enter an elite readership which excelled in the discernment of literary beauty. With the combination of these elements the critical anthology was born and the *Beauties* anthology was first established.

III

The 'better half of criticism': Shakespearean editors and Shakespeare's beauties

The writer on whom the praise/blame discourse of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries focused most intensely was Shakespeare. Numerous critical discussions, such as those by Dennis, Dryden, Gildon, and Rymer, spent much of their time critiquing his writing. As mentioned previously, Rymer had discussed *Othello* and *Julius Caesar* in his *Short View of Tragedy*. Dennis, in response, had remarked that 'it does not follow, because *Shakespear* has Faults, therefore he has no Beauties', and had written an essay 'On the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare' (1712).¹⁰⁷ The influence of the praise/blame discourse governed the way in which Shakespeare would be

¹⁰⁷ See pp. 31-32 above.

anthologised during the eighteenth century, and also contributed to his 'ascent from humble origins to great exaltation' as England's national poet and universal genius.¹⁰⁸ The discourse's roots in the writings of Longinus provided a crucial alternative to Aristotle and Horace, whose precepts could not 'easily be reconciled with his [Shakespeare's] practice'.¹⁰⁹ Shakespeare did not conform to the dominant neo-classical rules of Art, and to evaluate his works by such rules led to attacks such as that typified by Rymer. The hybrid genres of many of Shakespeare's plays, his low characters and supernatural elements, were at variance with neo-classical dramatic ideals of unity and conformity. However, Longinus, 'concerned with genius, not genus', gave Shakespearean critics an alternative methodology which could incorporate his more 'original' dramatic qualities.¹¹⁰ As Gary Taylor points out, Leonard Welsted's 1712 translation of *On the Sublime* used Longinus in defence of Shakespeare: 'in an appended essay he illustrated Longinian precepts with examples from Shakespeare'.¹¹¹ That Shakespeare could be quoted in defence of precepts which Longinus had originally illustrated with quotations from classical writers, amounted to a critical defence of Shakespeare from an alternative, but equally valid, classical source. Taylor summarises the implications of invoking Longinus in defence of Shakespeare as follows:

Longinus gave Shakespeare critics a warrant to ignore structural weaknesses and concentrate upon his fine passages; he also let them turn Shakespeare's glaring faults into a badge of greatness.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Jonathan Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare* (London: Picador, 1997), p. 166.

¹⁰⁹ Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Vintage, 1991), p. 89.

¹¹⁰ Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 90.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*

¹¹² Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 91.

Those elements viewed as faults and weaknesses by neo-classical standards could be embraced by the more subjective and less formal aspects of Longinian precepts. Shakespeare's striking passages and images could be highlighted and praised while ignoring the more problematic aspects raised by a discussion of the play as a unified whole. Longinus focused on beauties and faults and quoted illustrative excerpted passages; his methodology justified and encouraged a similar approach to Shakespeare. As a result, Shakespeare's inherent epigrammatic qualities, his 'quotable generalizations about human life' (which Jonathan Bate traces back to the textbooks from which Shakespeare himself was taught), were emphasized, and his 'best' passages were to be found scattered through poetic collections such as *The Beauties of Poetry Display'd* (1757), and various dramatic collections such as the *Thesaurus Dramaticus* (1724) and its later incarnations.¹¹³ The 1756 edition of the *Beauties of the English Stage*, whilst updating the entries to include more recent performances ('down to the year 1755'), places Shakespeare at the beginning of the dramatic lineage traced in its pages.

The influence of the beauties/defects discourse also extended to the various attempts to produce a complete edition of Shakespeare's works undertaken in the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1709, Nicholas Rowe published his edition of Shakespeare, entering the debate with the remark that Rymer ought to have observed some of Shakespeare's beauties as well as his faults, and he catalogued some of his own favourite passages within his 'Life' of Shakespeare.¹¹⁴ Rowe's edition introduced act and scene divisions and printed lists of *dramatis personae*; additions which sought to render

¹¹³ *The Beauties of Poetry Display'd* (London: J. Hinton, 1757). For details of the *Thesaurus Dramaticus* and its later editions see pp. 22-24 above.

¹¹⁴ See p. 32 above.

the plays more reader-friendly and contributed to the increasing domestication of Shakespeare. With an edition of the plays in book form, private reading was encouraged and potentially available to a wider range of people than those who would see them on the stage. In 1714, an unauthorised, additional volume was appended to Rowe's edition of Shakespeare, which, through its allegiance to the beauties/defects discourse, stressed the readerliness of the plays. The work of Charles Gildon, this added volume of *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare*, contained his 'Essay on the Art, Rise, and Progress of the Stage, In Greece, Rome and England' and 'Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare'.¹¹⁵ The 'Essay' responded to Rymer's treatment of Shakespeare and to Rowe's edition; Gildon boasting that he would 'give many more Examples of His [Shakespeare's] Beauties, than those few which his Editor [Rowe] has but slightly glanc'd on in his Life'.¹¹⁶ Within the 'Essay', Gildon criticises the extreme approach of those critics who deal with Shakespeare 'as some of our modern Dedicators do by their Patrons; denying them all defects, and at the same time dawbing them with Shining Qualities, which they do not only not posses, but have no need of, to compleat their Character'.¹¹⁷ Although Rymer undoubtedly 'carry'd the matter too far' in his focus on faults, Gildon points out that Shakespeare is not without his fair share of both aspects in his writing.¹¹⁸ Despite a continuous system of recommending Shakespeare's beauties

¹¹⁵ Colin Franklin, *Shakespeare Domesticated: The Eighteenth-Century Editions* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1991); Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Franklin notes that the appended volume concluded with 'An Index of the most Beautiful Thoughts, Descriptions, Speeches, &c. in Shakespear's Works', p. 102.

¹¹⁶ [Gildon] 'An Essay on the Art, Rise, and Progress of the Stage, In Greece, Rome, and England', in *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare, Volume the Ninth* (London: for E. Curll, K. Sanger and J. Pemberton, 1714), p. i.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. ii.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

throughout the discussion, Gildon stresses a balanced approach in evaluation. One should not proceed with the blind adoration of a dedicator, but neither should one indulge in an ‘unaccountable Bigotry [...] to the very Errors of *Shakespear*’, of the kind which drove Rymer ‘as far into the contrary Extreme’.¹¹⁹ For while Shakespeare ‘does not come up to the Antients, in all the Beauties of the *Drama*’, he has, however, ‘surpass’d them in the Topicks or Common Places’.¹²⁰ The ‘Essay’, concerned with the ‘Rules of the *Drama*’ as laid down by ‘the Antients’, again portrays Shakespeare as falling short of fulfilling ancient dramatic rules. Significantly, however, he is seen to fit most comfortably under Gildon’s remarks relating to the epigram, where, he states ‘most of the Miscellanies of *Shakespear* will fall’.¹²¹ Here, Gildon incorporates a Longinian approach to Shakespeare which values his genius in terms of his epigrammatic qualities and the number of his ‘Common Places’, providing a solution to the debate surrounding Shakespeare’s lack of conformity to classical rules and precepts.

Gildon’s view that Shakespeare’s excellence lay in his commonplaces and epigrams influences his discussion of the plays in his ‘Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare’, and his anthologising of Shakespeare within the *Complete Art of English Poetry* (1718). The former ‘Remarks’ are included in the appended volume to Rowe’s edition and are an extension of the ‘Essay’, intending to apply the dramatic rules set out there to each of Shakespeare’s plays. His intention in this discussion, is to ‘point out the Beauties of this Author, which are worthy the Observation of all the ingenious Lovers of this Art’, including, not only the argument or fable of each play, and a brief plot

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. iii.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*

¹²¹ *ibid.*, p. xix.

summary, but also including a number of quotations to illustrate the ‘Beauties of the *Fable, Conduct, and Manners*’ of the texts.¹²² For example, in the remarks on the *Comedy of Errors* the following couplet is included under the heading of ‘Slander’:

For Slander lives upon Succession,
For ever hous’d, where once it gets possession.¹²³

The ‘Remarks’ encourages a reading of Rowe’s edition of Shakespeare which calls upon the reader to evaluate Shakespeare’s faults and beauties by Aristotelian and Longinian precepts, and, in drawing upon the Longinian trait of incorporating short quotations, Gildon furthers the argument for the epigrammatic quality of Shakespeare’s beauties.

Four years later, Gildon took the argument even further in his aforementioned critique of Bysshe’s *Art of English Poetry*. In *The Complete Art of Poetry*, Gildon turns from the rules of drama to those of poetry, aiming to provide ‘Rules for the *Structure of an English Verse, at Rime and the like*’.¹²⁴ Expanding upon Bysshe’s three-part structure with six parts, Gildon also claims to have pursued a different methodology from his predecessor. Where Bysshe included ‘a sort of Dictionary of Epithets and Synonymous Words’, Gildon offers the reader, ‘the great *Images* that are to be found in those of our Poets, who are truly great, as well as their Topics and Moral Reflections’.¹²⁵ Bysshe offered a ‘Collection of the Most Natural, Agreeable, & Noble Thoughts’, while Gildon

¹²² [Gildon] ‘Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare’, p. 237. In this edition the ‘Essay’ is printed at the end of the volume, but the opening sentence of the ‘Remarks’ refers to the ‘Essay prefix’d to this Volume’ suggesting that the ‘Essay’ was intended to precede the ‘Remarks’.

¹²³ *ibid.*, p. 274.

¹²⁴ Charles Gildon, *The Complete Art of Poetry*, 2 vols (London: Charles Rivington, 1718), preface, p. 5

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

offered two collections which enlarged the quotations from Spencer and Shakespeare, whom he felt Bysshe had neglected. 'A Collection of the most beautiful Descriptions, Similes, Allusions, &c. from *Spencer*, and our best *English* Poets, as well Ancient as Modern' formed the entire second volume of the *Complete Art*. Gildon boasts that there are 'above Ten Thousand Verses' in this collection 'not to be found in any Performance of this Kind', although, as Culler and Benedict observe, a large proportion are to be found in the *Art of English Poetry*.¹²⁶

The second collection is devoted entirely to Shakespeare and is entitled 'Shakespeariana: or Select Moral Reflections, Topicks, Similes, and Descriptions from Shakespear'. Consisting of 155 passages, the 'Shakespeariana' responds to the rejection of Shakespeare 'by some Modern Collectors' (Bysshe), on account of his 'Obsolete Language'.¹²⁷ The collection is offered as a 'Specimen', Gildon observing that Shakespeare 'abounds in Beauties', and, like the 'Remarks', he works through each play in turn extracting their various beauties. Unlike the 'Remarks', however, the 'Shakespeariana' contains no critical commentary, and the passages stand alone as 'beauties' without the need of justification. Gildon indicates the speaker of each extract and adds a heading which further enforces the idea that Shakespeare excels in the 'Topicks or Common Places'. Titling passages 'Mercy', 'Hope', 'Authority' and so on, he presents Shakespeare's writings as bursting with universal commonplaces, words which transcend the drama and visual performance, beauties which can be culled, written, copied, and memorised. Gildon's discussions of Shakespeare, which began in the unauthorised volume appended to Rowe's edition, illustrate a move from the application

¹²⁶ See p. 22 above.

¹²⁷ Gildon, *The Complete Art of Poetry*, i, p. 304.

of Longinus in defence of Shakespeare, to a collection of Shakespeare's beauties with none of the typical Longinian commentary. The 'Shakespeariana' embodied the idea that Shakespeare was a writer of commonplaces and illustrated an approach which was to be assimilated into various editions of Shakespeare.

Colin Franklin observes that 'Gildon inspired an editorial taste for isolating Shakespeare's "Beauties"', and indeed, many of the editions which followed Rowe's display a similar preoccupation with highlighting such beauties.¹²⁸ Even those which shunned the practice felt it necessary to explain why they did so. Pope, who viewed Shakespeare as 'the fairest and fullest subject for criticism', containing the 'most conspicuous instances, both of beauties and faults of all sorts', characterised Gildon's appended selection as little more than filling 'a whole paper with citations of fine passages, with *general applauses*, or *empty exclamations* at the tail end of them'.¹²⁹ Despite his preference for highlighting beauties, which he terms in the preface to his own edition of Shakespeare (1725) as 'the better half of criticism', he does not entirely subscribe to Gildon's method of extracting them from the original context of the text itself.¹³⁰ In his own edition, therefore, Pope states that 'Some of the most shining passages are distinguished by commas in the margin; and where the beauty lay not in particulars but in the whole, a star is prefixed to the scene'. As for the defects, those which are 'excessively bad' are 'degraded to the bottom of the page; with an asterisk referring to the places of their insertion'. The disparity between Pope's treatment of

¹²⁸ Franklin, *Shakespeare Domesticated*, p. 178.

¹²⁹ Alexander Pope, 'Preface to the "Works of Shakespeare"', in *Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare*, ed. by D. Nichol Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 44. Pope is here probably referring specifically to Gildon's 'Remarks'.

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 57.

beauties compared to that of the faults, reinforces his preference for beauties and paradoxically sets a precedent for the culling of such passages. Although indicating where the defects originally stood, the relegation of such elements to the bottom of the page suggests that they can be discarded from the text, while the beauties should be retained and appreciated. Although he does not quite remove his beauties from their original context, he does, by means of an asterisk or comma, set them apart from the rest of the text; the symbolic markers drawing the eye to the shining passages and thus influencing the way in which the text is read. Margreta De Grazia identifies the use of quotation marks in the seventeenth and eighteenth century and their presence in the margins of texts to 'catch the readers attention'.¹³¹ Prior to the eighteenth century, when quotation marks came to signal private property, the quotation mark 'signalled communal ground or commonplaces':

They marked material to be copied by readers in their copy-books, thereby assuring that the commonplaces would become more common still. By simply perusing the margins of a text, readers might lift material for their own personalised storehouse of wise and therefore widely applicable sayings.¹³²

Pope's marking of Shakespeare's passages with marginal commas has much the same effect and, again, promotes the image of Shakespeare as a writer of commonplace sayings or '*sententiae*'.¹³³ Therefore, while Pope's markings are an act of critical evaluation and

¹³¹ Margreta De Grazia, 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. by Jean I. Marsden (Exeter: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp. 57-71. Quotation at p. 58

¹³² *ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

¹³³ *ibid.*

a direct application of the beauties/defects discourse, his method of marking such beauties also reflects the manner in which commonplace sayings were highlighted.

Pope's editing is, according to Marcus Walsh, typical of an aesthetic orientation, one of the four main editorial methods adopted from Shillingsburg's study of the literary editing of Milton and Shakespeare in the eighteenth century.¹³⁴ 'Editors working on the basis of the aesthetic orientation', he explains, 'make their decisions by reference to some standard of correctness, whether of the author or the editor, or the author's or editor's time'.¹³⁵ As the development of the 'praise and blame' discourse indicates, and Richard Terry's description of the discourse as one which led to the acquirement of taste suggests, the idea of literary beauty was exactly such a 'standard of correctness' and one which governed Pope's critical decisions.¹³⁶ Pope assessed the literary value of Shakespeare's writing by the critical standards of his own time, and his text testifies to these standards in its demarcation of literary beauties.

That Pope's edition of Shakespeare is dominated by an aesthetic approach is further supported by the presence of the index included in the sixth volume. This 'Index of the Characters, Sentiments, Speeches and Descriptions in Shakespear' was 'probably assembled by Fenton', but as Walsh observes, was 'in every way consistent with Pope's evaluative approach to Shakespeare'.¹³⁷ The second section is 'an index of gnomic or moral sayings in Shakespeare, instructive and valuable passages', the fourth, of

¹³⁴ See chapter 4 of *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing*, 'Making Sense of Shakespeare: Editing from Pope to Capell'.

¹³⁵ Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing*, p. 114.

¹³⁶ See p. 33 above.

¹³⁷ Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing*, p. 128.

“Thoughts or Sentiments”, the sixth of ‘Descriptions, or Images’ and the seventh an index of ‘some Similies and Allusions’.¹³⁸ ‘This’, Walsh remarks:

Is an Index which presents Shakespeare as a writer worth reading because he offers both moral instruction and poetic beauty. It is designed to guide the reader to striking or sententious passages, and treats Shakespeare as a storehouse of thoughts and images.¹³⁹

Like collections such as those by Bysse, Gildon, and others, Pope’s index aims to instruct its readers in matters of poetic excellence, while also presenting some of the passages as offering moral guidance. And, like such collections, ‘This Index implies a reader looking for instruction, images, and ideas, wishing to find profit and pleasure rather than to be puzzled by interpretative problems’.¹⁴⁰ Unlike the scholar or critic who examined the plays with an eye to variant readings, inconsistencies, and other textual problems, the index reflected the desire for digested literature and the rise in reference or index-reading, which had been growing in popularity since the poetic and dramatic commonplaces of the seventeenth century.

Pope, in Walsh’s argument, ‘conceived his business as the mediation of Shakespeare, the author of a past and less cultivated age, to readers in his own’, and it is significant that his primary means of such mediation is through the evaluation of beauties and faults.¹⁴¹ Like compilers and anthologists, the terms are employed as a means of instructing the reader, directing them towards particular aspects of the texts, emphasising their readerliness rather than their dramatic qualities. Just as Bysse presented his

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

¹³⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 131.

'collection' as a means of mediating between the poet and the public, Pope used the highlighting of Shakespeare's 'beauties' to bring Shakespeare in line with modern literary tastes, providing an example of how the current critical values could be applied to the national poet and dramatist. While the aesthetic orientation 'continued to be more or less present in editions of Shakespeare throughout the eighteenth century', it did become less important as historical and authorial orientations in turn came to prominence, with a greater focus on 'explanation and emendation'.¹⁴² Thomas Hanmer followed Pope's example in 1745, and William Warburton went further in his edition of 1747, observing Pope's beauties and adding his own, signified by double commas.

Lewis Theobald, however, in his edition of 1733 avoided the practice, commenting in his preface that:

The Science of Criticism, as far as it affects an Editor, seems to be reduced to these three Classes; the Emendation of corrupt Passages; the Explanation of obscure and difficult ones; and an Inquiry into the Beauties and Defects of Composition.¹⁴³

His work, he states, is 'principally confin'd to the two former parts', thereby attacking Pope's editorial methods and contrasting them with his own more Bentleian method of 'restoration and interpretation'.¹⁴⁴ Shakespeare's text, states Theobald, 'is religiously adher'd to, and the Numerous Faults and Blemishes, purely his own, are left as they were found'. Here Shakespeare's text is invested with a sacred status; beauties or defects are not highlighted and the only thing relegated to the bottom of the page is Theobald's own

¹⁴² *ibid.*, p. 114; p. 132.

¹⁴³ Cited by Walsh, p. 132.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p. 133.

voluminous commentary and footnotes. Samuel Johnson, whose edition was published in 1765, echoes Theobald in his avoidance of highlighting beauties. He does not deny the validity or worth of drawing attention to beauties and faults, stating such a task is ‘one of the duties of an annotator’, and indeed the only part of the task which he felt Pope was ‘eminently and indisputably qualified’ to carry out.¹⁴⁵ However, he goes on to discredit the practice of highlighting beauties, stating:

I have never observed that mankind was much delighted or improved by their asterisks, commas, or double commas; of which, the only effect is, that they preclude the pleasure of judging for ourselves, teach the young and ignorant to decide without principles; defeat the curiosity and discernment, by leaving them less to discover; and at last, shew the opinion of the critick, without the reason on which it is founded, and without affording any light by which it may be examined.¹⁴⁶

These remarks take on an added significance when considered in the light of anthologising and will be seen to form the basis of Johnson’s objections to anthologies of beauties, such as the collection of his own, published in 1781. They also, however, reflect a growing reaction against the practice of isolating and highlighting beauties, which had by this time become established not only as a critical discourse, but a familiar strand of anthologising. While the ‘neo-classical line’ of critics such as Dryden, Dennis, Addison, and Pope, had viewed the practice as a valuable means of evaluating literature and of instructing the reader, the dominance of the trend led to a concern that such mediation was actually a stumbling block to gaining the literary judgement that the

¹⁴⁵ Samuel Johnson, *Proposals for Printing by Subscription, the Dramatick Works of William Shakespeare* (1756), in *Works*, vii, ed. by Arthur Sherbo, p. 57.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*

discourse was supposed to promote.¹⁴⁷ Far from teaching the reader to appreciate literary beauty, Johnson argues, the practice precludes judgement, blunts discernment, and is based on the critic's own opinions without those opinions being explained to the reader, and so allowing for a balanced appraisal.

The issue of highlighting — or of not highlighting — Shakespeare's beauties can be seen to form a microcosm of the discourse at large and emphasises just how central and influential the practice was in the early-eighteenth century. By 1750, editions of individual plays were published which reflected the inculcation of beauties/defects criticism, and displayed a debt to the editing techniques of Pope and his contemporaries. An edition of *Macbeth*, published that year in Dublin, claimed to be 'Carefully corrected by the best copies: with notes explanatory &c. and the beauties of the author pointed out according to Mr. Pope's edition'.¹⁴⁸ Similarly, an edition of *As You Like It* contained 'the beauties of the author pointed out according to Mr. Pope and Mr. Warburton's editions'.¹⁴⁹ The aesthetic approach to editing of which the beauties/defects discourse was a part, may have decreased in importance as the century progressed, and the discourse itself may have begun to fall from favour as a result of criticisms such as those voiced by Johnson, but the practice did leave one important cultural legacy which was to outlive the use of the critical terminology itself. That legacy was of course the anthology of beauties, and more specifically, the anthology of the beauties of one individual author. The practice of highlighting Shakespeare's 'beauties' and compiling indices to passages within his works as exemplified by Gildon, Pope, and Warburton, inevitably led to the

¹⁴⁷ Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing*, p. 127.

¹⁴⁸ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Dublin: Augustus Long, 1750).

¹⁴⁹ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (Dublin: Augustus Long, [1750?]).

logical further step of isolating such beauties, not only on the page or in an index, but in a completely separate publication altogether. In 1752, William Dodd took that logical step and produced his *Beauties of Shakespear*, an anthology, which, taking its cue from the highlighting of that author's beauties, was compiled solely of his beautiful passages, which were given headings and indexed for accessibility. While heralded as the 'first Shakespearean anthology', Dodd's collection is also the first *Beauties* anthology which collects its contents from the writings of one individual author. It is an important critical anthology which owes its subject, its approach, and its compilation, to the practices of Shakespeare's first editors.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Gerald Howson, *The Macaroni Parson: A Life of the Unfortunate Dr. Dodd* (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1973), p. 33.

CHAPTER 2

'BETWEEN LAZINESS AND LEARNING': DODD'S *BEAUTIES OF SHAKESPEAR*

I

Dodd's 'juvenile performance'

In an attempt to locate the ambiguity of the anthology in its 'challenge to prevailing models of authorship', Leah Price observes that 'even biography confirms the contradictory role that the anthology took on at that time'.¹ To illustrate the point, she draws upon the fact that 'of the two of the most influential eighteenth-century collections, William Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespeare* and William Enfield's *Speaker*, one was edited by a future forger, the other by the author of a treatise on intellectual property'.² The validity of her point — that the dubious status of the genre was influenced by the fact that its 'authors' or compilers could, and did, come from any walk of life, including a criminal one — is not in question. However, the portrayal of William Dodd as little more than a 'forger', from the listing in the *Dictionary of National Biography* to Price's appellation of 'future forger', obscures, not only the representation of Dodd and his work, but also the clarity of Price's point. While it is well known that Dodd, sometime tutor to the fifth Earl of Chesterfield, was hanged for the forgery of a bond worth four thousand two hundred pounds in 1777, the notoriety gained from this act was far in the future when Dodd

¹ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 3.

² *ibid.*

compiled the *Beauties of Shakespear*.³ Indeed, more pertinent to Price's point that anthologies could be compiled by almost anyone, is the fact that far from being a *future* forger, Dodd *was*, in 1752, a twenty-three year old Cambridge graduate embarking upon a career in the Church. It is less remarkable for the flamboyant and fame-courting Doctor Dodd, 'forger', to have compiled an anthology of Shakespeare, than it is for a young ambitious unknown to tackle the heavyweight figures of Shakespeare's editors in his own collection of Shakespeare.

Of course, to fashion oneself in the mould of a Shakespearean editor alongside the figures of Pope, Theobald, and Warburton, as Dodd did through his anthology, is an act typically flamboyant and ambitious in its own right, equal to anything Dodd did in later life. The son of a clergyman, Dodd spent his youth in Kesteven in Lincolnshire, where his father, also William, was Vicar of Bourne.⁴ He entered Clare Hall, Cambridge, in 1746, gained his degree in 1750, and removed to London for a time before returning to Cambridge for ordination the following year. It is during his time at Cambridge that Dodd's literary aspirations first surface; he wrote a number of poems including *A New Book of the Dunciad*, which replaces Theobald, the object of Pope's satire, with another Shakespearean editor, the eminent churchman, Bishop Warburton. Dodd also worked on translations, and frequently contributed to Edward Cave's *Gentleman's Magazine*.⁵

³ While some later editions of Dodd's text did normalise the spelling of Shakespeare, this chapter will retain the spelling of Dodd's first edition to avoid confusion with George Kearsley's *Beauties of Shakespeare* (1783).

⁴ For further biographical details on Dodd and his career see Howson, *The Macaroni Parson* (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1973). A more recent discussion of Dodd's literary activities, his forgery and execution can be found in Paul Baines, *The House of Forgery in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), pp. 125-150.

⁵ Dodd's contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine* and his involvement with Cave are discussed by A. D. Barker in 'The Early Career of William Dodd', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 8:2 (1982), pp. 217-235.

Interestingly, Dodd's first publication was a 'college textbook, a synopsis in Latin of the philosophical writings of Grotius, Locke and Clarke', whose format and purpose was, 'to save students the trouble of wading through the originals', much as his Shakespearean anthology was to do.⁶ Influenced by his time in London where he had intended to 'set himself up as an author', Dodd wrote, and endeavoured to get staged, his farce *Sir Roger de Coverley*.⁷ The London theatres may also have given Dodd, if not his first taste of Shakespeare's plays, his first opportunity to see them performed. Certainly, it was at the theatre that Dodd met Mary Perkins, a young girl of sixteen rumoured to be the Earl of Sandwich's mistress. An imprudent marriage to Mary without informing his family left Dodd at the age of twenty-one with a wife to support and no regular income or career. Faced with his father's opposition to his new wife and his plans for a literary career (the elder William had opposed the staging of Dodd's play), Dodd followed his father and younger brother Richard into the Church of England. He returned to Cambridge to train and took orders six months later, in October 1751, after promising his father 'to renounce all literary ambitions for ever and devote his life henceforth to Christian duty'.⁸ Despite his promise, Dodd had, at this time, been working on the anthology of excerpts from Shakespeare's plays which was published on 16 March 1752, barely five months after he entered the Church.

The Beauties of Shakespear: regularly selected from each play was printed by Edward Cave, the proprietor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* and sold by T. Waller, a Fleet Street bookseller. The collection was far from being Dodd's last foray into the literary

⁶ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 21.

⁷ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 20.

⁸ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 26.

world, but his preface promotes the idea that he is casting off his childhood literary aspirations, in exchange for the 'better and more important things' demanded by the 'sacred function' of his new profession.⁹ Terming the compilation a 'juvenile performance', Dodd sought to excuse his efforts and the format of his collection to his fellow clergy as those of a young, inexperienced undergraduate; yet such an appellation disguises its importance and encourages the view of anthologies as lightweight and ephemeral.¹⁰ The idea for such a collection was not quite as 'simple and original' as Dodd's biographer, Gerald Howson claims, although it is unique in its status as 'the first Shakespearean anthology ever'.¹¹ From the beginning of the seventeenth century, anthologies had included extracts from Shakespeare, and the *Beauties* format was already established by the time Dodd published his collection.¹² Dodd's originality lies in the fact that such a collection had never been devoted to the writings of one individual before, and that the *Beauties of Shakespear* is, in fact, a much more complex production than its predecessors. The only collection displaying a similar format was that of Gildon's 'Shakespeariana' which was part of a larger poetic dictionary and conceived on a much smaller and simpler scale. From the collection's preface, it is clear that Dodd first envisaged his own project as being on a much larger and more scholarly scale. 'It was my first intention', he explains, 'to have consider'd each play critically and regularly thro' all its parts', but as this would have 'swell'd the work beyond proper bounds, I was

⁹ William Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare* 2 vols (London: T. Waller, 1752), i, preface, p. xx. Most of Dodd's preface is reprinted in, *Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Brian Vickers (London: Routledge, 1995), vol 3, 1733-1752, pp. 464-470. Page references in the *Critical Heritage* will be given where appropriate.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 33.

¹² Margreta de Grazia notes that 'Shakespeare was first anthologized in 1600 in two collections of quotations, John Bodenham's *Belvedere, or the Garden of the Muses* and *England's Parnassus*, generally attributed to Robert Allot.' See 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', p. 61.

obliged to confine myself solely to a collection of [Shakespeare's] poetical *Beauties*'.¹³ The result is, therefore, a 'collection of the finest passages of the finest poet', which is laden with all the textual apparatus of a critical edition. Dodd selects Shakespeare's finest passages while his commentary transforms the collection into something altogether different from that compiled by Bysshe or Gildon. Dodd's extracts do more than offer the reader a chance to brush up on their Shakespeare; they engage in a discourse of authorial authenticity and address the issues of editing Shakespeare in the early-eighteenth century. Dodd's initial plan was neither simple nor original and the critical anthology, the hybrid of complete edition and anthology of extracts which he finally produced, equally eludes such a description.

The first edition of the *Beauties of Shakespear* contained (rather ironically for a collection compiled by a clergyman), 666 separate passages from Shakespeare's plays, printed in a two-volume duodecimo format (plate 2). The first volume comprises three hundred and forty-eight passages, selected primarily from the comedies and tragedies. The second contains three hundred and eighteen extracts taken primarily from the remaining tragedies and histories. Not only are the plays digested and represented by selected extracts, the physical appearance of the anthology itself emphasises its ambiguous relationship to the two types of literary endeavour that it incorporates. Its small, compact size reveals it to be a portable text in contrast to the larger, more elaborate

¹³ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xvi. Dodd seems not to have abandoned this plan as a letter in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1777 (p. 172) records that he had proposed to publish 'a new and splendid edition of Shakespeare in quarto, with engravings by the best artists in Paris'. The cost of financing this edition is argued to have added to Dodd's already troublesome debts and in turn promoted his fateful attempt at forgery. See Edwin Elliott Willoughby, 'A Deadly Edition of Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 5 (1954), pp. 351-357. Howson, however, suggests that this proposed edition was in fact, 'a new *de-luxe* edition of the *Beauties of Shakespeare* to be printed, like the Bible [that is, Dodd's commentary upon it], in Paris and illustrated by the best artists available.' See *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 107. Dodd was certainly planning another edition of the *Beauties* before his death.

editions, which frequently characterised the most expensive multi-volumed publications of Shakespeare's *Works* by Pope or Warburton. Its scale illustrates the fact that the text is not as voluminous as a 'complete' edition, instead offering an inexpensive, miniature version, which would fit easily into the pocket, just as the miniature extracts would be portable in the minds of its readers, easy to memorise, and thus, similar to the commonplace books which used short extracts for their mnemonic and educational value. However, the text offered more than just memorable passages. The commentary, notes, and comparative illustrations which Dodd included from ancient and modern authors, educated the reader in the editorial procedures which Shakespeare had been subjected to, sought to explain obscure words and phrases, and encouraged comparison with other authors and dramatists who were indebted to Shakespeare's language and imagery. Dodd's textual apparatus brought the reader into the debates surrounding the editing of Shakespeare and aimed to place Dodd in the lineage of serious Shakespeare scholarship, while positioning the text itself as something other than a typical anthology.

Echoing the dual nature of the text, Dodd's preface oscillates between its description of the collection as little more than the result of idle reading, and assertions that it is, in fact, a serious piece of work, which, despite its size and format, has a role to play in the ongoing process of editing Shakespeare. Dodd portrays the project as one that developed over a period of time, during his studies at Cambridge:

It was long since that I first proposed publishing this collection; for *Shakespeare* was ever, of all modern authors, my first and greatest favourite and during my relaxations from my more severe

and necessary studies at college, I never omitted to read and indulge myself in the rapturous flights of this delightful and *sweetest child of fancy*.¹⁴

The precise duration of the project is unknown, although Howson suggests that ‘Dodd must have done the bulk of compilation during his six months at Cambridge preparing for ordination’ and ‘finished it at West Ham’ where he was appointed curate.¹⁵ However long the project took to execute, the extracts, the commentary, and the critical orientation of the preface itself, testify to the fact that the text is more than the result of Dodd’s ‘rapturous flights’ and ‘relaxations’. The presence of notes and commentary reveal that Dodd wanted to produce something more than just another general collection of excerpts of the kind he characterises as meriting ‘very small notice’ and ‘already too low for censure’.¹⁶ His use of paratextual elements positions the text within the critical dialogue carried out in the ever-expanding commentaries of editors such as Theobald and Warburton. His commentary may be filled with what Howson terms ‘pointless comments’, but Dodd’s notes endeavour to engage with the ongoing debate regarding the authenticity of Shakespeare’s texts, and do provide a summary of the editorial approaches which appeared in the first half of the eighteenth century.¹⁷ The preface to the *Beauties of Shakespear* effectively provides the reader with an overview of each of the editors and is, as Colin Franklin observes, a ‘serious work’.¹⁸ Indeed, as a summary of the editions from Pope through to Warburton, Dodd’s essay was valued and incorporated into the introduction of an edition of Shakespeare published in 1771. Following an earlier edition

¹⁴ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xv.

¹⁵ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 34.

¹⁶ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xix.

¹⁷ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 33.

¹⁸ Franklin, *Shakespeare Domesticated* p. 182.

in 1753, the text boasted that ‘the BEAUTIES observed by Pope, Warburton, and Dodd are pointed out’ and incorporated some of Dodd’s remarks on the earlier editors in its preface.¹⁹

Dodd portrays the lineage of Shakespearean editing as one marred by ‘the constant jarring and triumphant insults’ between the various commentators, who have, he declares, ‘not so much labour’d to elucidate their author, as to expose the follies of their brethren’.²⁰ As a result, Shakespeare has suffered not only from the ‘outrage of dull players’ and ‘dull printers’, but is now the prey of ‘still duller editors’ who have obscured his beauties and reduced the nation’s greatest writer to ‘a kind of stage for bungling critics to shew their *clumsy activity* upon’.²¹ Dodd assesses the merits and drawbacks associated with each editor, berating their dominant editorial methods of alteration and emendation. Rather ironically, given his own treatment of Shakespeare’s plays, Dodd believes that ‘the text is a sacred thing; ’tis dangerous to meddle with it, nor should it ever be done, but in the most desperate cases’.²² Despite the unauthoritative state of the surviving copies, owing to Shakespeare’s ‘inattention to, and disregard of his copies’, ‘how little care he took of their publication’, and ‘how mangled, maimed and incorrect his works are handed down to us’ (the handiwork of those ‘dull players and dull printers’), Dodd viewed many of the emendations and corrections to the texts as unnecessary and unjustifiable.²³ ‘Many a critic’ argues Dodd:

¹⁹ *The Works of Shakespear* (Edinburgh: A. Donaldson, 1771).

²⁰ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xiii.

²¹ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. viii.

²² Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. vii; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 465.

²³ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. ix; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 466.

When he has met with a passage not clear to his conception, and perhaps above the level of his own ideas, so far from attempting to explain his author, has immediately condemned the expression as foolish and absurd, and foisted in some footy [sic] emendation of his own.²⁴

Far from elucidating the difficulties in Shakespeare's text, this tendency towards emending obscure passages has led back to the critical tradition of fault finding. 'There is nothing so easy as to find fault, and alter one word for another', states Dodd. 'The tribe of *emending* critics' who shower upon the text a 'motley fardel of miserable and blind conjectures', do so only to display their own learning and superiority, rather than from any concern to restore the author's true meaning.²⁵

Of the various editions of Shakespeare published, Dodd regards Theobald's as the best due to his 'close attention to, and diligent survey of the old editors, and by a careful emendation of those slight faults which evidently proceeded from the press'.²⁶ Even this edition was, however, far from fully satisfactory, Theobald having 'left many passages untouch'd and unregarded which called for the editor's assistance'.²⁷ Hanmer is criticised for having 'proceed[ed] in the most unjustifiable method, foisting into his text a thousand idle alterations, without once advertising to his reader which are, and which are not *Shakespeare's* genuine words'.²⁸ Warburton, Dodd's object of ridicule in his *New Book of the Dunciad*, 'for the most part preferred his own criticisms to the author's words', but did redeem himself somewhat in Dodd's eyes, having at least 'given us the author's words and his own reasons for those criticisms'.²⁹ Pope's edition receives no

²⁴ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. vii; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 465.

²⁵ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. viii; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 465.

²⁶ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. ix; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 466.

²⁷ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. x; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, pp. 466-467.

²⁸ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xi; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 467.

²⁹ *ibid.*

mention except, perhaps, for a subtle jibe in Dodd's criticism of 'still duller editors' recalling the preface to Pope's edition where he remarks on the 'dull duty of an editor'.³⁰

Dodd's preface, therefore, aims to position Dodd and his collection of excerpts within the tradition of Shakespearean editing while also critiquing its methods. Unlike Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, and Warburton, Dodd doubts that any 'single man will ever be able to give the world a compleat [sic] and correct edition of *Shakespear*', and holds it 'no small affront to the world [...] to stuff a book with *querrelous* [sic] jargon where information is paid for and justly expected'.³¹ *The Beauties of Shakespear* is therefore offered as a kind of antidote to the modern editions of Shakespeare; Dodd claiming that although 'it would be easy for me, according to the custom of modern editions, to have triumph'd and insulted', he has, instead, 'taken no notice of the faults of others but endeavoured to the best of my judgement to explain the passage'.³² Dodd rejects fault-finding in Shakespeare's texts and in the comments of the editors, making the title of his collection wholly appropriate to his highlighting of 'beauties'.

Although he does not discuss the physical highlighting of beauties in the editions of Pope, Hanmer, and Warburton, Dodd's anthology of Shakespearean beauties follows their invocation of Longinus as a defender of Shakespeare's most beautiful passages. Dodd stresses the subjectivity of Longinus's precepts: 'the impression a performance makes upon our minds when read or recited'.³³ He goes on to quote Longinus's argument that 'you may pronounce that sublime beautiful and genuine which always pleases and takes equally with all sorts of men'. This, Dodd argues in turn, is particularly

³⁰ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xiii.

³¹ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xiv; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 469.

³² *ibid.* Dodd makes a few emendations, although only a small number were adopted by later editors.

³³ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xvi; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 469.

applicable to Shakespeare: 'for all humours, ages, professions, and inclinations jointly proclaim their approbation and esteem of him'.³⁴ Dodd also follows the basic selection processes evident in the editions of the previous editors and in collections such as Gildon's. He works systematically through each play in turn, noting the beauties sequentially in the order in which they are to be found in the original plays. Interestingly, given his own opinion of the editing, Dodd uses Hanmer's edition as his copy text, rather than the more recently published edition of Warburton, or the superior edition of Theobald. This choice may have been influenced by the fact that Hanmer's Oxford edition, as a university text, had 'contested the right of Tonson and the other proprietors to the Shakespeare copyrights on the grounds that perpetual copyright had been abolished by the Act of Queen Anne'.³⁵ Unwilling to challenge Oxford in court, 'the proprietors compromised', and so Dodd's use of Hanmer's edition may be taking advantage of that text's circumvention of copyright restrictions. Accordingly, the range of the texts in Dodd's collection follows those included in Hanmer's, and therefore, Pope's edition, omitting *Pericles* as Pope had done, terming it a 'wretched play' and not the work of Shakespeare.³⁶ Dodd arranges the plays according to genre: comedies, tragedies and histories, and alphabetically within those three divisions. Although Dodd endows each extract with a heading, he does retain act and scene references at the beginning of the corresponding group of extracts, creating a sequential, yet incomplete, progression through the text of the plays. The effect of reading the text in a linear fashion therefore

³⁴ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespeare*, preface, p. xvii; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 465.

³⁵ Terry Belanger, 'Tonson, Wellington and the Shakespeare copyrights', in *Studies in the Book Trade* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1975), pp. 195-209. Quotation at p. 200.

³⁶ As David Nichol Smith points out, Hanmer's edition was based on Pope's and corrected not by the folios and quartos, but by Theobald's edition. See Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare and the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), p. 43. Dodd's copy of Hanmer's edition, interleaved with his own comments is held in the Folger Shakespeare Library.

equates to reading only the marked passages in Pope's edition and skipping the rest of the narrative.

The contradictory impulses evident in the *Beauties of Shakespear* result in a rather curious collection which mediates between a scholarly edition and Shakespearean commonplace book. The meticulous detailed observation of the critical editor vies with the anthologist selecting Shakespeare's commonplaces, which, in their intended universality, do not require the contextualization provided by commentary and comparison. Franklin describes the collection as falling 'between laziness and learning', attributes represented by Dodd's anthology format and commentary respectively.³⁷ 'Educated readers could take on a whole play', while 'the uneducated would never have coped with his notes, or desired them'.³⁸ The collection, in Franklin's view, would seem to appeal neither to the educated reader who had no need of a digested Shakespeare when he could read the whole, nor the uneducated who desired such collections but could not cope with Dodd's commentary. In fact, the collection could potentially appeal to all sections of society as it mediates between those two extremes. The text provides a commonplace book, the index useful to scholars and literary novices alike. Dodd's commentary engaged with previous editors and would attract critics and scholars, while the notes are not so overwhelming as to deter casual readers to whom it offers an insight and education in scholarly and editorial methodologies. The balance between 'laziness and learning' created by the impulses of anthologising and of editing a critical edition, makes Shakespeare accessible to a wide readership, a utilitarian readership which potentially embraces all levels of society.

³⁷ Franklin, *Shakespeare Domesticated*, p. 183.

³⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 183-184.

The headings Dodd attaches to the extracts included in the anthology also reflect the dual impulses present in the collection and can be seen to fall into two categories. The first are those typical of the commonplace headings found in numerous anthologies — ‘rhetorical and dialectical classifications in which traditional wisdom was stored’ — those which De Grazia sees as deriving from ‘the topics or places of rhetoric and logic’.³⁹ Headings such as ‘Advice’, ‘Chastity’, or even the more lengthy, ‘Solitude preferr’d to a Court Life, and the Advantages of Adversity’, reflect universal emotions and experiences and undoubtedly portray the collection as ‘an extension of the commonplace tradition’.⁴⁰ Others, however, resist such commonality and stress Shakespeare’s originality through their incorporation of character references and direct description of the contents of the extracts. Of these, some indicate those elements of Shakespeare’s writings which did not subscribe to Aristotelian and Horatian artistic ideals and which did not fit within any rhetorical and dialectical classification. The idea that Longinian ideals allowed Shakespeare to be critiqued for his artlessness, rather than his artfulness, is confirmed not only by his status as the subject of an anthology of ‘beauties’ but also by the inclusion of passages reflecting such elements of Shakespeare’s plays which contravened traditional neo-classical rules. Dodd therefore includes passages reflecting Shakespeare’s use of the supernatural, his ghosts, spirits, and fairies. Several of the extracts from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* invoke the fairy element of that play and are titled: ‘A Fairy Bank’, ‘Fairy Courtesies’, ‘Fairy Jealousy, and the Effects of it’, and lastly, Puck’s speech (‘I am that merry wanderer of the night’) is headed simply, ‘Puck, or Robin Good-fellow’. Such headings draw on characters and events from the plays which cannot be placed beneath

³⁹ De Grazia, ‘Shakespeare in Quotation Marks’, pp. 59 and 61.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 61.

any traditional commonplace headings. These elements of Shakespeare are not viewed as commonplace but original, and so, various passages, including some of those below from the *Tempest* and *Hamlet*, are given headings which remind the reader that Shakespeare is not only a universal genius, but an original genius as well.

Some headings are so descriptive that they outweigh the very passage beneath them, rendering them almost redundant. For example, a heading from *The Tempest* spends so much time giving contextual detail that the heading is almost as lengthy as the extract which it precedes:

Caliban's Exultation after Prospero tells him - -He sought to violate the Honour of his Child, has something in it very strikingly in Character.

Oh ho, oh ho, - I woul'd it had been done,
 Thou did'st prevent me, I had peopled else
 This isle with *Calibans*.⁴¹

Likewise, many of the extracts taken from *Antony and Cleopatra* are not the familiar topics of rhetoric and logic but instead engage with the characters and the events of the play. For example, extracts are titled: 'Cleopatra on the Absence of Antony'; 'Description of Cleopatra's sailing down the Cydnus'; 'Octavia's Entrance, what it should have been'; or 'Antony, on his faded Glory'. Such headings assume a familiarity

⁴¹ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 108. For ease of reference (and to avoid confusion, as Dodd's act and scene divisions often differ significantly from modern editions), all future act and scene divisions and quotations are taken from *The Oxford Shakespeare*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), unless otherwise indicated. References to both *The Oxford Shakespeare* and to the reprint of the first edition of *The Beauties of Shakespear*, 2 vols (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1971) will be given. This extract is to be found in *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 1173. Dodd's use of italics in headings will be standardised throughout unless relevant.

with the plays or their characters and perform the function of making an otherwise isolated and disconnected extract comprehensible. They reflect the events and sentiments expressed in the extracts and betray the dramatic origins of the passage. Headings such as 'Octavia's entrance, what it should have been', comments on the nature of the passage, indicates the character involved, and, through the reference to her 'entrance', reflects the extract's dramatic origins. The description beneath the heading is specific and localised to one individual, Octavia, and a specific occurrence, her entrance into the action of the play. Dodd's commentary also contributes to the relationship between the extracts and the plays, the plays and other dramatic productions. A note appended to the passage which details Cleopatra sailing down the Cydnus in her barge includes Dryden's version of the scene, and Dodd's comment on Lepidus's speech relating 'Antony's Vices and Virtues' critiques Hanmer's emending of the lines, 'as the spots of heaven,/ More fiery by night's blackness' to 'As the spots of *ermine*, / Or *fires* by night's blackness'.⁴² This critical approach creates a scholarly intertextuality between Shakespeare, ancient and modern dramatists, and his eighteenth-century editors. The context of the play invoked in the heading is enlarged to place Shakespeare in a wider literary context.

This wider literary context is one traditionally denied by most anthologies, miscellanies, or commonplace books. What Barbara Korte says of poetry anthologies is equally, if not even more pertinent to anthologies of extracts such as the *Beauties of Shakespear*:

⁴² *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 1006; Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, pp. 151-152.

Each poem in an anthology has been de-contextualized (a flower picked from its native bed) and is successively re-contextualized and re-perspectivized, provided with a new semantic environment and thus new possibilities of reading the poem.⁴³

Removing excerpts from Shakespeare's plays de-contextualises them while their assembly in anthologised form is an act of re-contextualisation. The arrangement of passages in this new context gives each extract a new perspective and, through its simultaneous isolation and interconnection with surrounding passages, is given possible new meanings and readings. Any literary context is created within the pages of the anthology itself and is not dependent on an understanding of an extract's original origins. The rhetorical headings of the commonplace tradition reflect this process of de-contextualisation and help create and influence new perspectives and readings. Dodd's more general, universal headings engage in this process of disassociation, a process which portrays Shakespeare's writings as a storehouse of wisdom, and contributes to his image as the great poet of nature who depicts the human condition more accurately than any other writer. The majority of headings attached to the extracts culled from *The Winter's Tale* do not invoke particular characters or circumstances necessarily specific to the play. Leontes's description of his childhood relationship with Polixenes (I.1) is titled 'Youthful Innocence', his 'Is whispering nothing?' speech (I.2) 'Jealousy', and Florizel's praise of Perdita, 'What you do/Still betters what is done' (IV.4), is offered as an example of 'A Lover's Commendation'. Such headings offer the extracts beneath them as exemplary expressions of the quality or emotion heralded. They endow the passage with

⁴³ Barbara Korte, 'Flowers for the Picking: Anthologies of Poetry in (British) Literary and Cultural Studies', in *Anthologies of British Poetry: Critical Perspectives from Literary and Cultural Studies*, ed. by

a particular association which is independent of the complex associations within the play itself. Dodd's notes continue to create a sense of intertextuality, noting, for example, that Shakespeare 'excels prodigiously on the subject of jealousy', and encouraging his reader to whom 'it may be an agreeable amusement' to 'compare him on this topic, and to find, how everywhere different, yet excellent he is'.⁴⁴ Readers of the anthology could, by means of Dodd's headings, compare 'Fairy Jealousy, and the effects of it' from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (along with the quotations from Ovid, Seneca and Milton which are included in the notes) to that of 'A Woman's Jealousy more deadly than Poison' from *The Comedy of Errors*. Each extract is offered as isolated yet inter-linked with other passages on the same theme. New perspectives are therefore gained on the subject of jealousy through the associations created by the headings which cross the barrier of individual plays; perspectives which would not emerge simply from a reading of the whole of *The Winter's Tale*.

The presence of the headings, whether universal topics of wisdom or specific descriptions explicitly related to the plays, effectively illustrates the tensions inherent in a critical anthology between universality and particularity. They also control the anthological reading experience the collection offers and colour the interpretation of the passages which Dodd promotes. The headings establish a sense of variety; one can encounter passages on the topics of 'Chearfulness', 'Affected Gravity', 'Loquacity' and 'Mediocrity' grouped together. Furthermore, as Dodd states, the collection will appeal to 'readers of all tastes', for if a passage is not to their liking, they need only 'turn over the

Barbara Korte, Ralf Schneider and Stefanie Lethbridge (Amsterdam-Atlanta: Rodopi, 2000), pp. 1-32. Quotation at p. 19.

⁴⁴ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 138, n. 3.

page, and they will find something acceptable and engaging'.⁴⁵ At times, this variety disrupts any semblance of linear progression between extracts, although printed with indications of the act and scene from which they are taken. For example, in Dodd's selections from act three, scene thirteen of *Antony and Cleopatra*, he includes two speeches by Enobarbus ('I see men's judgements are / A parcel of their fortunes' and 'Mine honesty and I begin to square') which occur within ten lines of each other in the original text.⁴⁶ Dodd, however, entitles the former 'Fortune forms our Judgement', and the latter, 'Loyalty', titles which, although taken from the extracts themselves, give the entries a sense of thematic variety and disconnected isolation. The passages may therefore follow in a consecutive order, as they would in the original plays, but the appended headings serve to introduce a sense of disassociation. Of course, the reverse may also happen, the headings creating a sense of interconnection not necessarily found in the original context. Hamlet's 'Angels and ministers of grace' speech is given the heading of 'Hamlet, on the Appearance of his Father's Ghost', and is followed by Horatio's speech beginning, 'What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord', which is entitled 'The Mischiefs it might tempt him to'.⁴⁷ Although both passages appear in act one, scene four of *Hamlet* and are closely related, broken only by a short exchange regarding the ghost's purpose between Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus, Dodd's titles (the use of 'it' referring to the ghost of the previous heading) create a sense of cause and effect between the passages. This is also the case in a series of extracts taken from act

⁴⁵ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, preface, p. xviii; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 469.

⁴⁶ *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 161; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 1022.

⁴⁷ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, pp. 222-225; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, pp. 660-661. In Dodd's text the passage does not end at 'Think of it' as it does in the Oxford edition, but follows the reading of Q2, given in the 'Additional Passages', p. 688 and ending 'And hears it roar beneath.'

three, scene one of *The Tempest*, of which Dodd says: ‘There perhaps cannot be conceiv’d any thing more beautiful and natural that all the following scene’.⁴⁸ Despite a curiously contradictory opinion: ‘I almost think it an Injustice to Shakespear to take down any particular part’, Dodd declares that ‘the subsequent lines are so expressive of true and unbiassed [sic] Affection, I cannot help favouring the Reader with them’.⁴⁹ The lines which follow are those of Ferdinand’s soliloquy which opens the scene, the stage direction, ‘Ferdinand, bearing a log’ doubling as the extract’s title.⁵⁰ Following that, the next extract follows Dodd’s comment, ‘Miranda’s offering to carry the Logs for him is peculiarly elegant’. Whether the anthologised lines ‘If you’ll sit down/ I’ll bear your logs the while. Pray give me that; / I’ll carry it to the pile’ are as ‘peculiarly elegant’ as Dodd states, and whether they merit inclusion at all, is debatable, yet Dodd’s headings again create a sense of interconnection and progression.⁵¹ Perhaps it is not Miranda’s words which are critically beautiful; rather, the sentiment behind them is particularly laudable given the description of Ferdinand’s task in the preceding extract. The final extract from the scene further extends the connection between the passages, being titled, ‘And afterwards, how innocent—’. The heading informs the reader that the passage beneath follows ‘after’ the action of the last extract and indicates that the speaker is once again Miranda. The lines anthologised do follow those of the earlier passage, but are not as closely linked in the text as the preceding two, here separated by a lengthy dialogue between Ferdinand and Miranda interrupted with asides from Prospero. They are taken from the latter half of a speech by Miranda in which she declares:

⁴⁸ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 112.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 112; *The Oxford Shakespear*, p. 1179.

⁵¹ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 113; *The Oxford Shakespear*, p. 1179.

I am your wife, if you will marry me.
 If not, I'll die your maid. To be your fellow
 You may deny me, but I'll be your servant
 Whether you will or no.⁵²

Although the development between Miranda's offering to carry the logs and her offering of herself to Ferdinand takes place speedily between the two, in the text of the play, declarations of mutual admiration and love take place to prompt the latter, which are absent from the anthology. The chain of cause and effect established by Dodd's three headings creates a curiously contracted courtship stressing Miranda's 'innocence' over the 'bashful cunning' which she also attributes to her forthright proposal of marriage.

Finally, Dodd's headings also create associations and expectations not in the original text and often transform Shakespeare's words, shaping them so that they represent something very different from their function in the original play. An example from *King John* illustrates the differing implications invoked by removing a passage from its original context and giving it a heading which directs reader response towards a certain reading. A speech made by the Dauphin of France to Salisbury, the English lord who had deserted King John, is entitled 'A Man's Tears'. Louis comments to the weeping Salisbury:

Let me wipe off this honourable dew
 That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks. (V.2)⁵³

⁵² Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 113; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 1180.

⁵³ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, ii, pp. 87-88; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 420.

The speech appears to be one of compassion and virtue; Louis commending Salisbury's display of 'manly drops', the effect of which he claims, 'Startles my eyes'. That the Dauphin is shortly discovered to be plotting to kill Salisbury and the other rebels when he has obtained victory renders the speech insincere and hypocritical in the context of the play as a whole. Within the context of the anthology, however, the passage is neither insincere, nor hypocritical; instead it is offered, through the description proffered by the heading, as an exemplary expression of an honourable masculine display of emotion. Presenting the extracts as illustrations of absolutes, Dodd removes any ambiguity surrounding the interpretation of the extract or the sentiments and motivations described.

Dodd's employment of headings, therefore, creates and denies connections: they endow passages with new associations within the disconnected format of the anthology and create new perspectives between passages anthologised from the same play. In their allegiance to commonplace topics of rhetoric, they portray Shakespeare's works as a vast storehouse of universal truth and wisdom, and in their particularity and specificity, they celebrate Shakespeare's unique characterisations and the most striking aspects of the plays. They display the numerous themes upon which his plays touch and simultaneously instruct the reader as to how to interpret the portrayal of those themes.

II

Inclusion and Exclusion: Dodd's selecting and editing of extracts

It is not only the headings Dodd attaches to the extracts, or the effects they often exert on the anthology, which influence the reading experience and appropriation of Shakespeare evident in the *Beauties of Shakespear*. Equally significant is the choice of extracts that Dodd chose to include as examples of Shakespeare's 'beauties', and those which he excluded, as well as the way in which he edited particular passages. Just as the choice of headings reflected the tensions between a critical edition and an anthology of extracts, so too does the choice of passages to which Dodd assigns these headings. The debt of his format and the anthology's title to the critical treatment afforded to Shakespeare from critics like Gildon, to editors from Pope to Warburton, positions his choice of 'beauties' within the same praise and blame discourse. The selection is more than a compilation of memorable quotations: it is a compilation of passages which engages directly with the selection made by Gildon and the passages marked by Pope. Dodd's 'beauties' are of course more numerous — selected to fill the two-volume edition — yet a brief comparison between his choices and those of Gildon and Pope illustrates the debt Dodd owed to their selections and the ways in which his anthology repackaged Shakespeare, resulting in a production very different from those of others who also highlighted his beauties.

A cursory survey of the number of 'beauties' highlighted in each play by each of the critics confirms Addison's observation that 'every particular master of this art [that of

criticism] has his favourite passages'.⁵⁴ The preferences are at times as naturally subjective as the critics themselves, and yet, can also be seen to reflect changing attitudes to Shakespeare and to document the rising fortunes of many of his plays. Gildon selects the greatest number of beauties from *Measure for Measure*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *King John*; fewest from *The Taming of the Shrew*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *Henry VI Parts One and Two*; and none from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Henry IV Part One*, *Henry VI Part One* and *Timon of Athens*. Pope highlights most beauties in *Julius Caesar*, *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Timon of Athens* and *Romeo and Juliet*; fewest in *Loves Labours Lost*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Henry VI Part One* and *King Lear*; and none in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Henry VI Part Two*.⁵⁵ As for Dodd, he selects most 'beauties' from *Hamlet*, *King John*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra*; fewest from *Richard II*, *Henry VI Part One*, *As You Like It* and *The Comedy of Errors*; and none from *the Merry Wives of Windsor*. These comparisons are illustrated on the graph in appendix one. The vast array of plays listed reveal the level of variation between Gildon, Pope, and Dodd. Among the plays which supply the most 'beauties', only *Measure for Measure*, *King John*, and *the Merchant of Venice* are common to more than one critic, both Gildon and Dodd finding ten or more beauties in each. Similarly, the three only agree on one play among those which offer the fewest beauties, *Henry VI Part One*. The only text (apart from the absent *Pericles*) to which

⁵⁴ Addison, *The Spectator*, 262, in Bohn, *Works*, p. 172.

⁵⁵ Details of Pope's highlighting of excellencies in his edition of Shakespeare can be found in J. M. Newton, 'Alexander Pope on Shakespeare's Best Passages: A Check-List', *The Cambridge Quarterly*, 3 (1968), pp. 267-273.

Gildon, Pope and Dodd are universal in denying any beauties, is *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

This is a curious and intriguing state of affairs and one often difficult to account for. Austin Warren remarks Pope's marked beauties mainly 'seize upon what in Shakespeare was most akin in spirit to the eighteenth century; not his rhapsody but his reason; not lyric or dramatic art or his characterisations, but his "Judicious sentiments, his humanism, his wisdom"'.⁵⁶ Certainly some explanations for the various choices can be gleaned from the contemporary popularity and productions of the plays, and the aspects of the plays which appealed most to an eighteenth-century audience. Gary Taylor remarks that, between 1700 and 1728, Shakespeare's most popular plays were *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* (the adapted operatic version), *Julius Caesar*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest* (in the form of *The Enchanted Island*), *Henry IV, Part One* and *Othello*.⁵⁷ The popularity of the tragedies is to some extent evident in Pope, while Gildon finds most beauties in Shakespeare's comedies. By the mid-eighteenth century, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* were the most popular of the comedies and *Romeo and Juliet* was 'even more successful'.⁵⁸ Dodd often highlights most beauties in these popular plays; his most frequently anthologised play is *Hamlet*, while *The Merchant of Venice* and *Lear* provide numerous beauties.

Despite the contemporary popularity of many of the plays credited with most beauties by Dodd, his choice remains curious. Why so many beauties in *King John*, a play rarely performed, and why omit the *Merry Wives*? *King John* was also popular with

⁵⁶ Warren, *Pope as Critic and Humanist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1929), p. 159.

⁵⁷ Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 58.

⁵⁸ Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 117.

Gildon, and neither he nor Pope attributed any beauties to the *Merry Wives*. Was Dodd heavily influenced by his predecessors in the 'beauties' he selected? The answer is both yes and no. No, because his collection was larger than Gildon's, and unlike Pope's, exclusively concerned with performing the 'better half of criticism'. No matter how much Dodd followed Gildon or Pope, his substantially larger collection required him to make many of his own selections. Therefore, while Gildon, Pope, and Dodd all highlight Portia's 'Quality of Mercy' speech from the *Merchant of Venice*, only Dodd includes the 'Age cannot wither her' description of Cleopatra. Pope and Dodd highlight the murder scene in *Macbeth*, while Gildon does not; Gildon and Dodd highlight Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' soliloquy, while Pope does not. Yet lurking beneath this varied picture is a sense of Dodd's dependency on these individuals and their selections. In particular, a significant debt to Gildon is evident, which has not been previously recognised. Of the 155 Extracts in Gildon's 'Shakespeariana', a staggering 126 are duplicated in Dodd's selection. Even some of Dodd's selections which do not originate in the 'Shakespeariana' can be traced back to Gildon's 'Remarks on the plays of Shakespeare'. The extract entitled 'Slander' quoted previously from the 'Remarks' is not found in the 'Shakespeariana' but does appear in the *Beauties of Shakespear* under the same title.⁵⁹ Of the extracts from the 'Shakespeariana', nine of Gildon's ten extracts from *King John* are found in the *Beauties of Shakespear*, eleven out of fourteen from the *Merchant of Venice*, and seven out of nine from *Twelfth Night*. All of Gildon's extracts from *Troilus and Cressida*, *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, *Love's Labours Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *Much Ado about Nothing* (among others), are to be found in Dodd. Frequently, Dodd

⁵⁹ See chapter 1, p. 48 above.

even retains Gildon's headings or only alters them slightly. The aforementioned extracts from *Antony and Cleopatra*, entitled 'Fortune forms our Judgement' and 'Loyalty' are taken directly from Gildon; the extracts, their consecutive order, and their titles, replicated by Dodd.

While Gildon's 'Shakespeariana' forms the backbone of Dodd's anthology, his treatment of Gildon's selections reveals that Dodd was also altering Gildon's form and was actively developing the method of presenting and editing his extracts. Not all the passages which Dodd takes from Gildon are identical and many are subtly altered. At times, Dodd incorporates several of Gildon's extracts in a longer passage. For example, Dodd anthologises the majority of Angelo's speech found at the opening of act two, scene four of *Measure for Measure* under the heading of 'Love in a grave severe Governor':

When I would pray and think, I think and pray
 To several subjects: heaven hath my empty words,
 Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,
 Anchors on Isabel; God in my mouth,
 As if I did but only chew his name,
 And in my heart the strong and swelling evil
 Of my conception. *The state whereon I studied*
Is like a good thing, being often read,
Grown seared and tedious. Yea, my gravity,
 Wherein – let no man hear me – I take pride,
 Could I with boot change for an idle plume
 Which the air beats in vain. *O place, O form,*
How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,

Wrench awe from fools, and tie the wiser souls

*To thy false seeming!*⁶⁰

This extract incorporates two passages selected by Gildon (those in italics) headed ‘Simile’ and ‘Place and Form’ respectively. Similarly, Dodd joins together two other passages from the same play, found separately in Gildon. Taken from act two, scene two, the play at this point reads as follows:

ISABELLA: We cannot weigh our brother with ourself.

Great men may jest with saints; ’tis wit in them,

But in the less, foul profanation.

LUCIO: (aside to Isabella) Thou’rt i’th’ right girl. More o’ that.

ISABELLA: That in the captain’s but a choleric word,

Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.⁶¹

Gildon omits the first line, ‘We cannot weigh’, and includes Isabella’s two speeches as separate entries, the former titled ‘The Privilege of Greatness and Power’, the latter simply ‘On the same’. Dodd’s treatment of the passages omits the redundancy of two separate passages on the same topic by amalgamating them together to form a passage which he titles, ‘The Privilege of Authority’. Dodd’s editing ignores the dramatic aside and presents the passage as one complete speech, transforming disjointed parts of speech into a unified passage exemplifying a typical commonplace topic.

Dodd is thus engaged in a reconsideration of Gildon’s collection, adapting his

⁶⁰ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, pp. 46-47; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 799.

⁶¹ *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 798.

selections and unifying them to form new 'beauties'. Occasionally, he rejects Gildon's choice and selects a passage which immediately precedes or follows Gildon's passage. In *Twelfth Night*, Gildon extracts the second half of Orsino's speech, 'O spirit of love... high fantastical', while Dodd extracts the first half of the speech, 'If music be the food of love....'Tis not so sweet now as it was before'.⁶² Sometimes, Dodd selects a longer passage than Gildon; at others, he shortens Gildon's passage, and at times they begin and end their passages in different places but overlap and share the substance of an extract. For all his dependence on Gildon's choice of passages, however, Dodd uses them only as a foundation upon which to build and add more extracts. Therefore while Gildon's favouring of *King John* can be seen to underpin the number of beauties in Dodd's selection, it does not explain Dodd's own further additions. While Gildon's selections can be seen to confirm the idea that 'the eighteenth-century elevation of Shakespeare to the rank of supreme genius had a lot to do with nationalism and Francophobia', Dodd's selection combines nationalism with one of the pervasive trends in mid-eighteenth literature: sentimentalism.⁶³

King John is, of course, a play which deals with questions of Englishness in its depiction of the struggle for the English throne, and its inclusion of foreign nobility and battles with Spain, and particularly France, contained added resonance in an eighteenth-century England continually at war with France. Gildon's selections from the play draw upon a sense of English nationalism. Under the heading of 'Austria', the Duke of Austria's description of England as 'that pale, that white-faced shore', is included, as is a 'Description of an English Army' (II.1), where Châtillon observes that England's forces

⁶² Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, pp. 119-120; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 693.

⁶³ Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare*, p. 94.

are 'strong', 'his soldiers confident'.⁶⁴ Also included, under the heading of 'Description of a Battle', is the English Herald's pronouncement 'Rejoice, you men of Angers,' heralding King John's approach; the selection culminating with the play's final patriotic declaration: 'This England never did, nor never shall, / Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror'.⁶⁵ Dodd retains each of these speeches and even reinforces the nationalism of the passages by altering Gildon's headings. 'Austria' becomes 'A Description of England', and the 'Description of a Battle', we are told, is 'By the English'. The retention of such passages reflects a 'mid-eighteenth century national (and anti-Gallic) consciousness', confirms Dodd's inherited view of Shakespeare as the national poet, and participates in the appropriation of Shakespeare as the great English genius by highlighting his patriotic passages.⁶⁶ Yet Dodd adds to the continual appropriation of Shakespeare by anthologising his works in order to reflect other mid-century literary developments. The titles and contents of many of the passages reflect the growing sentimentalism of the period manifest in novels such as Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740-1741), *Clarissa* (1748-1749), and Sarah Fielding's *The Adventures of David Simple* (1744). Dodd includes passages entitled, 'Tokens of Grief', 'Grief', 'A Mother's Grief', 'Struggling Conscience', 'Despair', 'The Approach of Death' and the aforementioned 'hypocritical' speech, 'A Man's Tears', which portrays Salisbury and the Dauphin as sentimental men of feeling, the former crying 'manly drops', the latter visibly affected in turn. This predominance of extracts which focus on expressions of internal emotion are exemplified in two further extracts which echo typical sentimental motifs

⁶⁴ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, ii, pp. 74-76; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, pp.401-402.

⁶⁵ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, ii, p. 77, p. 91; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 404, p. 424.

⁶⁶ Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare*, p. 169.

common in mid-eighteenth century sentimental novels. The first entitled 'A Mother's Ravings' contains lady Constance's impassioned protestation, 'I am not mad: this hair I tear is mine'(III.4), a speech which draws to mind depictions of female grief, despair, and madness which resonate throughout the century, from Richardson's *Clarissa* to Sterne's *Maria*.⁶⁷ The second extract is a group of speeches gathered together with only a line of asterisks denoting the large chunks of text omitted. Spoken by Arthur to Hubert, who has come to torture Arthur and burn out his eyes, they are titled by Dodd, 'Arthur's Pathetick Speeches to Hubert', the heading immediately invoking their sentimentalism. Indeed, the extract even contains the obligatory sentimental handkerchief, which, Arthur reminds Hubert, he had knit 'about his brows' when his 'head did but ache'.⁶⁸ By anthologising such extracts under such headings Dodd re-contextualises Shakespeare in such a way that he is reinvented for a new, contemporary audience. Shakespeare is presented as the national genius whose universality renders him relevant to all ages; he is not only the exemplar of patriotism but Dodd further presents him as an exemplary sentimental writer. Dodd's anthologising of *King John*, therefore, displays an interpretation of the play, and of Shakespeare, inherited from Gildon, but also extends Gildon's selection to reappropriate Shakespeare for a mid-eighteenth-century readership.

The explanation for the exclusion of the *Merry Wives* from Dodd's anthology can also be seen as a blend of inherited values and contemporary concerns. Its omission from

⁶⁷ Indeed, *Clarissa* in her ramblings quotes various passages from *Hamlet*. See Richardson, *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady*, ed. by Angus Ross (London: Penguin, 1985), p. 893.

⁶⁸ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, ii, p. 83; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 413.

Dodd's anthology, Gildon's 'Shakespeariana', and Pope's lack of markings is curious considering it was a continually popular play, which, along with the likes of *Hamlet* and *Othello*, had 'acquired the status of popular classics by the eighteenth century'.⁶⁹

However, it was also a play which seemed, to many critics, to deserve 'oblivion on the grounds of its contemptibly low subject matter alone'.⁷⁰ Such an opinion seems to have influenced Dodd who declares his reasons for the play's omission in his preface. He admits that *The Merry Wives* is 'one of *Shakespear's* best, and most justly admired comedies', but that 'whoever reads that play, will immediately see, there was nothing either profitable or possible for this work'.⁷¹ The play is omitted because Dodd views its subject matter as unsuitable for contemporary audiences, undermining the focus on the 'reformation of manners' which literature should aim to promote. Here, Dodd makes moral judgements regarding the beauties he anthologises in a way that Bysshe did not. *The Merry Wives* may be one of Shakespeare's best plays and may contain many beauties, but Dodd's concern that a beauty be not simply critical, but moral, demands that all bawdy, suggestive or indelicate material be avoided in his collection. Dodd also gives a further reason why the play is not anthologised and why his reader 'will find very little of the *inimitable Falstaff*' in the collection. There are, he states:

many passages in *Shakespear* so closely connected with the plot and characters, and on which their beauties so wholly depend, that it would have been absurd and idle to have produced them here.⁷²

⁶⁹ Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 25-26.

⁷⁰ Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 125.

⁷¹ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, preface, p. xx; Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, iii, p. 470.

⁷² *ibid.*

This seems a contradictory attitude for an anthologist to adopt, especially given the connections and interconnections which Dodd's own headings exert on the extracts within the collection. While it is in one sense a thinly-veiled excuse for the almost total exclusion of Falstaff, Dodd seems to suggest that Falstaff's characterisation and the *Merry Wives* are more difficult to remove from their original context.⁷³ To appeal to the 'cardinal principle that dramatic speeches must be read in the context of character and action' seems, given the de-contextualisation of the process of anthologising, like an absurd statement on Dodd's part.⁷⁴ While he undoubtedly realised that it is preferable to read a play in its entirety, and while it is true that it is harder to justify a character like Falstaff without being aware of his role and context within the original play, the idea that the particularity of some episodes prevents them being anthologised is evident in Dodd's editorial activities within the collection.

The vast majority of the extracts in the beauties of Shakespeare, regardless of the headings which Dodd attaches to them, are decontextualised to the extent that all traces of their dramatic origins are removed. Once more, the disparity between the collection's status as a critical edition and anthology problematizes this portrayal further. For while Dodd indicates the acts and scenes from which the extracts are taken he rarely gives indication of the character speaking, setting, or stage directions.⁷⁵ Of the 666 extracts in the anthology, only fifty-eight retain any trace of dramatic apparatus. It is within plays such as *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Cymbeline*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet* that most dramatic indicators are retained. On some occasions, the presence of characters

⁷³ Falstaff is briefly represented by a passage from *Henry IV Part One* entitled 'Falstaff's Catechism'.

⁷⁴ Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare*, p. 201.

⁷⁵ He rarely bothers however to omit incidental references to character within speeches themselves.

and stage directions is owing to the anthologising of a substantial section or complete scene. Like Pope, who, if he deemed an entire scene excellent, would place a star at the beginning of the scene, Dodd often views a complete scene as a beauty. The balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet* is one such example, as is 'the murdering scene' from *Macbeth*, which Pope had also highlighted. The beauty here is not confined to a metaphor, simile, or particular image, but extends to the dramatic nature of the whole scene and the cumulative effect of the descriptions and characterisation.

The majority of extracts included in Dodd's anthology, however, appear to stand alone, independent of such contextual information. Having no indication of character or location they are thus freed from the associations which bound them in the original text. This may be a transgression of the principle 'that dramatic speeches much be read in the context of character and action', but it is by freeing these speeches from character and action that they become universal and authoritative. Rather than a speech given by a particular character at a particular point in a particular play, the speech becomes timeless, and freed from the constraints of gender and status attributable to the 'Shakespeare' of the collection's title. The exclusion of dramatic indicators presents the speeches of princes and kings alongside servants and clowns, men and woman, young and old, rich and poor. The anonymity of the speeches renders them applicable to everyone and for all time. Interestingly, however, not all began as isolated and as unified as they appear in the anthology. Rather than retaining interjections and the conversational element of passages, Dodd often eliminates dramatic aspects to form a more unified speech. For example, under the heading of 'Antony's *Vices and Virtues*', Dodd begins an extract taken from act one, scene four of *Antony and Cleopatra* with Lepidus's speech, 'I must

not think there are/ Evils enough...’, which also continues to incorporate Caesar’s reply ‘You are too indulgent [...] So much as lanked not’.⁷⁶ Within this passage Dodd has in fact cut out several speeches and stitched together two of Caesar’s speeches. In the original play, Caesar is interrupted by two messengers bringing reports of Anthony, a circumstance omitted by Dodd who joins the speech ‘Antony,/ Leave thy lascivious wassals’ [sic] to Caesar’s earlier speech thus continuing his pronouncement on Anthony’s character without interruption. The same occurs in the editing of the *Tempest*. Under the heading of ‘Caliban’s Curses’, Dodd links together two of Caliban’s speeches, ‘As wicked dew as e’er my mother brushed’ and ‘I must eat my dinner/ This island’s mine’, whilst also omitting an intervening speech by Prospero.⁷⁷ The knitting together of the speeches renders the declaration ‘I must eat my dinner’ jarring and rather redundant without wider contextual detail. A slightly more successful amalgamation from the same play occurs in ‘Ariel’s Description of his managing the Storm’, where another of Prospero’s comments is excluded and Ariel’s description continues without any disruption to the sense and progression of the episode.⁷⁸

Dodd’s selection and editing of extracts within the *Beauties of Shakespear* therefore results in an appropriation of Shakespeare and can be seen as part of the continual rewriting and refashioning of Shakespeare which has contributed towards his ongoing popularity. Dodd seized on the Longinian approach to Shakespeare which stressed his epigrammatic qualities and extended it to present Shakespeare as a writer whose works were truly universal and timeless. In his editing of *King John* and omission

⁷⁶ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, pp. 151-153; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, pp. 1006-1007. Dodd gives the scene as 1.5

⁷⁷ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, p. 107; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, pp. 1172-1173.

⁷⁸ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, i, pp. 105-106; *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 1171.

of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, he exploited the anthology's generic flexibility and adapted his presentation of Shakespeare to appeal to contemporary literary and social expectations. By isolating passages, Dodd rewrote Shakespeare as more than the national poet or dramatist: he rewrote Shakespeare as the nation's ultimate dispenser of literary excellence, wisdom and morality.

III

Influence and Imitation

Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespeare* continued to be published throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, continuously appropriating and refashioning Shakespeare in line with changing literary trends. Taylor notes the text went through thirty-nine editions between 1752 and 1893.⁷⁹ The collection was not, however, an immediate best-seller. During Dodd's lifetime, a second edition of the collection was published (1757) by Edward Cave's heirs, David Henry and Richard Cave.⁸⁰ Before his death in 1777, Dodd was also preparing a third extended edition for the press, which was printed posthumously in 1780.⁸¹ This third edition is significant; not only does it contain Dodd's own final revisions, the text also subtly appropriates the figure of its compiler in a similar way to Dodd's own appropriation of Shakespeare. The third edition stands as a kind of defence of Dodd, a sympathetic eulogy to the clergyman who was involved in

⁷⁹ Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 91.

⁸⁰ A Dublin reprint, claiming to be a third edition, was also published by J. Milliken in 1773.

⁸¹ Dodd, *The beauties of Shakespear*, 3 vols (London: J. Macgowan, 1780).

numerous good works, but was to be remembered for generations to come on account of his execution for forgery and the scandal which surrounded it.

From the title page's announcement that this edition contains 'the author's last corrections', a note of pathos is invoked which is echoed in the Editor's Address. This editor remains anonymous and his reference to Dodd as not only the 'collector' but 'author' of the collection, reveals that, as with the collection of Shakespeare, the original author 'has virtually disappeared from the presentation of his texts'.⁸² Benedict's observation that *Beauties* anthologies effectively remove the author from the text and replace him with the 'mediator of the cultural context – the publisher' who then 'comes center stage', gains greater resonance in the case of Dodd's anthology.⁸³ After his death, his notoriety gave the collection a curiosity value which threatened to outweigh the celebrity of the author from whose works its contents were culled. The editor is wholly sympathetic to the 'well known and, formerly, much esteemed collector' of the anthology, referring to his act of forgery as, 'the unfortunate affair which terminated in his death', a death to be 'compassionately regretted'.⁸⁴ The circumstances leading up to and surrounding Dodd's death are also bitterly and satirically invoked in a biting dedication. While the first edition of the *Beauties of Shakespear* was dedicated to Sir George Lyttleton, the third was pointedly addressed 'To the Right Honourable Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield'. Chesterfield was of course Dodd's former pupil, the man whose name Dodd forged, and the man whose determination to prosecute his former tutor led to Dodd's execution. The dedication reads as follows:

⁸² Benedict, 'Literary Miscellanies: The Cultural Mediation of Fragmented Feeling', *ELH*, 57 (1990), pp. 407-430. Quotation at p. 409.

⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁴ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, 3rd edition, preface, p. v.

These Beauties of a favourite Author, many of which were selected for his particular use, by an unfortunate but affectionate Tutor, in his early years, are, with all due admiration of that Nobleman, whose great regard for strict justice, could overcome every tender feeling of grateful compassion to the Man who spent the prime of his days in the service of his Education, Inscribed by an astonished admirer of his singular virtues, and his Lordship's

Most obedient

Humble Servant,

The Editor.

Howson argues that Dodd wrote 'a sarcastic dedication to the Earl of Chesterfield', which was to be included in the first edition of the anthology, but which, in a miraculous act of foresight, Dodd removed at the last moment — 'a piece of discretion for which he must have blessed himself a thousand times thirteen years after'.⁸⁵ If, indeed, Howson is referring to the same dedication, it cannot have been written for the first edition in 1752.⁸⁶ It was thirteen years later, in 1765, that Dodd became tutor to the future fifth Earl of Chesterfield (godson to Philip Dormer Stanhope, the fourth earl) and so the references to his 'unfortunate but affectionate tutor', who 'spent the prime of his days in the service of his Education', must date from a much later period. Indeed, contrary to Howson's suggestion, the dedication may not have been written by Dodd. It is signed by 'The Editor' which, given the dual editorship of the third edition, could apply to Dodd or the anonymous editor.⁸⁷ While Dodd may have written the letter before his death, the reference to the 'astonished admirer of his singular virtues' would seem to imply that

⁸⁵ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 35.

⁸⁶ As A. D. Barker suggests, Howson appears to have confused this with the dedication to the third edition. See 'The Early Career of William Dodd', p. 233, n. 67.

⁸⁷ It is possible that this anonymous editor may have been Dodd's friend and amanuensis, Weedon Butler, but I have found no evidence to support such a suggestion.

Dodd is not the writer and that the dedication was composed after his execution. Yet whether or not the audacious dedication was inscribed by Dodd or the subsequent editor, its presence places Dodd as the central figure of the collection, which itself becomes a memorial to the work of his 'early years', and whose contents are themselves appropriated as being selected for the education of Chesterfield himself. Dodd becomes a martyr in his own collection, his anthologising of Shakespeare beauties presented as a sign of his talent and virtues so mercilessly forgotten by his ungrateful student.

The edition contains many additions, to the notes as well as the extracts, incorporating 'observations and criticisms' from 'various commentators' published since the earlier editions. The resultant collection is presented as 'the very book which the Doctor had in hand, and in the press, nearly ready for publication, before his death', and embodies the developments in Shakespearean scholarship over the three decades since the first edition.⁸⁸ The text now includes some 'General Observations', in which Dodd expresses his opinions on the more recent editions of Shakespeare by Steevens, Johnson and Capell, and an 'Essay on the Character of the Melancholy Jacques, from the Ingenious Mr. Richardson'. Many of the original beauties are lengthened, many more introduced, some omitted, some amalgamated to form new extracts. Of the passages selected from *All's Well that Ends Well*, the first play in the collection, thirteen new passages are added and five of the original extracts are lengthened. Curiously, many of the added passages could be seen to reflect Dodd's own personal situation during his trial, rather than continuing the systematic approach to selecting Shakespeare's critical 'beauties'. With references to present errors and past endeavours, judgement and

⁸⁸ Dodd, *The Beauties of Shakespear*, third edition, preface, p. vi.

authority, the passages evoke private, internal experience. Here the domestication and privatisation of Shakespeare is taken to a new level, offering an insight into Dodd's situation through the skilful appropriation of Shakespeare's words. The decontextualisation of the passages places the words in the mouth of Dodd rather than Shakespeare, as is illustrated by the following example, entitled, 'Idolatrous Worship':

Thus, Indian-like

Religious in mine error, I adore

The sun that looks upon his worshipper

But knows of him no more.⁸⁹

Within the context of the anthology, a speech made by Helen in act one, scene three of the play, is stripped of associations of gender. The reference to error and the tone of despair, emphasised by the isolation of the passage itself, brings Dodd's own error and isolation to mind. Similarly, another passage contains the lines:

What I can do can do no hurt to try,

Since you set up your rest 'gainst remedy.

He that of greatest works is finisher

Oft does them by the weakest minister.

So holy writ in babes hath judgement shown

When judges have been babes; great floods have flow'n

From simple sources, and great seas have dried.

When miracles have by th' great'st been denied.

Oft expectation fails, and most oft there

Where most it promises, and oft it hits

Where hope is coldest and despair most fits.⁹⁰

This passage is loaded with images applicable to the events of 1777, during which Dodd and his supporters sought to obtain pardon for his crime. The passage begins with a sentiment no doubt shared by Dodd and his friends, that it could 'do no hurt to try' whatever possible to save the sentenced Dodd, locked in a prison cell awaiting his fate. The reference to the 'weakest minister' could be seen as a reference to Dodd himself; a clergyman who did many good works, but with a weakness for the luxuries of life which culminated in the moment of weakness which eventually sealed his fate. Furthermore, the line, 'When miracles have by th' great'st been denied', parallels actual events. A petition, written by Johnson (just one of the numerous endeavours he undertook on Dodd's behalf), 'thirty-seven and a half yards in length' and containing 'twenty-three thousand signatures', was brought before the highest power in the country, King George III.⁹¹ Dodd needed a miracle but this miracle was denied by the 'greatest' earthly power: no reprieve was given, Dodd was to be executed at Tyburn. The final lines of the passage reflect the high hopes Dodd invested in the campaign to save him; he never really expected that he, a clergyman who never really intended to defraud anyone, would die for such a crime, and culminates voicing his final despair when all hope was gone. One final addition seems to echo the spirit embodied in the collection's dedication, reading:

Well, thou hast a son shall take this disgrace off

⁸⁹ *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 861.

⁹⁰ *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 863.

⁹¹ Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 211.

me. Scurvy, old, filthy, scurvy lord. Well I must be patient. There is no fettering of authority.⁹²

It is difficult to read a passage addressing one who has a son, a lord, who has it within his power to 'take this disgrace off me', without associating the addressee with the fourth Earl of Chesterfield and his 'son' with the fifth Earl. Certainly, deriding a lord as 'scurvy', 'old' and 'filthy', would no doubt create such associations among all who knew Dodd's story.

The inclusion of such extracts transforms the anthology into a form of propaganda, criticising Chesterfield and sympathising with Dodd. Various headings also reflect Dodd's demise: 'Unprepared Death', 'Weight of Established Reputation', 'Comfort from Despair', 'Impossibility of Intercession', 'Intents more excusable than Acts' (Dodd's case rested on whether he had 'intended' to defraud), 'Good Jailor', and most poignantly, 'Execution finely expressed', which reads simply, 'by eight tomorrow / Thou must be made immortal'.⁹³ Paul Baines notes the fact that much of the 'literary tragedizing' in the writing concerning Dodd following his conviction used Shakespeare's writing to evoke 'sympathetic identification' for Dodd's predicament.⁹⁴ The third edition of the *Beauties of Shakespeare* embodies such tragedizing, appropriating Shakespeare so that his words are seen to mirror Dodd's fall from grace and presenting Dodd as a latter day Shakespearean tragic hero. Furthermore, the third edition of the collection effectively puts the commonplace qualities of the anthology into practice. Not only can the reader find extracts which parallel their own lives; the extracts parallel the lives of the

⁹² *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 866.

⁹³ *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 807. The extract is from *Measure for Measure*, 4.2.

⁹⁴ Baines, *The House of Forgery in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 137.

collection's original compiler. A comment concerning Shakespeare's characters in the 'observations' following the selections from *All's Well* states that 'he draws *human nature*, as it is; and gives us the *real* and consequently *mixt* characters of life; and not the *perfect*'. Shakespeare portrays real people and his works are therefore applicable to real people, in all situations of life, even to the extreme situation in which Dodd, a suitably 'mixt' character, found himself. The contradictory role that the anthology adopts in the eighteenth century, highlighted by Price, is confirmed, not simply by the fact that Dodd was a *future* forger, but by the ability and flexibility of the genre to refashion Shakespeare's words in order to reflect the experiences of a forger. Indeed, by appropriating Shakespeare's words and applying them to Dodd, the third edition of the *Beauties of Shakespear* can be seen to perform an act of authorial 'forgery' of its own.

While the appropriation of Shakespeare as a defender of Dodd is the most significant editorial strategy observable in the third edition of the text, some other issues are manifest in the added headings. Some, for example, suggest that this edition is more concerned with appealing to a female audience. The collection presents Shakespeare as an author whose writings reflect female experiences, and are applicable to women as well as men. Headings include: 'Child-bearing prettily exprest'; 'The pleasing punishment that women bear'; 'A Virgin Addrest'; 'An aimiable Bride'; 'Valuable Woman loved for her own Sake'; 'Women sacred even to Banditti' and 'Female timidity'. Furthermore, the collection testifies to a changing attitude towards the one play which Dodd previously excluded for its ambiguous morality. The *Merry Wives of Windsor* is reinstated in the collection, the editor noting that he 'thought it proper to insert a few [extracts], as they

appeared on closer examination, adapted to the design of this undertaking'.⁹⁵ Falstaff is now further represented by virtue of an extract entitled 'Ford's Character of Sir John Falstaff' which ironically presents him as

A gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, of great admittance, authentic in your place and person, generally allowed for your many warlike, court-like, and learned preparations.⁹⁶

These various additions and alterations testify to an ongoing process of refashioning Shakespeare for each generation and of disseminating his works to a wide and varied readership. The collection was undoubtedly popular: the *Monthly Review* termed the first edition 'a valuable miscellany' which was 'much improved, as well as considerably extended' in its third edition.⁹⁷ It was from an edition of the *Beauties of Shakespear* that Goethe first became acquainted with Shakespeare, and Laurence Sterne, later the subject of a similar *Beauties* anthology, possibly owned a copy.⁹⁸ The expanding popularity of Shakespeare throughout the eighteenth century is not, as De Grazia argues, enough in itself to account for Dodd's collection and its popularity; however, the continued reprinting of the collection testifies to Shakespeare's increasing popularity, and it was undoubtedly 'the first successful populariser of Shakespeare as a poet for all occasions'.⁹⁹ The collection worked on the '*Reader's Digest* principle', offering those who could not afford the more expensive editions, or did not have the

⁹⁵ The edition however retains Dodd's original preface which explains the play's omission.

⁹⁶ *The Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 493.

⁹⁷ *Monthly Review*, 63 (1780), p. 232.

⁹⁸ Vickers, *Critical Heritage*, p. 464. On Sterne's ownership of the *Beauties of Shakespear*, see Chapter 8, p. 320 below.

⁹⁹ De Grazia, 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', p. 61; A. D. Barker, 'The Early Career of William Dodd', p. 224.

education to engage with their scholarship, the opportunity to read the works of England's greatest writer.¹⁰⁰ Edwin Willoughby argues that the collection was 'read by many whose religious convictions would not permit them to read plays', a view echoed by Howson, who notes that the text became 'the book to give a young lady on her betrothal or to a child at Christmas', and was to be found in 'countless parlours, studies and nurseries from London to San Francisco [...], it penetrated into the homes of the most bigoted evangelical sects of the "Bible Belt", whose members would have denounced Shakespeare's plays, acted on the stage, as creations of the Devil'.¹⁰¹ The decontextualisation of the passages from their dramatic origins made Shakespeare accessible to a larger readership who would accept him under the guise of a moral writer of universal wisdom while they rejected him as a dramatist. Moreover, the decontextualisation is furthered in later editions of the text: editions of *Beauties of Shakespear* after 1818, drop Dodd's commentary.¹⁰² Without Dodd's observations and critical judgements on the passages, they are freed from the beauties/defects discourse which underlay the original collection. The collection is thus freed from the tensions and ambiguities which characterised Dodd's first edition as the text mediated between anthology and critical edition, laziness and learning. The collection continued to be published in numerous editions through to the twentieth century when Collins Clear Type press published an edition in 1936 (see plate 3), and the facsimile of the first edition was published in 1971 as part of the *Eighteenth-Century Shakespeare* series. Although many of these collections claim to be Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespeare*, few refrain from

¹⁰⁰ Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare*, p. 86.

¹⁰¹ Willoughby, 'A Deadly Edition of Shakespeare', p. 351; Howson, *The Macaroni Parson*, p. 34.

¹⁰² De Grazia, 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', p. 64.

altering Dodd's text in some way. Some omit passages and add others; some offered a miniature edition of the collection (such as that included in the *Jones Diamond Series* in 1826).

Dodd's collection also had its imitators. *The Picturesque Beauties of Shakespeare*, a collection of engravings, was published in the 1780s, and *A Select Collection of the Beauties of Shakespeare* was compiled by J. Croft and published in 1792.¹⁰³ The most successful imitation was that published by George Kearsley in 1783 as part of his series of *Beauties* anthologies begun in 1781 with the *Beauties of Johnson*. Kearsley's publication of such authorial anthologies, particularly a *Beauties of Shakespeare*, is interesting, as Kearsley not only met Dodd, but was the publisher of *The Convict's Address* (1777), the sermon written by Johnson and delivered by Dodd to his fellow-prisoners in Newgate, and an edition of *Occasional Papers by the late William Dodd, LL.D*, most of which were papers written for Dodd by Johnson. Isaac Reed, editor of *Shakespeare* (1785) and author of the anonymously published *Account of the Life and Writings of William Dodd, LL.D* (1777), records that Kearsley had informed him that Johnson was the true author of the *Convict's Address* and that he had made eighty-seven pounds profit from the publication.¹⁰⁴ He also recounts a story told to him by the Keeper of Newgate prison. After Mrs. Dodd approached him with a bribe to permit Dodd to escape, the Keeper, Akerman, placed a man in Dodd's room 'to be continually with him that he might not destroy himself'.¹⁰⁵ At this turn of events:

¹⁰³ *The Picturesque Beauties of Shakespeare* (London: at C. Taylor's and at Mr. Taylor's, [1783-1787]); *A Select Collection of the Beauties of Shakespeare* (York: for the author, 1792).

¹⁰⁴ Robert F. Metzdorf, 'Isaac Reed and the Unfortunate Dr. Dodd', *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 6 (1952), pp. 393-396.

¹⁰⁵ Metzdorf, 'Isaac Reed and the Unfortunate Dr. Dodd', p. 395.

Dodd sent for Kearsley and begged him to apply to Akerman to have the man removed assuring him there was no reason for any apprehension of his doing violence to himself as he was too much of a coward and too fearful of Death to take any such steps. Akerman however would not consent.¹⁰⁶

Despite the ineffectiveness of Kearsley's intervention, it is interesting to note the bookseller's presence during Dodd's incarceration. Equally interesting is the fact that although Kearsley's Shakespeare anthology is listed on the *ESTC* as 'a different selection from that compiled by William Dodd', his debt to Dodd is more extensive than simply his use of the same title. Although a different selection, Kearsley's anthology echoes Dodd's, in a manner similar to Dodd's use of Gildon. Many of Kearsley's passages echo those found in Dodd's collection, sometimes expanding on Dodd's beauties, sometimes extracting shorter excerpts. Around two thirds of Dodd's extracts from *King John* are echoed in Kearsley's selection. He retains the majority of the 'England' passages found in both Gildon and Dodd, and includes many of Dodd's 'sentimental' additions, including those of Constance's ravings and the first half of the Dauphin's speech to Salisbury. The anonymous editor's treatment of this passage provides a typical illustration of the way in which Kearsley's text alters that of Dodd's. The passage begins as it did in Dodd's, 'Let me wipe off this honourable dew', but ends six lines short of Dodd's extract at the line, 'Figured quite o'er with burning meteors'. Ending the passage at this point avoids the character reference in the next line, 'Lift up thy brow, renownèd Salisbury', and further decontextualises the passage from its dramatic origins. The title is also shortened from 'A Man's Tears' to simply 'Tears', an alteration, which, with the shortening of the

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*

extract, succeeds in rendering the passage more universal, non-gendered, and, therefore, applicable to a wider readership. Kearsley's headings repeatedly follow this pattern transforming Dodd's more particular and lengthy headings into those more typical of commonplace headings. 'A Description of England' becomes 'England', 'Ambition, jealous of a too successful Friend' becomes 'Ambition', and 'Octavia's Entrance, what it should have been' is labelled 'Reproach'. Kearsley's headings remove the particularity remaining in Dodd's headings: eliminating terms like 'description' and 'entrance' strips away the theatrical residue. The passages contain fewer traits of their original context and stand alone, giving 'the impression of being Shakespeare's own utterances: his self-expression'.¹⁰⁷ Kearsley's *Beauties of Shakespeare* continues the process of decontextualisation begun by Dodd. Although some dramatic elements remain, the collection can be seen to remove the theatrical apparatus which testified to Dodd's critical approach, of doing 'for a few passages what an editor would do for Shakespeare's *Works*'; the format now exclusively that of the anthology.¹⁰⁸

The distinction between the purpose of Dodd's text as a critical anthology and Kearsley's collection is stated in the preface. Kearsley's collection 'was begun with different views from its predecessor and is conducted in a different manner'.¹⁰⁹ Dodd's collection, it is argued, 'appears to have been chiefly as a vehicle, to display the compiler's reading and critical talents', while the 'present volume has no higher aims than a selection, useful for reference to the learned, for instruction to the ignorant, and for information to all'.¹¹⁰ In the three decades between 1752 and 1783, the role of the

¹⁰⁷ De Grazia, 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', p. 64.

¹⁰⁸ Willoughby, 'A Deadly Edition of Shakespeare', p. 352.

¹⁰⁹ *The Beauties of Shakespeare* (London: G. Kearsley, 1783), preface.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

anthology had developed and altered, as had the understanding of what constituted a literary beauty. The link between critical beauty and moral beauty suggested by Dodd's original omission of the *Merry Wives* had grown so that the two ideas were interchangeable. Or rather, they had come to mean the same thing: a literary, critical beauty, was a moral beauty. Beauty lay less in a well chosen simile, image, or description (although such factors were still relevant) than in a fine sentiment, or moral observation. In turn, anthologies of 'beauties', while still marketing themselves as tools to aid critical evaluation, were predominantly concerned with promoting a moral rather than critical education through examples from fine literature. The precise nature and progress of these changes is the subject of the following chapters, which discuss the various *Beauties* anthologies published by Kearsley before the *Beauties of Shakespeare*; but a few alterations are worth highlighting here.

The 'different manner' of execution described in the preface is significant. Although Kearsley's first edition gives the impression of an initial, not totally successful, attempt to anthologise Shakespeare, its method of anthologising reflects an important stage in the eighteenth-century's ongoing refashioning and canonisation of Shakespeare. The collection contains 544 passages in the main body of the anthology. This is followed by an appendix 'consisting of Passages omitted in the Plays', containing a further 190 passages. Finally, the collection ends with a further fifty extracts entitled, 'The Beauties of Shakespeare's poems'. Unlike Dodd, Kearsley dispenses with the format of working through each play chronologically, indicating act and scene references. Instead, his format is alphabetically focused. The headings are listed alphabetically, with all passages relevant to each heading listed beneath. This arrangement further distances the extracts

from their dramatic origins: passages are defined not by play, but by heading. References to the particular play, act, and scene, are given at the end of each passage, but these are rendered subservient to the headings which structure the anthology. Headings are not duplicated throughout the collection as was the case in Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear*. Here, all Shakespeare has to say on any particular topic is grouped together in one place: 'the *topoi* that once structured the truths and opinions of logic and rhetoric have now become the topics which organise Shakespeare's consciousness'.¹¹¹ This organisation marks the final stage in the transformation of Shakespeare's works into a storehouse of universal wisdom and moral truths. It is not each play in turn which is presented as containing beauties, it is Shakespeare himself who has something to say on topics ranging from 'Admiration' through to 'Youth', by way of 'Danger', 'Love', 'Politics' and 'Swimming'. A review of the collection in the *Monthly Review* favoured this arrangement which it views as more similar to that used by Gildon, than that of Dodd. While Dodd's plan 'was more extensive', Kearsley's method is

more useful to those who wish to see how Shakespeare hath expressed himself on various subjects which relate to the passions and pursuits of men, and the events of human life. He that will read Shakespeare in the detail and take him in parts and parcels, may here be fitted to his taste.¹¹²

The collection improves accessibility and ease of access to Shakespeare's writings on particular topics, and yet, despite this encouragement to 'lazy' index-reading, the reviewer also implies that the reading gained from the collection may be more concentrated and detailed.

¹¹¹ De Grazia, 'Shakespeare in Quotation Marks', p. 65.

Another significant development evident in this collection is the presence of Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry. Although Dodd had anthologised poetry from within the verse structure of the plays, Shakespeare's longer, non-dramatic works were not represented. These had been 'generally excluded from eighteenth-century editions of Shakespeare' from Pope and Theobald through to Johnson in 1765.¹¹³ Edmond Malone included them in his 1780 *Supplement* to the revision of the Johnson edition, and it is as a supplement to the main body of the anthology that they are anthologised in the *Beauties of Shakespeare* three years later.¹¹⁴ Kearsley's inclusion of the non-dramatic poetry reflects its growing popularity and the opinion that it can supply 'materials for reflection', which 'imperceptibly leads mankind to the knowledge and practice of virtue'.¹¹⁵ As a whole, Kearsley's *Beauties of Shakespeare* is a testimony to the elevation of Shakespeare to the appellation of a 'Universal Genius' and represents the culmination not only of the eighteenth-century's deification of Shakespeare, but of the process of anthologising Shakespeare begun by Dodd.

The Shakespearean anthologies produced by Dodd and Kearsley not only reflect Shakespeare's increasing popularity throughout the course of the century, they also contributed to the representation of Shakespeare as a 'universal genius' by anthologising his works under universal headings, freeing them from constraints of genre, locality, gender, and status. The popularity of the collections testify to their appeal and influence in this regard. A fifth edition of Kearsley's collection was published in 1784, complete with 'larger type', which appropriated Shakespeare by misquoting *Antony and Cleopatra*

¹¹² *Monthly Review*, 69 (1983), p. 263.

¹¹³ Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare*, p. 40.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Beauties of Shakespeare* (G. Kearsley), preface.

in order to explain the collection's continuing success: 'Age cannot wither it, nor custom stale / Its infinite variety'. The genre of the anthology offered 'infinite variety', its flexibility allowing it to amend its contents according to taste, thus ensuring it is never out of date. The collections of Dodd and Kearsley remake Shakespeare each time they remake themselves, ensuring that Shakespeare's most beautiful passages are inculcated in the consciousness of each ensuing generation. Benedict, Price, and Walsh have all pointed to Jane Austen's novels for confirmation of the domestication of Shakespeare of which anthologies such as the *Beauties* of Shakespeare were a part. In *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine Morland, 'in training for a heroine', is pictured reading 'all such works as heroines must read to supply their memories with those quotations which are so serviceable and so soothing in the vicissitudes of their eventful lives'.¹¹⁶ 'Quoting forms part of adult sociability' and from Shakespeare Catherine gains 'a great store of information'.¹¹⁷ What has not been noted, however, is that all of Austen's quotations are to be found within the pages of Dodd's anthology. Similarly, in *Mansfield Park*, Henry Crawford observes that 'Shakespeare one gets acquainted with without knowing how [...] His thoughts and beauties are so spread about that one touches them everywhere'.¹¹⁸ Edmund Bertram affirms the inculcation of Shakespeare in the 'Englishman's constitution', commenting that his 'celebrated passages are quoted by everybody; they are in half the books we open, and we all talk Shakespeare'.¹¹⁹ Anthologies such as Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* and its various imitators, undoubtedly contributed to the spreading about of Shakespeare's thoughts and beauties. Kearsley's edition's claim that

¹¹⁶ Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, ed. by Marilyn Butler (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 15.

¹¹⁷ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 79; Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p. 15.

¹¹⁸ Austen, *Mansfield Park*, ed. by Tony Tanner (London: Penguin, 1985), Chapter 34, p.335.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*

‘whoever is concerned in the business of education, will find it very serviceable, in impressing on the memory of Youth some of the sublimest and most important lessons of Morality of Religion’, seems to be confirmed in Edmund’s assertion that ‘we all talk Shakespeare’.¹²⁰

William Dodd’s critical anthology made this process possible by compiling the first ever anthology of Shakespeare, devoted to the most beautiful and striking extracts and passages from the plays. His appropriation of the beauties/faults discourse and development of the methodologies employed by critics and editors, such as Gildon and Pope, resulted in a technique of anthologising which made Shakespeare accessible and memorable to new readers. Price argues that ‘Shakespearean editing set a precedent for the power of condensations to scramble genre’ and, indeed, Dodd’s debt to Shakespearean editing strips the plays of most of their generic markers and presents them not as dramatic, but as anthology-pieces and commonplaces, part of a new genre.¹²¹ The collection establishes an approach to Shakespeare and a way of reading his plays which ultimately resulted in texts such as Harriet and Thomas Bowdler’s *Family Shakespeare* (1807). In Dodd’s editing lies the seed which is later manifest in the methodology of Harriet who weeded the plays, ‘keeping what she regarded as the flowers, and pulling the nettles with unsparing hand’.¹²² By the nineteenth century, the process of extracting and anthologising moral beauties had given way to expunging and bowdlerising; Bowdler cutting and removing all passages containing improprieties or obscenity. Furthermore, aside from his collection’s implications and influences on Shakespeare in the eighteenth

¹²⁰ *Beauties of Shakespeare* (London: Kearsley, 1783), preface.

¹²¹ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 10.

¹²² Noel Perrin, *Dr. Bowdler’s Legacy: A History of Expurgated Books in England and America* (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 64.

century and beyond, Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear*, through its status as the first author-orientated beauties anthology, carried wide-ranging implications for eighteenth-century practices of anthologising and of appropriating and refashioning the authorial persona through the selection and editing of extracts.

In a fitting tribute to his contribution to the *Beauties* tradition, Dodd was himself the subject of a *Beauties* collection in the late-eighteenth century. His sermons formed the basis of a text entitled *The Beauties of History; or, Pictures of Virtue and Vice* which were 'selected for the Instruction and Entertainment of Youth by the Late William Dodd, LL.D' (plate 4). Published in 1795, the text imitates the format of an earlier *Beauties of History* compiled by the Rev. L. M. Stretch in 1770.¹²³ 'The greater part' of Dodd's *Beauties of History* was, according to the preface, 'selected by the late Dr. Dodd, to illustrate and exemplify his *Sermons to Young Men*'.¹²⁴ Headings such as 'Gaming', 'Friendship', and 'Revenge', are illustrated with various 'sentiments' and examples drawn from eminent men, biblical, historical and contemporary, and the whole is intended as an educational aid for 'youth of more younger years'. The *Beauties of History* is Dodd's ultimate revenge on the Earl of Chesterfield; his onetime tutor celebrated as an exemplary tutor to the country's youth. The text aims to present the macaroni parson and forger, Dr. Dodd, as an instructor of youth whose writings will 'instill the principles of virtue', and will, somewhat ironically, teach them 'to avoid the examples of those who by their vices and depravity have made themselves hated by posterity'. The text rewrites Dodd utilizing the same editorial methods Dodd used in his

¹²³ *The Beauties of History* (London: Vernor and Hood, E. Newberry, 1795). This edition claims to be 'Considerably Enlarged' but I cannot find an earlier edition.

¹²⁴ The preface to the third edition is signed Stephen Jones.

rewriting of Shakespeare. As Brewer notes, 'Shakespeare became famous not as a dramatist, but *as an author*' and it is Shakespeare as an author, confined to the pages of a book, and not a dramatist of the theatre, which emerges from this first Shakespearean anthology.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), p. 480.

CHAPTER 3

THE 'DEATH' OF THE AUTHOR AND *THE BEAUTIES OF JOHNSON*

I

Beauties and Booksellers

A. T. Hazen has argued that 'the eighteenth century adopted new ideas with caution' and that it therefore took thirty years from the publication of Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* before the bookseller George Kearsley 'satisfied the public's demand for hand books or school textbooks of this nature'.¹ While there were few authorial *Beauties* anthologies published between 1752 and 1781, when Kearsley began what was to become a series of such collections with a *Beauties of Johnson*, further editions of Dodd's text, a *Beauties of Homer* (1775), and a *Beauties of Chesterfield* (1777) were published, establishing a tradition of similar texts utilising the title *Beauties*. It was, perhaps, not so much caution as copyright, which influenced the production of such texts; the only authorial collections preceding Kearsley's appeared after the abolition of perpetual copyright in 1774. Hazen notes that there was 'an occasional attempt of a similar nature' published in the intervening period, citing as an example the *Beauties of English Prose* (1772).² This four volume collection of 'Moral, Critical, and Entertaining Passages, Disposed in the manner

¹ A. T. Hazen, 'The *Beauties of Johnson*', *Modern Philology*, 35 (1938), p. 289.

² *ibid.*

of Essays' was selected to 'cultivate the Mind and promote the practice of Virtue', and is indeed a typical example of the kind of anthology produced during these years.³

However, such texts were more than just an 'occasional attempt': a survey of *Beauties* collections in these decades testifies to a slowly growing tradition of texts which imitated and followed one another in format and theme. These collections seized upon the opportunities exposed by the popularity of Dodd's anthology and followed early generic anthologies of poetry and drama, adding to them digested collections from contemporary poems and plays and incorporating the newly popular prose form, as illustrated by the *Beauties of English Prose*. Booksellers all over the country saw the advantages of producing such collections. Their composition required little time and expense, and provided the opportunity to utilise surplus copies of poems, or to extract the most profit from existing copyrights. Moreover, if a number of booksellers joined together and published an anthology as a joint venture, numerous copyrights could be pooled, and the expense and risk of the project would be lessened for any one individual bookseller.

A collection of the *Beauties of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians* published in 1753, the year after Dodd's collection, illustrates the expansion of such collections to include the anthologising of the periodical press. The anthology also highlights the involvement of the most powerful and influential of the London booksellers, as well as smaller booksellers such as Waller, in the production of such texts. This two-volume collection digested extracts from the various periodicals under typical commonplace

³ *The Beauties of English Prose* (London: Hawes Clarke and Collins, S. Crowder et al., 1772). Barbara Benedict points out that this collection was itself serialised in London in 1833, as part of Tegg's *Beauties of Literature*. See Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p.320. For further information on Tegg's series see chapter 8, p. 328 below.

heads such as 'Advice', 'Death', and 'Education', incorporating substantial entries, often entire essays, and alternating between the serious moral advice of the essays and the less serious and more satirical advertisements. Sixteen booksellers in all were responsible for the collection, including Jacob and Richard Tonson, J. and P. Knapton, H. Lintot, T. Longman, J. Ward and J. Hinton, who was later to publish a *Beauties of Poetry Display'd* in 1757 (see plate 5).⁴ That the powerful Tonsons (who were renowned for owning and guarding a substantial share of the Shakespeare copyrights) were involved in such a collection, testifies to the mainstream nature of the collection of 'beauties'. *The Beauties of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians* was extremely popular and often reprinted and imitated. A Dublin reprint appeared in 1757, the Tonsons alone produced an edition in 1763, another Dublin edition of the same title was published by Sarah Cotter in 1767, a three volume edition 'printed for the proprietors, and sold by the booksellers in town and country' appeared in 1773, and yet another Dublin edition was published by James Williams in 1778. Finally, the Tonsons reappear in an imprint of a 1780 edition of the text which now contains a 'biographical and critical account of the life and writings of Mr. Addison', and where they are advertised to be selling the edition along with S. Dampier, E. Curdle, and A. Mallard.

The Tonsons and their fellow booksellers were not the only booksellers who produced a collection of the *Beauties* of the periodical press. In 1757, the bookseller, T. Waller, who had been responsible for publishing Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear*, produced a more humorous and less structured *Beauties of all the Magazines selected for the year 1762*, which was originally intended 'to be continued the Middle of every

⁴ The other booksellers include: S. Draper, W. Innys, S. Birt, D. Brown, J. Shuckburgh, M. Cooper, E. Wicksteed and J. Oswald.

Month'.⁵ The contents of this collection were not arranged alphabetically beneath traditional commonplace heads. Instead, the selection of essays, letters, ballads, and articles were printed in a double-column periodical/newspaper format. Waller's text does not offer its contents as an extended commonplace, but as a kind of new and 'ultimate' periodical, comprising all the best elements of other periodicals. Another *Beauties of the Magazines, and other periodical Works* was published in 1772 by the booksellers Richardson and Urquhart. Like Waller's collection, this too was chronological in its outlook; the contents 'selected for a series of years'. The contents were not, however, extracted and digested; essays were reprinted in their entirety, aiming to provide the reader with the essays of authors not included in editions of their Works. These few anthologies of the periodical press effectively illustrate the flexibility of the genre, the way in which the title of *Beauties* was appropriated by various booksellers, attached to varying approaches and a range of formats, in the years following Dodd's collection of Shakespeare.

Numerous collections of poetic and dramatic *Beauties* were also published. The various manifestations of the *Thesaurus Dramaticus*; *The Beauties of the English Stage* (1756), and later *The Beauties of the English Drama* (1777), dominated the dramatic anthologies, while Hinton's *Beauties of Poetry Display'd* was merely the first in a line of anthologies offering the best examples of English poetry. In 1761, *A Poetical Dictionary; or, the Beauties of the English Poets* was published by a group of booksellers, including J. Newberry, J. Richardson, T. Longman, T. Davis, and, the newly

⁵ *The Beauties of all the Magazines selected* (London: T. Waller [1762]-64).

qualified bookseller George Kearsley.⁶ This collection of the ‘most celebrated Passages’ from authors such as Beaumont, Fletcher, Gray, Johnson, Mason, Shakespeare, Otway, and Smart, was intended to be of use to ‘the man of knowledge and erudition’, ‘the preceptor’ and his pupils, and to be ‘an agreeable present to the ladies’.⁷ More than a teaching aid or useful index for educated readers, the collection also embraces the youthful and female reader, claiming to have ‘kept clear of every quotation that favours in the least of obscenity, immorality, or vice’.⁸ The equation of critical beauty with moral beauty implicit in Dodd’s *Beauties of Shakespear* is here explicitly stated. The collection aims to ‘promote the love of liberty, patriotism, and religion; and to impress a knowledge of the great creator of the universe’ upon the minds of its readers.⁹ A ‘beauty’ has become more than a term of critical approbation and means of literary instruction: here a ‘beauty’ is a means of inculcating moral and religious instruction. Such collections of *Beauties* can therefore be seen to promote the mid-eighteenth-century concern with the reformation of manners, reflecting the idea that literature should, above all, be instructive. No matter how striking an image, apposite a simile, or meritorious a description, literary excellence is only achieved when such technical genius combines with a moral sentiment, universal truth, or moral tenet.

While promoting virtue and morality, such collections could also promote a sense of nationalism and patriotism. We have seen how selections from Shakespeare were used to promote that author as the exemplary English writer whose works contained rousing

⁶ *A Poetical Dictionary; or, the Beauties of the English Poets*, 4 vols (London: for J. Newberry, J. Richardson, S. Crowder and Co., T. Longman, T. Davis, R. Stevens, T. Caslon, J. Coote, and G. Kearsley, 1761). The British Library copy of this text (1346c23) is signed by ‘Princess Elizabeth’.

⁷ *A Poetical Dictionary*, preface, p. x.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *ibid.*

patriotic speeches, and this process was adopted by many anthologies which followed Dodd's. *The Beauties of English Prose*, *The Beauties of the English Stage* and *The Beauties of the English Poets*, all align the titular phrase 'beauties' with that of 'English', thereby marketing the collections as a treasury of all that is best in English Literature. *The Parnassium: or Beauties of English Poetry* (1762) although comprised of complete poems by poets such as Gray, Pope, and Young, nevertheless subscribed to the idea of gathering the best English writers together under the banner of *Beauties*. Of course, the authors included in such collections were not always strictly English. Nonetheless, the frequent heralding of the beauties collected in these anthologies as such, reveals a skilful marketing technique employed by their various booksellers. A collection of 'English' *Beauties* encouraged a sense of national pride; booksellers were packaging the best of the nation's heritage in digested form, so that everyone in the nation could afford to buy into their literary inheritance.

An extension of this geographical and spatial marketing is evident in yet another manifestation of the *Beauties* text, when the epithet 'Beauties' became common in travel books. Alongside *Beauties* of English literature one could find *The Beauties of England* (1757), *Beauties of Nature and Art Displayed* (1763-1764), *The Beauties of Nature* (1769), *Beauties of Natural History* (1777), and a *Beauties of Flora* (1778). Such texts were often not, strictly speaking, anthologies, but followed the basic principle of gathering and offering information in a digested format. *The Beauties of Nature*, by W. Jackson, consisted of a Sternean 'sentimental Ramble', discoursing on 'the Vegetable world', 'Man's Cruelty', and 'the Origin of the Soul', and finished with a section entitled

'The Maxims of Truth', a collection 'of the Authors most Favourite Thoughts'.¹⁰ Philip Luckombe's *The Beauties of England* was advertised as a 'travelling pocket companion', a portable travel guide of all the most remarkable sites in the country. Although perhaps only anthologies in the broadest sense of the term, these texts are part of the wider growth of the *Beauties* tradition, reflecting the desire for cheap, portable books, and illustrating the infiltration of the beauties discourse into all areas of society. The public were encouraged to appreciate beauty wherever it was to be found; in the natural world, in literature, in elegant writing, in art, and in one's fellow human beings, and books were published to guide the reader in each area. *A Beauties of Writing* by Thomas Tomkins was published in 1777, illustrating various styles of penmanship, and Daniel Webb appropriated the title for his *Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting*, published by Dodsley in 1760.¹¹

The idea of a collection of literary *Beauties* was therefore adapted in various ways in the decades following the publication of Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear*. Although no other authorial collections appeared for some time, numerous *Beauties* anthologies were published, offering didactic, virtue-promoting selections, which frequently appealed to a sense of national pride and identity. Aimed at women, marketed as schoolbooks or travel books, the epithet *Beauties* was affixed to a wide variety of texts, often beyond the genre of the anthology itself. As the graph in appendix two illustrates, the number of texts which utilise the word 'Beauties' in the title began to gain momentum in between 1752 and 1780, before reaching its peak in 1782, emphasising the application of the term to all

¹⁰ W. Jackson, *The Beauties of Nature* (Birmingham, for the author, 1769).

¹¹ Thomas Tomkins, *The Beauties of Writing* (London: J. Wallis, 1777); Daniel Webb, *An Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1760).

genres of literature and to all kinds of subject. So, while eighteenth-century booksellers, authors, and compilers, did not immediately imitate Dodd's collection of Shakespeare with similar authorial collections, they did respond by expanding and developing the genre in other areas, exploiting the genre and format to its full potential and establishing a popular sub-genre of *Beauties* texts.

Of the various booksellers who published and sold *Beauties* texts, from the small regional booksellers to the influential individuals in the capital, the one bookseller whose name was to become predominantly associated with such texts in the final decades of the century was George Kearsley. Originally from Dublin, Kearsley was a minor London bookseller, whom Benedict describes as having 'a fairly typical career'.¹² He had been apprenticed to his uncle, Jacob Robinson of Ludgate Street, London, serving out his seven-year term from 1753 to 1760.¹³ Benedict states that Kearsley succeeded to Robinson's business, and indeed Kearsley is recorded as publishing pamphlets from around 1758, from the Golden Lion in Ludgate Street.¹⁴ In 1761, he married a Miss Chillingworth, and at some stage he removed to premises in Fleet Street and is recorded as employing at various dates, around five apprentices.¹⁵ Two of these appear to have

¹² Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p.334.

¹³ The relationship between Robinson and Kearsley is confirmed by Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, 9 vols (London: for the author, 1813), reprinted by the Kraus Reprint Corporation, (New York: AMS Press, 1966), v, p. 552.

¹⁴ See Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', pp. 333-335. The biographical information on Kearsley is obtained from Benedict, as well as from Ian Maxted's *The London Book Trades 1735-1775* (Exeter: for the author, 1984) and *The British Book Trades 1710-1777* (Exeter: for the author, 1983). Also used: H. R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers who were at work in England and Scotland from 1726 to 1755* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932) and D. F. McKenzie, ed., *Stationers' Company Apprentices 1701-1800* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1978).

¹⁵ The address in Fleet Street is unclear and is given variously as, 2 Fleet street, opposite Fetter Lane, or The Johnson's Head Fleet Street, 46 Fleet Street. These may all refer to the same address. Plomer suggests 46 Fleet Street is the same as 'opposite Fetter Lane' and that Kearsley removed from Ludgate Hill in 1773 to Fleet Street, where he was still in 1776. On the other hand, McKenzie records Kearsley as in Ludgate Street from 1768 and moving to Fleet Street in 1781. Certainly, it would be interesting if Kearsley moved to a new premises named The Johnson's Head, in the same year that the *Beauties of Johnson* was

been Kearsley's own sons: Thomas registered in 1789 (the year before Kearsley's death), and George, apprenticed from 1781 to 1788.¹⁶ George junior appears to have taken over the business after his father's death.¹⁷

During his lifetime Kearsley, like many other booksellers, sold 'whatever was popular [...], sensational pamphlets, trials, plays, contemporary poetic and literary works, medical treatises, academic speeches, religious histories, even political literature'.¹⁸

Despite such variety of output, Benedict also characterises Kearsley as predominantly a 'children's bookseller'.¹⁹ Kearsley did publish children's books, and while his *Beauties* collections of the 1780s were marketed as suitable for 'youth of both sexes' and, in the years before his death, he began publishing collections by the Rev. John Adams which also aimed at this audience, children's literature was by no means Kearsley's speciality.²⁰

Indeed, in the few contemporary accounts which give an insight into Kearsley's work or reputation, it is his political literature (which Benedict positions as an almost surprising afterthought), and not his children's literature, that is highlighted. A letter from Isaac

published. The location on Fleet Street, opposite Fetter Lane is close to the entrance to Gough Square where Johnson lived from 1746-1759. The names do not however tally with those given in Benedict. She suggests that after succeeding Robinson, he operated from the Golden Fleece in Ludgate Street from 1758 to 1773, and from the Golden Lion in Fleet Street until his death in 1790. Kearsley appears to have gone bankrupt twice, in 1765 and again in 1784.

¹⁶ James T. Boulton wrongly states that Thomas Kearsley published the *Beauties of Johnson*. It seems likely that this is a case of confusion with the son, Thomas. See *Johnson: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by James T. Boulton (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 14. Kearsley also appears to have had a daughter. A Miss C. Kearsley (possibly Catherine after her mother) is recorded as marrying Thomas Davison, a printer on July 12 1799 and her son, George Kearsley Davison was in business from 1832-1837. See Maxted, *The London Book Trades and The British Book Trades*. This information can also be found on the web at <http://www.devon.gov.uk/library/locstudy/bookhist/k.html>.

¹⁷ Benedict comments that 'for the next six years, he traded as "Catherine and George Kearsley"', and that 'from 1796 to 1813 his son George took over the business'. 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p. 334.

¹⁸ Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p. 334.

¹⁹ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 209.

²⁰ For example, *The Flowers of Modern History* (1788), *Anecdotes, bon-mots, and characteristic traits of the greatest princes...* (1789), *Woman. Sketches of the History, genius [...] of the fair sex* (1790), *A View of Universal History* (1795) and *The Flowers of Ancient History* (1796). Many of Adams's collections were published after Kearsley's death suggesting that it was his wife and son who exploited the market for

Reed to John Nichols of 1787 recounts a meeting between Reed and Kearsley, in which Kearsley accused Reed of having been ‘the writer of the unfavourable criticisms on his publication in the Gentleman’s Magazine’.²¹ Reed, who denied authorship, professes himself sorry that ‘there was anything that could be injurious (as he tells me this has been) to a man of business, who has always been represented to me as one struggling hard for the support of a large family’.²² Another testimony from Nichols is found in his description of the routine followed by George Steevens in his walks into London. Steevens would frequently visit Henry Baldwin and Samuel Johnson and then would often call ‘at the well-stored shop of Ben White [and] the political storehouse of George Kearsley’.²³

The view of Kearsley as a political bookseller and his shop as a ‘political storehouse’ is one confirmed by the events in which Kearsley involved himself, shortly after completing his apprenticeship, taking over his uncle’s business, and marrying Catharine. In 1762, Kearsley became the publisher of John Wilkes’s paper *The North Briton*, a response to *The Briton*, a paper run by Lord Bute’s administration and edited by Tobias Smollett.²⁴ *The North Briton*’s attempts to ‘expose and ridicule the new government’s conduct of affairs; to harry the Scots on each and every occasion’ as well as heaping ‘all manner of abuse on the government and its friends’, soon earned the paper

children’s literature and text books following the initial success of the format in the various *Beauties* collections.

²¹ Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, ii, pp. 668-669. Reed states the rumour that he was the author is a falsehood and is writing to Nichols to ask him to tell Kearsley, ‘every circumstance you know of my writing in the Magazine’.

²² Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, ii, p. 669.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ For details concerning Kearsley’s involvement with Wilkes and *The North Briton*, see George Rudé, *Wilkes and Liberty: A Social Study of 1763-1774* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962) and Peter D. G. Thomas, *John Wilkes: A Friend to Liberty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

a number of heavyweight opponents.²⁵ Although ostensibly anonymous, Wilkes was widely known to be the author, along with Charles Churchill who was also responsible for several numbers. The paper managed to avoid prosecution for a time, but, in 1763, when Grenville succeed Bute and the King reopened Parliament with a speech that infuriated Wilkes, the situation quickly escalated.²⁶ On 23 April, the Number Forty-five of *The North Briton* was published, which, although ‘carefully and respectfully worded’, appeared to many, especially George III himself, to accuse the King of being a liar.²⁷ According to Thomas, ‘Wilkes insisted on publication even though Kearsley thought this a libel’.²⁸ A general warrant was soon issued for the ‘authors, printers and publishers’ of the Number Forty-five, and Kearsley, along with several others, was arrested.²⁹ He had been, as Thomas observes, ‘little more than the middle man between the author and the printers, and not always that: he had allowed his name to appear on every issue in return for a share of the profits’, but was not actively involved.³⁰ Kearsley, under interrogation from Halifax and Egremont, revealed all he knew and named Richard Balfe as the printer and Wilkes and Churchill as authors, stating that he had received part of the number forty-five from Wilkes himself. Kearsley was soon released and Wilkes also escaped prosecution, later receiving substantial damages.³¹

²⁵ Rudé, *Wilkes and Liberty*, p. 10.

²⁶ Previous to this on 18 November 1762, the Secretary of State had issued ‘a general warrant for the arrest of “the Authors, Printers and Publishers of a seditious and scandalous weekly paper entitled *The North Briton*”, specifying issues one to twenty-five, printed by “George Kearsley.”’ See Thomas, *John Wilkes*, p. 23. This warrant was never executed.

²⁷ Rudé, *Wilkes and Liberty* pp. 22-23.

²⁸ Thomas, *John Wilkes*, p. 23.

²⁹ The warrant, dated 26 April 1763, is reprinted in *Copies taken from the Records of the Court of King's Bench, at Westminster* (London:, 1763), p. 62, in *The Literary Property Debate: Seven tracts 1747-1773*, ed. by Stephen Parks, (New York and London: Garland, 1974). The arrest took place on 29 April 1763.

³⁰ Thomas, *John Wilkes*, p. 29.

³¹ Many others received damages from wrongful arrest or wrongful seizure of papers, but it is not clear whether Kearsley was one of this number.

Such events reveal Kearsley to be no stranger to the dangers of the book trade in the early years of his career, and suggest, that although he managed to establish himself as a businessman and fairly successful bookseller, hardship, financial difficulties, and the threat of prosecution were never far away. Kearsley had also been involved with Wilkes's notorious *Essay on Woman* in its early days when Wilkes was keen to have copies for private circulation. On 18 October 1762, Wilkes wrote to Kearsley: 'I am impatient for my *Essay on Woman*. Let it be on very good paper. Two Proofs'.³² The project was abandoned, presumably as Thomas suggests, 'because Kearsley took fright at the threatened prosecution of *The North Briton*'.³³ Wilkes, however, later printed the poem along with a collected edition of *The North Briton* at a press in his own house in George Street, for which he was tried for libel in February 1764. Kearsley was one of the witnesses and obtained a promise of immunity which he claimed in 1765.³⁴ In 1764, Kearsley was advertised as one of a number of booksellers selling an edition of *Gotham*, a poem by Wilkes's co-author, Charles Churchill.³⁵ He also appears as one of the booksellers in London selling *A Middlesex North-Briton* around six years later.³⁶ Kearsley's experiences with Wilkes certainly did not dampen his interest in political affairs, and he continued to publish and sell material of a political nature throughout his career. A few representative examples include: *The case of the British troops serving in Germany* in 1762; *A brief and impartial review of the state of Great Britain at the commencement of the fourth session of the fifteenth Parliament of the present reign* in

³² Thomas, *John Wilkes*, p. 24.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ See Thomas, p. 241, note 143. Possibly owing to impending bankruptcy. The *London Gazette* records that a Certificate of Bankruptcy was to be granted on 9 March 1765, and that the dividend was to be declared for 12 April, and again for 9 October of that year.

³⁵ Charles Churchill, *Gotham, A Poem. Book I* (London: for the author, 1764).

³⁶ *A Middlesex North-Briton* (London: for the author, [1770?])

1783, and *Caricature anticipations and enlargements; occasioned by a late pious proclamation; also by two celebrated speeches in Parliament relative to a repeal of the Test Act* (1787).

With his name attached to Wilkes and the notorious Number forty-five, not to mention his own arrest and appearance in Wilkes's libel trial, it is hardly surprising that Kearsley gained a reputation as a political bookseller. A brief survey of his publications reveals that alongside his many political publications, Kearsley did publish, in Benedict's words, 'whatever was popular', but does not indicate that he was predominantly a publisher of children's books. Like many booksellers, he profited from selling reports of trials and scandalous events. The papers Kearsley published relating to the Dodd affair numbered among many such publications, which included; *The Trial of John Donellan Esq. For the wilful murder of Sir Theodosius Edward Allesley Boughton* (1781), *The Trial of John Motherhill, for committing a rape on the body of Miss Catherine Wade* (1786), and *An authentic account of forgeries and frauds of various kinds committed by that most consummate adept in deception, Charles Price* (1786), along with the history of Price, 'Old Patch', entitled *Memoirs of a Social Monster* (1786). He also published plays and poems. In 1761, he was part of a conger of booksellers which included the Tonsons which published Colly Cibber's *The Double Gallant*. He published many of Charles Dibdin's comic operas and farces in the early 1780s, including his *Liberty-Hall* (1785), and brought out an edition of Garrick's poems in 1785, and one of Gray's in 1786. He published sermons, religious treatises, scientific and medical essays, including Samuel Clossy's *Observations on some of the diseases of the parts of the human body* (1763), Francis Dobb's *Millenium, a poem in four books* (1787), which claimed to explain 'why

the second coming of Christ, and the commencement of his personal reign on Earth are immediately to be expected', and *The Rule of the members of the Company of Jesus* (1775).

Even this small selection of Kearsley's output shows him to be a typical London bookseller, producing texts that spanned a variety of genres and subject matter. And, like many other London booksellers in the second half of the eighteenth century, one of Kearsley's main concerns was the raging debate surrounding the subject of literary property and perpetual copyright. Kearsley had a personal interest in these events and is named as a respondent in one of the most significant cases to have been fought on the subject of literary property. The case was that of *Donaldson v. Becket*, an extension of the earlier case of *Millar v. Taylor* of 1769, which centred upon the publication of Thomson's *Seasons*. The verdict in the earlier case had ruled that copyright was perpetual. However, Millar, the proprietor of the Thomson copyrights, died in 1768 before the case was decided.³⁷ When Millar's copyrights were put up for sale, the rights to the *Seasons* and some of Thomson's other poems were purchased by a number of booksellers, including John Rivington, William Strahan, Thomas Longman, Thomas Davis and George Kearsley. Kearsley bought a one-twelfth share for 42 pounds.³⁸ In 1771, the new copyright holders, confident in the earlier ruling, filed a bill against Donaldson and his brother.³⁹ Unfortunately for them, the final outcome did not follow that reached in previous case, and the ruling of the court went against Kearsley and the other booksellers: perpetual copyright was abolished.

³⁷ For a more detailed discussion of these cases see Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), in particular pp. 92-112.

Much has been written on the effects which this ruling exerted on the eighteenth-century book trade, but perhaps the single most important result was that 'The works of Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Bunyan and others, all the great properties of the trade that the booksellers had been accustomed to treat as private landed estates, were suddenly declared open commons'.⁴⁰ Yet while the booksellers saw their power and monopoly over the works of certain writers being stripped from them, they also benefited from new opportunities to exploit the various authors now released from long-standing copyrights. In relation to these events, Kearsley's publication of author-orientated *Beauties* anthologies is of greater significance than a simple exploitation of an already successful genre. His collections take advantage of 'safe' authors now free from copyright restrictions, such as Pope and Swift, and also illustrate a bookseller's exploitation of the abolition of perpetual copyright. In many ways, the digesting and anthologising of the author's words is a pointed illustration of what happens when literature is rendered common property: it is reduced to a series of common places.

The genre of the anthology and various 'condensations, compilations, and other works of a common nature' were, Mark Rose states, 'protected under the Statute of Anne' of 1709.⁴¹ However, the means by which these collections were composed rarely reflected a concern for questions of literary property. As A. S. Turberville notes, 'It was doubtful whether there were copyright in abridgements', and this ambiguity surrounding the legality of extraction and compilation led to many collections whose contents were

³⁸ *The Case of the Appellants and Respondents in the Cause of Literary Property* (London: J. Bew, W. Clarke, P. Brett, C. Wilkin, 1774), p. 15. Reprinted in *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts 1764-1774*, ed. Stephen Parks (New York and London: Garland, 1975).

³⁹ Rose, *Authors and Owners*, p. 95.

⁴⁰ Rose, *Authors and Owners*, p. 97.

⁴¹ Rose, *Authors and Owners*, p. 137.

plundered from other works with little regard to copyright and even less to the acknowledgement of sources.⁴² In 1774, this ambiguity was addressed amid concerns that the genre had been overlooked and that its very presence highlighted an inconsistency in the new statutes. In an appendix to his *Address to the Artists and Manufacturers of Great Britain*, W. Kenrick observes that:

If authors have no foundation for copy-right at common-law, the proceedings in equity must be founded solely and strictly on the statute; by which it does by no means appear that *abstracts*, *abridgements* and *compilations* (of which the greater number of the new books now published consist) are at all contrary to law.⁴³

Kenrick's argument is that compilation becomes synonymous with piracy if there are no boundaries or guidelines in place. It is, he states; 'to little purpose to determine whether literary property be *temporary* or *perpetual*, unless the *nature* of that property be also precisely ascertained'.⁴⁴ For every original writer like Shakespeare or Milton 'there are five hundred copyists and compilers'.⁴⁵ Indeed, compilations are so numerous that if 'they are no longer to be allowed, the paper-mills may stop, the printing-press stand still, and its numerous retainers be obliged literally to starve'.⁴⁶ His appendix calls for an 'alteration in the laws relating to literary property', so that

⁴² A.S. Turberville, ed., *Johnson's England: An Account of the Life and Manners of his Age* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1933), ii, p. 314.

⁴³ W. Kenrick, LL.D., *An Address to the Artists and Manufacturers of Great Britain* (London: Messrs. Donville, Dilly, F. Newberry, Williams, Evans & Riley, 1774), p. 45. Reprinted in *The Literary property Debate: Eight Tracts 1774-1775*, ed. by Stephen Parks (New York and London: Garland, 1974).

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

both writers and booksellers may know how far they are authorized to abridge, copy or make quotations from the works of their predecessors; without which they cannot safely exercise their calling, and all improvements in works of *history, philology* and *science* must speedily have an end.⁴⁷

Kenrick's appendix stresses not only the need for, and usefulness of, compilations. It points to the inherently unoriginal nature of so many books — especially those promoting learning and education — and highlights the ambiguous position of the genre in relation to copyright law. Without further emendation, the abolition of perpetual copyright comes close to making piracy lawful in the form of the compilation. The only way to avoid such a loop-hole would be to ban compilations, and thus the vast majority of literary publications, including history books and school books. It is perhaps for this reason that so many eighteenth-century anthologies, including Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* and those published by Kearsley, marketed themselves as schoolbooks, claiming to be for 'young persons' or the 'youth of both sexes'. Aligning the text with education gave it some validity and protection against the charge of mere piracy and plagiarism. Therefore, while anthologies fell into a loop-hole in the statutes created by the abolition of perpetual copyright, the ruling that literature was common property ushered in the golden age of the anthology and the beginning of collections which devoted their contents to the works of one individual author.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 48.

II

Johnson and the 'Beauties' Discourse

Kearsley's decision to marry the genre of the *Beauties* anthology with the works of authors, now common property, was a skilful marketing move. He was, of course, familiar with the genre from his involvement in the publication of the *Poetical Dictionary; or, the Beauties of the English Poets* (1761), and had also published the *Beauties of Biography* in 1777. What is curious, however, is his first choice of subject. With the rising importance of the figure of the author, Kearsley anthologises not a dead author whose works are free from copyright restrictions, but a living author; in fact, the one individual who personified the new vision of authorship in the eighteenth century: Samuel Johnson. While Johnson embodied the ideas and changing status of authorship and achieved canonical status in his own lifetime, Kearsley's choice of Johnson is important in a number of ways. That the only two other authors, aside from Shakespeare, which were the subject of a *Beauties* collection before Johnson were Homer and Chesterfield is significant. Like Shakespeare, Homer can be seen to represent a classical, canonical author whose works occupied a central position in literary culture and in the education of the young. Chesterfield, on the other hand, although a self-styled preceptor through his *Letters to his Son*, was no established canonical author. In the collection, the Earl who employed William Dodd as a tutor to his godson, is presented as the epitome of genteel learning; the anthology consisting of 'remarks on politeness, and of knowing the world', giving the 'necessary instructions to complete the gentleman and

man of fashion'.⁴⁸ The *Beauties of Johnson* in its choice of subject stands not as companion to the *Beauties of Chesterfield*, but as a challenge to it. Far from anthologising the writing of the aristocracy in an attempt to instruct the frivolous 'man of fashion', Kearsley's collection presents a man of the people, the son of a Lichfield bookseller, as an educator of all the people, whose writings are made up of, 'Maxims and Observations, Moral, Critical, and Miscellaneous'. In a sense, the Johnson anthology is a literary manifestation of Johnson's famous rebuttal of Chesterfield's patronage in 1755, when he claimed his *Dictionary* was completed 'with so little obligation to any favourer of learning', let alone Chesterfield; he who had failed to offer 'one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, one smile or favour'.⁴⁹ Johnson's rejection of Chesterfield was well-known and crystallised in Boswell's *Life*: 'I thought [he] had been a Lord among wits; but I find, he is only a wit among Lords!'⁵⁰ So too was Johnson's opinion of Chesterfield's *Letters*, the very writings contained in the *Beauties of Chesterfield*: 'they teach the morals of a whore, and the manners of a dancing-master'.⁵¹ As the compiler of the momentous *Dictionary of the English Language*, Johnson's achievements, authority, and authorial status, exceeded that of the Lord who failed to offer him assistance. Similarly, Johnson's categorising of Chesterfield's *Letters* as immoral positions Johnson as a superior moral commentator, and so, as an author, more fit to be anthologised and suited to the role of moral and literary exemplar. The preface to the first edition of the *Beauties of Johnson* bears this out, characterising Johnson as 'unsupported by the patronage of the great', yet having 'ever scorned to accommodate himself to the

⁴⁸ *The Beauties of Chesterfield* (Edinburgh: printed by James Murray, 1778).

⁴⁹ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, i, p. 261.

⁵⁰ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, i, p. 266.

⁵¹ *ibid.*

licentiousness and levity of the present age'.⁵² The *Beauties of Johnson*, therefore, presents an implicit criticism of the earlier collection by virtue of the circumstances which characterised the relationship between Johnson and Chesterfield, just as the *Beauties of Shakespear* had done for Dodd and Chesterfield's heir.

Anthologising Johnson in a collection of *Beauties* offers not only explicit praise and confirmation of Johnson's literary reputation: it provides a physical manifestation of the effects of the new copyright laws on one of its supporters. Although recognising the rights of authors, Johnson supported the abolition of perpetual copyright, arguing that:

There seems, (said he,) to be in authours a stronger right of property than that by occupancy; a metaphysical right, a right, as it were, of creation, which should from its nature be perpetual; but the consent of nations is against it, and indeed reason and the interests of learning are against it; for were it to be perpetual, no book, however useful, could be universally diffused amongst mankind, should the proprietor take it into his head to restrain its circulation [...] For the general good of the world, therefore, whatever valuable work has once been created by an authour, and issued out by him, should be understood as no longer in his power, but as belonging to the publick.⁵³

Johnson believed that the dissemination of literature and knowledge was paramount, and testified to such an ideal in his own work, writing sermons which he sold to various clergymen, and, in the case of Dodd, writing speeches and a sermon which Dodd would deliver as his own. Extracting passages from Johnson's own works and assembling them in an anthology is itself a means of disseminating Johnson to a wider readership. The

⁵² *Beauties of Johnson* (London: George Kearsley, 1781), Preface, p. iv.

⁵³ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, v, p. 259.

anthologising of extracts under headings disperses the authorial corpus under a variety of themes and topics. Kearsley's anthologising subjects Johnson to the logical extension of his argument: editing his writings and placing his works under commonplace headings gives his writing to the public, removing Johnson from the picture, his literature 'no longer in his power'. Of course, treating literature as common property in this way and removing the author's power can result in dangerous misinterpretations, and such was the case with *The Beauties of Johnson*.

However much the anthologising of Johnson can be seen to embody the ideals enshrined in law by the abolition of perpetual copyright, there are some indications that Kearsley's choice of Johnson was motivated by a more personal relationship. The extent of Kearsley's acquaintance with Johnson is uncertain, although as we have seen the two came into contact during the trial of William Dodd. Kearsley had published *The Convict's Address* and *Occasional papers by the late William Dodd, LL.D.*, both in 1777, and both predominantly written by Johnson for Dodd. At some point (whether in 1781 as Mackenzie suggests, or earlier) Kearsley named his shop The Johnson's Head; whether as a result of his relationship with Johnson, or a ploy to attract his attention, certainly it was an attempt to flatter the nation's most famous writer.⁵⁴ Whatever relationship existed between the two, it appears to have extended to the loaning and borrowing of money, and was not always amicable, a fact endorsed by a letter from Johnson to Mr Lowe of 15 October 1781. Johnson writes:

⁵⁴ See pp. 115-116 above.

I have put Mr. Kearsley's note into the hands of Mr. Allen to whom I owe rent; if any assistance of yours is necessary, you will certainly give it. If something is not done before my return, I think his last proposal such as leaves him very little claim to tenderness.⁵⁵

Why Kearsley owed Johnson money is unclear, yet as Chapman observes, 'it was doubtless *not* a payment in respect of *The Beauties of Johnson*' which had not yet been published.⁵⁶ However, given the dating of this letter, only weeks before Kearsley's anthology was published in November, it is tempting to associate the reference to the proposal which left Kearsley with 'very little claim to tenderness' with the forthcoming collection, even if the debt is entirely unrelated. Johnson requested to see Kearsley after the publication of the anthology (the circumstances surrounding which are discussed below), and is recorded as sitting for a picture 'to Mr. Trotter, in February 1782, at the request of Kearsley', who 'had just furnished him with a complete list of all his works, for he confessed he had forgot more than half what he had written'.⁵⁷ Johnson was therefore familiar with the bookseller before the publication of the *Beauties* and possibly knew of the forthcoming anthology, whose compilation could, perhaps, be seen as an attempt to flatter Johnson motivated by Kearsley's own debt to him, or, as an opportunistic commercial tactic on Kearsley's part, exploiting his loose connections with the writer.

Johnson's possible dislike of the idea of an anthology of his own writings is hardly surprising given his rejection of the practices which directly influenced the

⁵⁵Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Redford, iii, p. 361; *Letters*, ed. Chapman, ii, p. 437. Allen was Johnson's landlord and go-between in the Dodd affair.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, n. 740.

⁵⁷ Kearsley's 'Anecdotes of Johnson', reprinted in George Birkbeck Hill's, *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), ii, pp. 161-170. The picture in question was intended as a frontispiece to

methodology of the *Beauties* tradition. He had, after all, criticised the practice of highlighting Shakespeare's beauties in his *Proposal for Printing by Subscription, the Dramatick Works of William Shakespeare* (1765).⁵⁸ While Johnson saw the observing of beauties as part of an annotator's and critic's duty, he disagreed with the rather arbitrary markings introduced by Pope and his followers, who did not explain to the reader the reasons for their selections, and, therefore, hindered the education and judgement of their readers. The idea that marking beauties in the margins of the text precludes the pleasure of judgement, and curbs curiosity and discernment, is an important one to Johnson and can be seen to form the basis of his objections to collections of 'beauties' which transferred such highlighted passages into an entirely new context. For Johnson, the discovery of 'beauties' or 'faults' within a piece of literature requires 'no previous acquisition of remote knowledge'.⁵⁹ After all, 'the obvious scenes of nature [...], a sentiment of reflection or experience [...], are to be considered as proportional to common apprehension, unassisted by critical officiousness'.⁶⁰ Only when a beauty 'arises from some adaptation of the sentiment to customs worn out of use, to opinions not universally prevalent, or to any accidental or minute particularity, which cannot be supplied by common understanding; or common observation', is it 'the duty of a commentator to lend his assistance'.⁶¹

It will, argues Johnson, 'probably please his reader more, by supposing him equally able with himself [the editor] to judge of beauties and faults', and so he posits

the *Beauties*. Other details on the engravings for the anthology can be found in appendix H of Boswell, *Life*, iv, pp. 459-461.

⁵⁸ See chapter 1, p. 55 above.

⁵⁹ Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 57.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ Johnson, *Works*, vii, pp. 57-58.

that, in his edition of Shakespeare, any 'notice of beauties and faults' will be 'limited' and form 'no distinct part of the design'.⁶² Nine years later, in the Preface to the completed edition, he confirms that 'poetical beauties or defects I have not been very diligent to observe'.⁶³ Again he advocates the reader's right to uninfluenced reading and self discovery, stating that: 'the reader, I believe is seldom pleased to find his opinion anticipated; it is natural to delight more in what we find or make, than in what we receive'.⁶⁴ Johnson's former supposition, that the reader needs no 'remote knowledge' to discover beauties and faults, is here refined and reworked into an argument for a more gradual evolution of critical judgement as a skill which is 'improved by practice'.⁶⁵ 'Common apprehension' alone is insufficient. 'Some initiation is however necessary' to 'enable the candidate of criticism' in his quest of discovery.⁶⁶ Significantly, judgement, while improved by practice, precept, and habit, is 'hindered by submission to dictatorial decisions'.⁶⁷

Within his own writings and criticisms Johnson can be seen to initiate the reader in the appreciation of literary beauties and faults without dictating the reader's response to a text by means of marginal commas. The terms 'beauties' and 'faults' are scattered throughout his critical writings, testifying to his own engagement in the discourse. Jean H. Hagstrum observes, for example, that Johnson 'often divided even his important essays into a consideration first of beauties and then of faults'.⁶⁸ Like Addison before

⁶² Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 57.

⁶³ Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 104.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁶ Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 104.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁸ Jean H. Hagstrum, *Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1952), p. 33.

him, Johnson's critique of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in his *Lives of the Poets*, 'fell under the traditional heads of fable, sentiments, manners and language' and was concerned with weighing up the beauties and faults contained in the poem.⁶⁹ In his concluding remarks Johnson comments:

Such are the faults of that wonderful performance *Paradise Lost*; which he who can put in balance with its beauties must be considered not as nice but as dull, as less to be censured for want of candour, than pitied for want of sensibility.⁷⁰

His 'Life' of Pope again illustrates Johnson's critical application of the beauties/defects discourse. The *Temple of Fame* has 'as Steele warmly declared, *a thousand beauties*', while the *Essay on Criticism* has many 'particular beauties'.⁷¹ Of the *Dunciad* he comments, 'the beauties of this poem are well known; its chief fault is the grossness of its images', and of Pope in general, he praises his 'many beauties of speech'.⁷²

Johnson, like his contemporaries, ultimately derived the beauties/defects discourse from Longinus, who as Johnson himself remarked: 'is quoted by every poet and Critick [sic], as deciding upon faults and beauties of stile with authority contested only by *Huetius* and *Le Clerc*'.⁷³ Hagstrum observes that for Johnson, Longinus is 'an *arbiter elegantiarum*, deciding upon beauties and faults in the conventional manner'.⁷⁴ Yet while beauties and faults are an inherent aspect of literary criticism, Johnson is no

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ John Wain, ed., *Johnson as Critic* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 295. From the 'Life' of Milton.

⁷¹ Wain, *Johnson as Critic*, p. 417; p. 419.

⁷² Wain, *Johnson as Critic*, p. 426; p. 430.

⁷³ Quoted in Hagstrum, *Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism*, p. 145, from the Preface to the 'Commentary on the Four Evangelists'.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

advocate of pointing out these beauties or faults via use of quotation as Longinus does.⁷⁵

There are only a few quotations in this essay on Milton, for example; the criticism mainly comprises comments on elements such as the machinery, the episodes, or the integrity of the poem, with no illustrative quotation.

This lack of quotation can be seen as a testimony to Johnson's reluctance to preempt or hinder the reader, and is most clearly manifest in the structure of his own edition of Shakespeare. No passages are marked in this edition: his critique of beauties and faults is for the most part confined to the preface. Within it, Johnson draws attention to a number of Shakespeare's faults, which he remarks are 'sufficient to obscure and overwhelm any other merit'.⁷⁶ This approach he defends in a letter of 16 October 1765 to Charles Burney. He writes: 'We must confess the faults of our favourite, to gain credit to our praise of his excellencies'.⁷⁷ However, the overriding argument of the preface is that while Shakespeare undeniably has many faults and many beauties 'his real power is not shewn in the splendour of particular passages, but by the progression of his fable and the tenour of his dialogue'.⁷⁸ Drawing attention to beauties and faults on the page takes away from the unity of the piece and distracts the reader from the overall progression of the drama. To truly appreciate a piece of literature, Johnson argues that 'parts are not to be examined till the whole has been surveyed'; to appreciate the whole beauty it is necessary to examine the 'full design' and the 'true proportions'.⁷⁹ In a comment as applicable to

⁷⁵ In the Preface to his *Works of Shakespeare* (1765) Johnson comments that, 'The great contention of criticism is to find the faults of the moderns, and the beauties of the ancients. Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 59. In the *Idler*, No. 60, Dick Minim is satirised as the 'great investigator of hidden beauties'. Positioning himself as a 'man of wit and humour' Dick 'began to display the characters' of the great authors, 'laying down as an universal position that all had beauties and defects'. *Works*, ii, pp. 185-188.

⁷⁶ Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 71.

⁷⁷ Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Redford, i, p. 256; Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Chapman, i, p. 178.

⁷⁸ Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 62.

⁷⁹ Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 111.

collections such as Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* as to the editorial practices of Pope and Warburton, Johnson argues that 'he who tries to recommend him [Shakespeare] by select quotations, will succeed like the pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his house for sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen'.⁸⁰

This argument, followed to its logical conclusion, is equally applicable to the *Beauties* tradition as a whole (which had sprung from precisely such an approach to Shakespeare), and to the *Beauties of Johnson*, which offers a recommendation of Johnson as a moral and critical figure, by means of short sentences and passages extracted from a much larger body of work. The *Beauties of Johnson* utilises the very techniques that Johnson avoided applying to his work on Shakespeare, and applies them to Johnson himself.

Yet while the collection defies Johnson's critical belief in the whole work being more than the sum of its parts, by dismantling literature into its component parts, it does conform to his opinions upon the role of literature in society, and is, as we have seen, an extension of Johnson's views of the subject of literary property. The collection is, to some extent, guilty of adding to the expansion and 'multiplication of books' Johnson derides in the *Idler*, No. 85, and is representative of those texts compiled by authors who simply 'lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third'.⁸¹ Despite this, Johnson does admit that not all such compilations are useless. After all:

Writers of extensive comprehension, have incidental remarks upon topicks very remote from the principal subject, which are often more valuable than formal treatises, and which are yet

⁸⁰ *Monthly Review*, (May, 1757). See Goldsmith, *Works*, i, p. 11; Johnson, *Works*, vii, p. 62.

⁸¹ *Idler* 85, *Works*, ii, p. 265.

not known, because they are not promised in the title. He that collects those under their proper heads, is very laudably employed, for tho' he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and by making that easy of attainment, which is already written, may give some mind more vigorous, or more adventurous than his own, leisure for new thoughts, and original designs.⁸²

Johnson himself was such a writer of 'extensive comprehension', and so it is no surprise that this passage was quoted in the preface to the first edition of the *Beauties of Johnson*. While using Johnson's own words to justify the utility and validity of the genre as one which facilitates a process of improvement in the form of 'new thoughts' and 'original designs', the passage also validates the position of the editor. He may exert 'no great ability in the work', but his task of collecting the valuable incidental remarks from the works of extensive writers and arranging them under 'proper heads', is nevertheless a laudable one. Here, the beliefs which coloured Johnson's position on the question of literary property, are invoked to defend the genre. Johnson's belief in the importance of disseminating literature and rendering it common 'for the general good of the world' is utilised to validate the treatment of Johnson's own writings. Similarly, on the title page of the first edition, an extract from the *Rambler* is printed which suggests that not only is the text fulfilling a service for those more vigorous and adventurous minds, but that its editor is a public benefactor, concerned for the moral welfare of his readers (plate 6).

The passage reads as follows:

We frequently fall into error and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because for a short time they are not remembered: he may therefore be justly

numbered among the benefactors of mankind, who CONTRACTS THE GREAT RULES OF LIFE INTO SHORT SENTENCES, that they may be easily impressed on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habitually to the mind.⁸³

Here, the idea of the sentence or maxim conveying the ‘great rules of life’ in a short, memorable form, is again invoked and recommended as educational (‘taught by frequent recollection’), much as earlier seventeenth-century commonplaces had been. By selecting such ‘rules’, the editor is presented as doing something much more honourable than simply exploiting the possibilities opened up by the copyright ruling: he is giving the public access to the literature they rightfully own, and arranging it in a format that will be of greatest benefit to them. By quoting Johnson’s remarks on such collections within a similar compilation of Johnson’s own work, and thus representing Johnson as approving and endorsing the process of contracting short sentences, the anthology gains a sense of authority derived directly from Johnson himself. Before the reader had even progressed beyond the title page of the collection, they encountered an appropriation of Johnson, a selected passage promoting an image of the author as the benevolent benefactor of the genre which belied the complex and often ambivalent attitude Johnson held towards the anthology. Taken out of context and mediated by the figure of an editor, Johnson’s words were taken out of his power and given to the common reader as commonplaces. The danger of this process, as Johnson and Kearsley were to discover, is that when the author is removed from his text anonymous editorial mediation threatens to undermine individual authorial authority. Anthologies could harness the laudable ideals of the dissemination of literature and knowledge in selecting extracts and maxims, but the very

⁸² *ibid.*

process of 'contracting the great rules of life into short sentences' could be a dangerous business if the sentence contracted was a little too short, and the resulting rule was a matter of 'death' rather than 'life'.

III

Suicide and Exercise: 'A very dangerous misconception'

The means by which Kearsley's anthology contracted Johnson's writings into short sentences was to transform them into a series of 'Maxims and Observations, Moral, Critical, and Miscellaneous'. The first edition comprised five hundred and eighty such maxims from Johnson's works, arranged under around two hundred and sixty headings. The extracts were, the title page boasted 'accurately extracted from his works, and arranged in Alphabetical Order, after the Duke de La Rochefoucauld's Maxims'. The *Reflexions ou Sentences et Maximes Morales* (1665) of the Duke de La Rochefoucauld, were first translated into English in 1670 by John Davis and went through at least twenty-nine editions during the eighteenth century.⁸⁴ Although often viewed as a 'manual of cynicism', the collection was widely admired. Swift's 'Verses on the Death of Dr Swift' (1731), was 'occasioned by reading a maxim in Rochefoucauld', and his *Thoughts on Various Subjects* (1724) is obviously influenced by the style and form of the *Maximes*.⁸⁵ Many imitators followed, while others appropriated the form for their own purposes.

⁸³ *Rambler*, 175, *Works*, v, p. 160.

⁸⁴ One of these was published by a former apprentice of Kearsley's, Joseph Wenman, in 1788.

⁸⁵ W. G. Moore, *La Rochefoucauld: His Mind and Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 31. Harold E. Pagliaro also sees Halifax, Chesterfield and Shenstone as being influenced by La Rochefoucauld. See

Edmund Curll published Addison's *Maxims, Observations, and Reflections, Moral, Political and Divine* in 1719-1720, while the Tonsons published the *Maxims, Characters, and Reflections, Critical, Satyrical, and Moral* of the Elizabethan poet and diplomat, Fulke Greville in 1756. Collections of the maxims of Dr. South and John Tillotson were produced, as were those of Sir Theodore Janssen's *General Maxims in Trade* (1713) and Colonel James Callander's *Military Maxims* (1782).⁸⁶

The popularity of the maxim form was of course, nothing new. As Derek Watts comments: 'man's desire to express himself in a brief and memorable form is found in the oldest transcriptions'.⁸⁷ The maxim, generally short, succinct, and pithy, was a form invested with a sense of finality and authority. Like commonplaces, maxims were adopted to fulfil a religious and instructive purpose. Short maxims were easy to remember and, above all, accessible. And, as we have seen, it was precisely such brevity and the value of their mnemonic properties which situated such forms at the heart of early modern education techniques. According to Watts, the word *maxime* was commonly associated with having a practical purpose and was defined as a 'principle or rule of conduct'.⁸⁸ On the other hand, a *sentence* was thought of as 'embodying a more "disinterested" philosophical or moral truth'.⁸⁹ La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes* are, therefore, not really *maximes* according to Watts, as 'very few of them offer practical advice.' W. G. Moore, however, argues that maxims should not be regarded as truisms,

'Paradox in the Aphorisms of La Rochefoucauld and some Representative English Followers', *PMLA*, 79 (1964), pp. 42-50.

⁸⁶ *Maxims, sayings, explications [...] extracted from the writings of the late Reverend and Learned Dr. South* (London: J. Roberts, 1717); *Maxims and discourses moral and divine: taken from the works of Archbishop Tillotson* (London: J. Tonson, 1719); Sir T. Jassen, *General Maxims in Trade* (London: Sam Buckley, 1713); Colonel James Callander, *Military Maxims* (London: T. Cadell, 1782).

⁸⁷ Derek Watts, *La Rochefoucauld: Maximes* (University of Glasgow, 1993), p. 18.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

but rather as simply expressing a sentiment.⁹⁰ Regardless of the precise implications of the French terms *maximes* and *sentences*, the maxim in England came to be viewed as a short, conclusive statement which conveyed a sense of authority, whether it expressed a religious truism or moral sentiment.

That Johnson's work should be anthologised and sold as a collection of 'maxims and observations' in imitation of La Rochefoucauld is significant. To this day, Johnson's writings are viewed as a storehouse of comments or sound-bites which can be plundered for an apt opinion or quotation for any given circumstance. In a recent study of Boswell's writing of his *Life* of Johnson, Adam Sisman states that 'Johnson's particular genius was to express in trenchant form eternal truths; like Oscar Wilde, he is perennially quotable'.⁹¹ Indeed, Boswell's *Life*, with its almost reverential detail to what Johnson said or did at a particular time, undoubtedly did much to promote this image of Johnson as having a witticism, profundity, or put-down for all occasions. 'I am quite full of Dr Johnson's sayings', Boswell remarked to the bookseller Tom Davies in 1775, and so too was the *Life* itself.⁹² Boswell 'frequently referred to his book as a "compilation"', and 'presented it to the world as if it were an anthology of Johnsoniana'.⁹³ Although he 'deliberately played down his own role in selecting and shaping', Boswell's role was as much compiler as author, and the *Life* can be viewed as much as anthology as biography.⁹⁴ Information, anecdotes, gossip, letters, transcripts, stories, documents, and manuscripts from a wide variety of sources, were gathered, arranged, edited and

⁹⁰ W.G. Moore, *La Rochefoucauld: His Mind and Art* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), p. 31.

⁹¹ Adam Sisman, *Boswell's Presumptuous Task: Writing the Life of Dr Johnson* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. xx.

⁹² Quoted in Sisman, *Boswell's Presumptuous Task*, p. 85.

⁹³ Sisman, *Boswell's Presumptuous Task*, p. 174.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

manipulated, to form the final *Life*, in much the same way as any eighteenth-century anthology was compiled, albeit with the corresponding effort that such a mammoth task demanded.

Boswell's *Life* represents the collation and improvement of the many writings that poured out after Johnson's death, many of which took the form of Johnsonania and collections of sayings and miscellaneous anecdotes. Boswell himself reflects the late-eighteenth-century desire to collect, gather, and record quotable scraps and his biographical practice owes much to this desire's literary manifestation in the form of the anthology. Boswell's habit of illustrating Johnson's life with various quotations from his writings, or snippets from his conversation, is an extension of the treatment Johnson's work received at the hands of booksellers like Kearsley, even while Johnson was still living. The image of Johnson, frozen in time as a perennially quotable author whose work is full of maxims and sayings for all occasions may be owing to the popularity of Boswell's biography, but such a portrayal has its roots in the appropriation of the authorial Johnson illustrated by collections such as the *Beauties of Johnson*.

By presenting its contents under various alphabetical headings from 'Affectation' to 'Youth', Kearsley's anthology of Johnson portrays Johnson's writing as a storehouse of wisdom and advice on numerous topics. As Dodd had done with Shakespeare, the compiler of the *Beauties of Johnson*, thought to be William 'Conversation' Cooke (who wrote a *Life of Johnson* published by Kearsley in 1785), appropriates the Johnsonian persona: the 'Rambler' does anything but ramble in the collection of short, pithy observations.⁹⁵ Interestingly, the vast majority of the extracts — over a third of the total

⁹⁵ A. T. Hazen suggests William Cooke is the compiler/editor of the *Beauties of Johnson* on the basis of similarities between the 'Life of Johnson' included in the *Beauties* and the 'Life' by Cooke, published by

five hundred and eighty — included in the anthology are taken from Johnson's *Rambler*. While the anthology gathers its contents from a wide spectrum of Johnson's writing — his recent *Lives of the Poets* feature strongly, extracts are to be found from his political works, his prefaces to the Dictionary, and edition of Shakespeare — it is Johnson's periodical and novelistic prose which is the predominant source of extracts. Over one hundred passages are included from the *Idler* and over forty from Johnson's only novel, *Rasselas*.

In many ways this anthologising of Johnson's work stresses the inherent anthological nature of the eighteenth-century author. Many of Johnson's writings utilise the art of compilation, the most obvious, of course, being his monumental *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), which is itself an anthology of 'philosopher's principles of science; from historians remarkable facts; from chymists [sic] complete processes; from divines striking exhortations; and from poets beautiful descriptions'.⁹⁶ The quotations selected by Johnson from illustrious poets and authors to illustrate word usage can be seen to create an anthology of 'beauties'. Robert De Maria has observed that 'the aphoristic quality comes out in Johnson's selections' within the *Dictionary*, and it is this quality which is exploited by the *Beauties of Johnson*.⁹⁷ Even his periodical writings, which are presented as unified narratives, owe something to Johnson's eye for the

Kearsley in 1785. Cooke was certainly familiar with such texts and their compilation - see his remarks on Goldsmith's *Beauties of English Poesy* (1767) in chapter 7 below. If Cooke was frequently employed throughout his lifetime as an editor of such texts, his rather pointed comment that Goldsmith 'did nothing but mark the passages with a red lead pencil, and for this he got *two hundred pounds*' becomes more understandable: *European Magazine*, 24 (1793), p. 94. Cooke frequently appears on the fringe of the Johnson/Goldsmith circle and his dealings with Kearsley make his editorship probable. Interestingly, the *ESTC* lists Cooke as the author of *The beauties of ancient history* (1782), first published as 'The way to the temple of true honour and fame by the paths of heroic virtue' in 1773.

⁹⁶ Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, preface, in *The Oxford Authors: Samuel Johnson*, ed. by Donald Greene (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 318.

⁹⁷ Robert DeMaria Jr., *Samuel Johnson and the Life of Reading* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 83.

extractable thought. Most *Rambler* and several *Idler* essays begin with an extracted quotation or maxim, taken from classical or modern sources, which stand at the head of each essay as a universal truism which encapsulates the subject upon which Johnson elaborates. These quotations reveal that Johnson not only read with an eye for extractable maxims and sentiments, but that he also utilised anthologies, many of his passages coming from the *Greek Anthology*.

Johnson's aphoristic qualities seem hardly in any doubt to modern inheritors of the Boswellian 'Johnson', for whom the epithet 'Johnsonian' signifies an author of pithy sayings and apposite maxims; a Johnson known for writing 'not so much a body of work as a store of wisdom'.⁹⁸ Yet, by reducing Johnson's writing to a series of 'maxims and observations', the *Beauties* 'deliberately reduce[s] to order what Johnson himself chose not to order'.⁹⁹ Lawrence Lipking notes:

Out of a fluid and unpredictable medium they [scholars] distill wisdom, mere wisdom, and let the rest go. The result is a perennial Johnson whose consistency and wholeness far surpasses his reputation of two decades ago, but whose very unity seems at odds with the troubled and various character we thought we once knew.¹⁰⁰

While Kearsley's anthology does not set out to impose the same sense of unified thought upon Johnson as the modern scholars to whom Lipking refers, its technique, of reducing Johnson's writing to a series of extracted maxims grouped beneath headings, renders Johnson universal and perennial and transforms his literature from writing with

⁹⁸ Lawrence Lipking, *The Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 406.

⁹⁹ Lipking, *The Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England*, p. 408.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

contemporary relevance to the status of wisdom literature. As such, his writing ‘has nothing to do with time and place or circumstances or contexts’.¹⁰¹ It becomes ‘impersonal and abiding and adaptable to many purposes’.¹⁰² Johnson is no longer an individual, but a universal entity denoted by the phrase ‘Johnsonian’. It ‘was mainly as an editor, compiler, a translator, and a literary historian that Johnson made his way in the world of letters’, yet the viewing of his works merely as compilations which can be rearranged and re-compiled ignores the sense of progressive and reasoned argument which defines much of his writing.¹⁰³ Indeed, it was this rational, logical approach to the topics discussed in his periodical essays, such as those in the *Rambler* and *Idler*, which endowed Johnson with a sense of that all-encompassing authority which was to allow his works to be so easily extracted into maxims and anthology pieces. That over half of the contents of the *Beauties of Johnson* are extracted from the *Rambler* and *Idler* is, therefore, significant. For while these moral essays undoubtedly contain ‘condensed and brilliant sentences’, they are prose compositions with their own structure and order, a fact belied by their representation in the *Beauties of Johnson*.¹⁰⁴

Within the pages of Kearsley’s collection, for example, three extracts are included from the famous fourth *Rambler* essay which discourses on the popularity of the ‘wild strain of imagination’, and the role and influence of realism and romantic imagery within modern fiction. The extracts are headed ‘Imitation’, ‘Splendid Wickedness’, and ‘Youth’, titles which are taken from the content of each extract and, therefore, to some extent representative of what is anthologised beneath. Under ‘Imitation’, is Johnson’s

¹⁰¹ Lipking, *The Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England*, p. 407.

¹⁰² *ibid.*

¹⁰³ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁴ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, i, p. 214.

observation that 'It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation [...] a mirror which shows all that presents itself without discrimination'.¹⁰⁵ Under 'Splendid Wickedness' we find a discussion of men who have been 'splendidly wicked', whose 'endowments threw a brightness on their crimes' and who were never fully detestable and therefore 'have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world'.¹⁰⁶ Finally, under the heading of 'Youth' is a particularly apt quotation, which could be seen to shape Kearsley's own editorial concerns:

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears; are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, tho' not the same degree of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.¹⁰⁷

While the extraction of these passages from the body of the essay does not severely misrepresent the general sense of Johnson's words and there is no internal editing, it does misrepresent the interconnection between these passages. Forced apart by the alphabetical arrangement of the anthology's headings, the passages become individual comments upon a particular subject and not part of a developing argument. The path between each step of Johnson's reasoned argument is obscured and replaced by disjointed elements of his discourse. Read separately, and out of order, the passages could be seen

¹⁰⁵ *Rambler*, No. 4, Johnson, *Works*, iii, p. 22.

¹⁰⁶ *Rambler*, No. 4, Johnson, *Works*, iii, p. 23.

¹⁰⁷ *Rambler*, No. 4, Johnson, *Works*, iii, p. 21.

as simply discussing youth and the general importance of inculcating virtuous precepts, the relationship between art and nature, and the glorification of wicked characters, and need not bear any relationship to the world of literature and fiction which stands at the core of Johnson's narrative.

Interestingly, it is the application of tenets like those of Johnson's upon writing suitable for young readers in this essay, which leads some of the collection's editorial methods to displace the interconnection between Johnson and his own words even further. As books house 'the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions', the author must be aware that 'the power of example is so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence'.¹⁰⁸ Care must therefore be taken to ensure that 'when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects'.¹⁰⁹ In taking care to select only 'the best examples', so that the great rules of life could be contracted into short, memorable sentences, the editor of the *Beauties of Johnson* ironically displaces the sense of Johnson's words, to the extent that one extract, for which the collection became quickly notorious, came to exemplify precisely the uncertainty and mischievousness which Johnson had argued should be avoided.

Under the heading of 'Death' the collection anthologised eight extracts, five of which were taken from *Rambler* essays. Significantly, the first edition of the anthology did not reference any of its contents, so each of the extracts stood independent of any context but that suggested by the headings imposed by the collection's compiler.

¹⁰⁸ *Rambler*, No. 4, Johnson, *Works*, iii, pp. 21-22.

¹⁰⁹ *Rambler*, No. 4, Johnson, *Works*, iii, p. 22.

Alongside Johnson's famous observation from the 'Life of Pope', that, 'The Death of great men is not always proportioned to the lustre of their lives', and another from the *Convict's Address*, the following extract was included:

To die is the fate of men; but to die with languishing is generally his folly.

To any reader familiar with Johnson's writings, this observation was far from an example of Johnsonian excellence: indeed, it seemed to portray the great moralist as an advocate of suicide. Moreover, the sentiment voiced here seemed to contradict all Johnson had ever said on that particular subject. In his *Dictionary*, he had defined suicide as 'self-murder; the horrid crime of destroying one's self', in the *Life of Pope*, Johnson had remarked upon the 'illaudable singularity of treating suicide with respect', and to Boswell he had confided, 'I should never think it time to make away with myself'.¹¹⁰ Yet despite his public condemnation of suicide, here was an extract in an anthology of Johnson's writing which seemed to suggest that men should hasten their deaths rather than 'die with languishing'.

The apparent inconsistency was soon noted by the press and by Johnson's acquaintances alike. Boswell records that in May 1782, Johnson received a letter from the Reverend Lancelot St Albyn, highlighting the passage within the *Beauties* which was 'supposed by some readers to recommend suicide'.¹¹¹ Although knowing Johnson 'too well to join in this opinion', St. Albyn expresses his concern, especially as 'a person, in

¹¹⁰ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, v, p. 54. Quoted in Pat Rogers, *The Samuel Johnson Encyclopaedia* (Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1996), p. 386.

¹¹¹ The letter is dated 4 May 1782. See Johnson, *Letters*, ed Chapman, ii, p.482. For Boswell's account of the letter and Johnson's reply, see Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, iv, pp. 148-151. The affair and the relevant letter are also summarised in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 55 (1786), pp. 93-95.

the character of a master of an academy recommended the “Beauties of your writings” [...], to all persons who have the care of youth, as well calculated to convey at once both pleasure and instruction, particularly to young minds’.¹¹² That an anthology of extracts especially suited to, and marketed as, an aid to education could be seen to recommend suicide, was viewed by the *Gentleman’s Magazine* as a ‘very dangerous misconstruction of a passage’, which threatened to undermine the authority which such collections claimed for themselves and their subjects.¹¹³

This process of anthologising evident in the *Beauties of Johnson* appropriated Johnson’s words so that they were ‘no longer in his power’. The context in which they were now placed was not that in which they were intended to be read and their meaning had altered to something other than Johnson’s authorial intention. The ‘Death’ extract heralded the metaphorical ‘death’ of the author and the rise of the compiler who mediated between words and their readers. Despite this, the titular affiliation of the collection with Johnson and its use of Johnsonian quotation to validate the format and approach, placed an image of a Johnsonian author figure as the cornerstone of the collection’s authority. Like Dodd’s collection of Shakespeare, words spoken by fictional characters or as hypothetical propositions, were, within the context of the anthology, placed in the mouth of the new ‘Johnson’ that the collection had created. This authorial ambiguity was such that St Albyn desired Johnson to ‘favour the public [...], with an explanation, which will effectively remove so erroneous an idea’.¹¹⁴ Although Johnson had been authorially distanced from the contents of the anthology, it was now necessary for him to intervene

¹¹² *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 55 (1786), p. 93.

¹¹³ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 55 (1786), p. 94.

between compiler and public. The author would have to be resurrected in order to rectify the misunderstanding and authorise his own words once again.

Johnson, aged seventy-three, was in poor health and recuperating in the country when he responded to the letter on 15 May. It is a significant letter as it affords a rare glimpse of an anthologised author responding to the contents of the anthology itself. Revealingly, the collection itself was of little interest to Johnson. He writes:

The book called "The Beauties of Johnson", is the production of I know not whom: I never saw it but by casual inspection, and considered myself as utterly disengaged from its consequences.¹¹⁵

Johnson appears to have paid little attention to the work, and, six months after its initial appearance, seems oblivious to its contents and to the details of its publication. As has been noted, Johnson did know Kearsley from his dealings with William Dodd (although he may not have known of William Cooke's involvement), but what is interesting is Johnson's sense of detachment from the text. The words may be his, but the figure of the compiler has intervened between the author and his work, creating a sense of distance between author and text. Johnson virtually ignored the text and the initial complaints surrounding it. He observes: 'I remember some notice in the paper; but, knowing that it must be misrepresented, I thought of it no more, nor do I now know where to find it in my own books'.¹¹⁶ Admittedly Johnson had been absent from London when the controversy began, but that he cannot locate the original passage in his own works further

¹¹⁵ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, iv, p. 150; Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Chapman, ii, pp. 482-483.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*

distances the author from the rendering of his writings in anthologised form. Such distancing is highlighted by W. Hale White as one of the disadvantages 'inseparable from a collection of striking passages'.¹¹⁷ A selected passage 'loses the weight of what goes before and comes after' and, in the case of the 'Death' extract, the passage has indeed lost 'what goes before and comes after', so much so that Johnson himself is unsure of the original context.¹¹⁸ He offers his correspondent an improvised version of what he supposed the argument of the original had been and promises 'some time in the next week, to have all rectified.'¹¹⁹

Indeed, as George Birkbeck Hill observes, Johnson, on his return to town 'lost little time in sending for Kearsley'.¹²⁰ A letter, dated five days after the reply to St. Albyn, on 20 May, reads as follows:

Mr Johnson sends compliments to Mr Kearsley, and begs the favour of seeing him as soon as he can. Mr Kearsley is desired to bring with him the last edition of what he has honoured with the name of Beauties.¹²¹ (see plate 7)

No record of this meeting survives, although a testimony to its outcome is provided in an announcement printed in the *Morning Chronicle* on 29 May. This confirmed that the paper was requested to 'print the whole passage, that its true meaning may appear, which

¹¹⁷ W. Hale White, ed., *Selections from Dr. Johnson's 'Rambler'* (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1907), p. iii.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, p.151; Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Chapman, ii, p. 483.

¹²⁰ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, p. 214.

¹²¹ Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Chapman, ii, p. 483, no. 782. Interestingly this letter was reprinted at the beginning of Kearsley's edition of William Cooke's *Life of Johnson* (1785), which also contained Johnson's writings in the Dodd affair. Here Kearsley presents the letter as a sort of commendation of the collection rather than the perhaps sarcastic and less than complimentary assessment which Johnson had intended.

is not to recommend suicide but exercise'.¹²² The entire passage with the extracted comment read:

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed: but while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from Heaven, and chronical from ourselves; the dart of death, indeed, falls from Heaven, but we poison it, by our own misconduct: to die is the fate of men; but to die with languishing is generally his folly.¹²³

Restored to its original context the passage is as Johnson anticipated, 'all true, and all blameless'.¹²⁴

Blameless the original extract may have been in its original context, but blame was to fall on Kearsley's method of anthologising which so completely appropriated the extract that it could no longer be easily located in Johnson's works. The 'dangerous misconstruction' of the passage was owing not only to the sentiments apparently expressed in its excerpted form, but also to the editorial method which placed it in the collection without any form of referencing to direct the reader to the narrative from which it was extracted. This lack of referencing was perhaps one of the issues which Johnson wished to discuss with Kearsley at their meeting. Interestingly, however, the 'last edition of what he has honoured with the name of Beauties' which Kearsley was to take to the meeting was not, in fact, the edition which had caused the problem. In the six months

¹²² Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Chapman, ii, p. 483, note to 781-4; *Gentleman's Magazine*, 55 (1786), p. 95.

¹²³ *Rambler*, No. 85, Johnson, *Works*, iv, p. 483.

¹²⁴ Johnson, *Letters*, ed. Chapman, ii, p. 483. Letter to St. Albyn of 15 May 1782, no. 781.

that had passed between the publication of the first edition of the *Beauties of Johnson* and their meeting, the anthology had altered considerably. The 'last' edition of the *Beauties of Johnson* would in fact have been the fifth edition of the text, which had been announced on 23 April 1782, boasting 'considerable additions'.¹²⁵ Moreover, Kearsley had added a second volume or 'Part II' to the collection, whose second edition was also announced on the 23 April, coinciding with the fifth edition of what had now become part one.¹²⁶ Not only had the *Beauties of Johnson* been evolving and expanding over the months, but it appears that part of this process encompassed Kearsley's response to the 'Death' extract, long before Johnson's correspondent raised the matter and Johnson met with Kearsley. The second edition of the first part was published, as Hazen states, 'probably during the last week in December, although the title page is dated 1782'.¹²⁷ Whether published in late 1781 or early 1782, this edition claimed to be 'enlarged and corrected' with, most significantly of all, 'the References added'.¹²⁸ Within a fairly short time elapsing from the original complaints of 12 December (to which St. Albyn had been referring), Kearsley had issued a new edition which aimed to halt, and to an extent rectify, the confusion resulting from the unreferenced extracts of the first edition. Indeed,

¹²⁵ Hazen, 'The *Beauties of Johnson*', p. 291 lists the major editions of the anthology as does Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, iv, p. 500. Technically speaking the 'last edition' of Kearsley's 'Beauties' would probably have been the *Beauties of Sterne*, which the *Town and Country Magazine* for April 1782 notes, 'may be classed under one head with the *Beauties of Johnson*', p. 213, an association which would no doubt have displeased Johnson. See Johnson's opinion of Sterne in chapter 4 below.

¹²⁶ Hazen points out that Kearsley had in fact 'used a cancel title-page to dispose of unsold copies' and that only the second and fifth editions of the first part were actually reprinted; the third and fourth editions comprised the sheets of the second edition, the title-page and advertisement being cancels. The sixth edition is a reissue of the fifth and the second part had only a single printing; the second and fifth editions (no third and fourth editions of the second part are thought to exist: it is assumed Kearsley jumped to the fifth edition of the second part in order to coincide with that of the first part), being made up from the same sheets as the first edition. See Hazen, 'The *Beauties of Johnson*', pp. 290-292.

¹²⁷ Hazen, 'The *Beauties of Johnson*', p. 291.

¹²⁸ *The Beauties of Johnson*, second edition, (London: G. Kearsley, 1782).

an announcement in the *Morning Chronicle* for 31 December 1781 states that references have been added in the new edition of the collection.¹²⁹

Kearsley's swift response with the second edition highlights the flexibility of the genre of the anthology and its ability to transform and reinvent itself according to public taste and demand. The second edition is also significant as the postscript to the preface of this edition provides an interesting response to the success of the format of the first edition and defence of the text, and indeed genre, as a whole. It refers to the 'very rapid and extensive' sale of the first edition, which, it claims 'justifies the idea of selecting thoughts from so celebrated a writer' and 'calls upon the Editor to render the second edition as acceptable to the Public as possible'.¹³⁰ In order to do this, a reference 'to the place from whence it was extracted' is given at the end of each maxim. This, it is hoped, will 'gratify those who would wish to see any particular subject more extensively discussed in the original' and will avoid the accusation of misrepresentation being levelled at the collection.

For the reviewers, however, the genre's ability to adapt and alter was of little consequence, given the perceived fixity and authority of the printed book itself. The newspaper correction could not rectify the balance, for, in the opinion of the writer discussing the affair in the *Gentleman's Magazine*: 'the *misconstruction* arising from a *book* may long survive the *explanation* contained in a *newspaper*'.¹³¹ Indeed, as Johnson

¹²⁹ Helen Louise McGuffie, *Samuel Johnson in the British Press, 1749-1784: A Chronological Checklist* (New York & London: Garland, 1976), p. 270.

¹³⁰ *The Beauties of Johnson*, second edition, p. viii. Interestingly, at the end of the volume, there is an advertisement for the forthcoming second part which 'will form a complete Selection from the Whole of Dr. Johnson's Works'.

¹³¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 55 (1786), p. 93. Interestingly the correspondent, one A. B., sees the magazine as a '*lasting Repository*' which can 'perpetuate the Doctor's Vindication of himself, as well as to communicate to the world the steps which led to it'.

himself commented: 'when a book is once in the hands of the public, it is considered as permanent and unalterable'.¹³² The anthologies of 'beauties', which illustrated the flexibility of print and emphasised a somewhat utilitarian approach to literature, were also bound by this fixity and permanence of the physical form of the book, which was seen to endow a sense of indisputable authority. The attitude expressed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, however, also illustrates the growing status and influence of the genre of the anthology, despite its ongoing miscellaneous categorisation in the periodicals and reviews. The 'Death' episode highlights the fact that the collection is viewed as a 'book', something more permanent, and therefore more potentially damaging, than the ephemeral 'newspaper'. For Kearsley, the collection represented a subjective choice of passages which removed words from their original context and repackaged them for their readers, and should be read as such. As the second edition states: 'this is not a Book of *Essays*, but of *Maxims, &c, selected from Essays*', the editor's purpose being 'to contract diffusive reasonings into *short sentences*'.¹³³ That his readers needed to be reminded of this fact, suggests the collection was in danger of being endowed with too much authority. The addition of the references was intended to shed some of that authority back on the original author, Johnson, whose works could now be consulted alongside the shortened versions within the anthology.

¹³² Johnson, *Rambler*, No. 23, *Works*, iii, p. 127.

¹³³ *The Beauties of Johnson*, 2nd edition, (London: Kearsley, 1782), p. viii.

IV

Readership and Reception

Ironically, of course, the inclusion of references implies the reader has a complete edition of the original works to hand, a condition unlikely to apply for the majority of the genre's target audience. As the *Town and Country Magazine* commented in 1782, upon the *Beauties of Johnson* and the recently published *Beauties of Sterne*, such collections would 'doubtless well afford entertainment to such readers as have not the time, or opportunity, to read the originals at large'.¹³⁴ The compilation was targeted at those who could not afford the time or money necessary to read — or buy — the entirety of Johnson's output, and so the addition of references can be seen as little more than an addition to appease more scholarly readers who knew Johnson's writing more intimately. As Hale White commented in his own collection from Johnson's works: 'many people who deserve consideration will not or cannot read big books, and a few, by a chance word which fits their own case, may be drawn to study the author'.¹³⁵ This belief that readers would dip into such collections and be drawn into reading the author by virtue of a chance word or phrase which caught their attention was echoed by Johnson himself. Boswell records that Johnson was 'a great friend to books like the French *Esprit d'un tel*; for example, *Beauties of Watts, &c., &c.*', of which he is recording as saying 'a man will often look and be tempted to go on, when he would have been frightened at books of a

¹³⁴ *Town and Country Magazine*, (1782), p. 213.

¹³⁵ Hale White, ed., *Selections from Dr. Johnson's 'Rambler'*, p. iii.

larger size and of a more erudite appearance.’¹³⁶ The small, portable, duodecimo format of the volumes was accessible, unintimidating, and most importantly, cheap.

The *Beauties of Johnson* also potentially appealed to those readers who would find Johnson’s style difficult and who, in the words of Robert Burrows, ‘labour out a passage through the palpable obscure’.¹³⁷ The collection not only made Johnson’s writings available in an inexpensive form affordable to a wider, less scholarly audience, but also made his style more accessible and comprehensible. Burrows, in his ‘Essay on the Stile of Dr Samuel Johnson’ of 1787, draws attention to the perceived obscurity of Johnson’s style, to which ‘the testimony of all unlearned readers abundantly testifies’.¹³⁸ Johnson’s use of ‘polysyllables of Latin derivation’ is bemoaned as a ‘wilful exclusion’ of the unlearned reader, as well as excluding ‘almost the whole female world’.¹³⁹ The reader of the *Rambler*, complains Burrows, is faced with a ‘labyrinth of long and learned words’ which require the reader to have a copy of the *Dictionary* at hand. These aspects of Johnson’s writing — which Burrows refers to as ‘blemishes’ and ‘faults’ — reflect an approach to Johnson which follows the recurring critical discourse of praise and blame. He observes that Johnson’s ‘universally acknowledged beauties’ are well known and ‘induce imitation’, requiring him, as Johnson had done of Shakespeare, to focus upon his blemishes and ‘give warning to his imitators’.¹⁴⁰ That Johnson is in turn critiqued within the beauties/faults discourse is interesting, but the fact that an anthology of his ‘beauties’ effectively removes those rather elitist and esoteric elements which Burrows views as

¹³⁶ Quoted in *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, 2:2.

¹³⁷ Robert Burrows, *Essay on the Stile of Doctor Samuel Johnson* (1787), The Augustan Reprint Society, Introduction by Frank H. Ellis (Los Angeles: University of California, 1984), No. 229, p. 31.

¹³⁸ Burrows, *Essay*, p. 28.

¹³⁹ Burrows, *Essay*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁴⁰ Burrows. *Essay*, pp. 53-54.

faults, and opens up his writings to the unlearned and female reader, is significant.

Johnson's 'beauties' are not simply moral and critical. Some of the 'beauty' lies in their accessible, portable, affordable format.

Kearsley's collection aimed to do more than merely simplify the complexity of Johnson's language for less educated readers; it claimed to supplement the bibliography of Johnson, thus appealing to a more scholarly audience. The first edition remarks that 'very few are in possession of the *whole* of his works; many of them being published in the early parts of his fame' and thus now 'very difficult to be found'.¹⁴¹ The editor claims to have been 'favoured with a perusal of *all his pieces*' and so the collection boasts 'some novelty in the *matter* as well as in the *manner*'.¹⁴² The *Beauties of Johnson*, therefore, fulfilled a critical and bibliographical purpose which mediated between the polarities of 'laziness and learning', just as Dodd's collection had done. As a result, it was welcomed by the reviewers, the 'Death' episode notwithstanding. The *Monthly Review* heartily wished it 'success', observing that, 'The merit of Dr. Johnson as a moral and critical writer is well known', confirming the suitability of the collection's editorial preoccupation.¹⁴³ The review goes on to remark that Johnson's 'great excellence' lies 'deep in observations and acute remarks on men and manners', which are interwoven with reflections calculated, 'to impress the heart with a sense of the beauty of virtue and the obligations of religion'.¹⁴⁴ That the *Beauties of Johnson* retrieves these observations and acute remarks from Johnson's extensive, and, at times, difficult, writings is, in Johnson's own words, a 'laudable endeavour'. The text is in no way viewed as a

¹⁴¹ *Beauties of Johnson*, preface, p. v.

¹⁴² *ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Monthly Review*, 66 (1782), p. 237.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*

bowdlerisation or corruption of Johnson's work; rather it reveals an understanding of its strengths and highlights his status as a moral and critical author whose writings are generally viewed to be full of such maxims. As the *Monthly Review* states, the collector of the anthology 'sufficiently expresses the design of this publication in the Title-page' and, as such, it is a valid production which achieves what it sets out to do. Above all, the text is viewed as useful to the young 'for whose improvement and convenience, particularly in schools it seems principally intended'. The collection confirms Johnson's literary reputation for a new audience, presenting him to 'generations of young readers in a way that would certainly fix his image as a moralist'.¹⁴⁵ Johnson's readership would also potentially be extended to include a greater number of females, who, not being educated in the classics, might not have understood his Latinate and scholarly language unless in such a digested form. Indeed, as Boulton concludes, the *Beauties of Johnson* was 'a compilation which, possibly as much as any, consolidated Johnson's reputation as a sage and moral teacher, as well as satisfying an audience unaccustomed to sustained and literary pursuits'.¹⁴⁶

Not all the responses to the anthology were so positive however. James Callender's *Deformities of Johnson* was published in 1782 and utilised the beauties/defects discourse to situate itself in opposition to the *Beauties*, as a condemnation of Kearsley's satisfaction of popular curiosity through 'the rubric of aesthetic education'.¹⁴⁷ Scorning the laudable ideals of education and dissemination of Johnsonian wisdom, for which Kearsley's collection was praised, the *Deformities* echo

¹⁴⁵ Boulton, *Johnson: The Critical Heritage*, p. 14.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p. 337.

the *Beauties*, in as much as they are both ‘selected from his [Johnson’s] works’. They differ, however, in format; Callender rejecting the genre of the anthology for that of an extended narrative which delights in drawing attention to disparaging remarks made by Johnson about people such as Chesterfield and Swift, alongside the highlighting of various inadequacies of the *Dictionary*. When the essay, which lists many other such complaints and faults in Johnson’s work, finally ends, it is only to assert that ‘the subject seems *inexhaustible!*’¹⁴⁸ In this work, the discourse from which the *Beauties* anthology grew, is, to an extent, reclaimed back from the anthology to the critical essay, Callender’s bile harking back to the fault-finding of Rymer.

As with the *Beauties*, Johnson was also familiar with the *Deformities*. Boswell records writing to him and informing him that ‘as “The Beauties of Johnson” had been published in London, some obscure scribbler had published at Edinburgh what he called “The Deformities of Johnson”’.¹⁴⁹ Johnson, in his reply of 28 March 1782, commented: ““The Beauties of Johnson” are said to have made money for the collector; if the “Deformities” have the same success, I shall be still a more extensive benefactor’.¹⁵⁰ The *Beauties* was indeed successful, as Kearsley’s various imprints and editions illustrate. The *Deformities*, however, did not have the same good fortune. A letter from George Steevens to William Cole of 14 May 1782 is revealing:

Be not angry when you find that the same parcel includes the *Deformities*, a Scottish Pamphlet

¹⁴⁸ James Callender, *The Deformities of Johnson* (Edinburgh: for the author, 1782). Callender was a nephew of the poet Thomson.

¹⁴⁹ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, p. 148.

¹⁵⁰ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, p. 149. Here again we see that Johnson knew of the reputation and success of the *Beauties of Johnson* before he received St. Albyn’s letter that May.

written by a Club of Caledonian Wits. Every bookseller of credit in London has refused to sell it. The Doctor [...] laughs at such ribaldry, and offered, by way of frontispiece to it, a very ugly head of himself, which was meant to have been prefixed to his *Beauties*, but was cancelled at my desire.¹⁵¹

The *Town and Country Magazine* for November 1782 is less than enamoured with the *Deformities*, and gives, as a typical specimen of its arguments, the faintly ludicrous response to Johnson's observation of Scotland that there 'is no tree for shelter or timber, and that a tree may be shewn there as a horse in Venice'.¹⁵² Callender retorts that there 'are thousands of trees of all ages and dimensions within a mile of Edinburgh', and that 'the Rambler must have been blinder than darkness if he did not see them'.¹⁵³ Such is the kind of petty observation which litters the work. The 'force' of Callender's arguments, is, for the *Town and Country*, illustrated in its relation of an anecdote relating to a meeting between Johnson and the King. The latter enquired of Johnson 'why there were so many words in his Dictionary which he could not understand?' Johnson's reply, '*My book was not written for kings*', is given as an illustration of the 'grossness of Johnson's conversation', which, in Scotland, 'shocked all who were near him'. Callender tries to belittle Johnson's reputation and portrays him as rude and uncouth, commenting that 'no

¹⁵¹ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, iv, p. 499, appendix J. A letter from Callender of 4 October 1783 to the bookseller Stockdale requesting the remaining copies of the pamphlet to be returned, confirms he was the author and not the suspected club of Caledonian wits. The *Town and Country Magazine* (1782), p. 603, suspects the author is a 'head-strong Scotchman who thinks the doctor has not paid sufficient deference to his country in his Tour through Scotland.'

On the subject of portraits of Johnson, Kearsley seems to have commissioned various engravings of Johnson for the frontispiece of the *Beauties*. According to the 'Anecdotes of Johnson' published by Kearsley, reprinted in Birkbeck Hill's *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, ii, pp. 161-170, Johnson 'sat for [a] picture to Mr. Trotter, in February 1782, at the request of Mr. Kearsley, who had just furnished him with a complete list of all his works, for he confessed he had forgot more than half what he had written', p. 164. Other references to engravings for the *Beauties* can be found in the appendices of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. See appendix H, iv, pp. 459-461.

¹⁵² *Town and Country Magazine*, 14 (1782), p. 603.

man of common decency would have said what he did of the present R__l family'. Such anecdotes, the *Town and Country* termed 'wretched and groundless', and 'worthy only of such a critic'.

The *Deformities* may have attracted little more than censure, but the publicity it received raised the profile of the opposing *Beauties*. Indeed, as Benedict observes: 'later booksellers even bound the *Beauties* and *Deformities* together'.¹⁵⁴ Even the misconstrued entry under 'Death' undoubtedly gave the text publicity it would otherwise have lacked. Kearsley was not slow to take advantage of these events. He extended and improved the edition and recommended the collection for 'a Christmas box, or a New Year's gift, to those who wish to improve their own minds, or have the instruction of either sex committed to their care'.¹⁵⁵ The collection was quickly pirated in Ireland and in America, and was extremely popular.¹⁵⁶ The *Beauties of Johnson* was 'reprinted by twelve Dublin booksellers in 1782 and frequently quoted from in Irish periodicals and lent by the circulating libraries.'¹⁵⁷

The collection was therefore successful; it reached a ninth edition by the end of the century, and, in doing so, disseminated Johnson's writings to a new generation of readers. The collection's approach to Johnson's writings ensured that they 'belonged to the publick' in a portable and affordable format. Its repackaging of his writings in a collection of 'maxims and observations' contributed to Johnson's growing reputation as a dispenser of wit and wisdom on a variety of topics. The text equally benefited the

¹⁵³ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p. 337.

¹⁵⁵ Hazen, 'The *Beauties of Johnson*', p. 289.

¹⁵⁶ See Chapter 8, pp. 306-308 below.

¹⁵⁷ Richard Cargill Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers 1740-1800* (London: Maevell Publishing, 1986), p. 105.

bookseller George Kearsley. As G. B. Hill observes, 'Kearsley did very well' as a result of the *Beauties of Johnson*.¹⁵⁸ The text was relatively easy and cheap to produce: a hired compiler like Cooke could collate a collection in a short space of time and need not be paid much. With the expanding reading public and their growing interest in digestible literature, satisfying this demand through the form of the anthology was thus very profitable. With the *Beauties of Johnson*, Kearsley tapped into the growing tradition of 'Beauties' texts utilising and expanding upon the editorial techniques and structure employed in Dodd's anthology of Shakespeare. After the abolition of perpetual copyright, Kearsley exploited the potential of Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* transforming it into a commercial venture, rather than a scholarly one, and directed the focus of such collections from broad generic subjects to specific individual authors.

In its preoccupation with collecting the 'beauties' of Samuel Johnson, Kearsley's first author-orientated *Beauties* collection represents an important stage in the development of the *Beauties* tradition as a whole. It testifies to the influence of the beauties/defects critical debate and utilises earlier forms and methodologies of anthologising in order to market itself for a late-eighteenth-century readership. Following Dodd's techniques of extraction, arrangement, and compilation, the *Beauties of Johnson* appropriates the authorial persona of its subject, presenting Johnson as a dispenser of wisdom and moral maxims. Such a representation of Johnson as author was influential, and remains with us today, perpetuated by Boswell and other collectors of Johnsoniana. The editing of the author within the *Beauties of Johnson* illustrated a way of repackaging authors which would in turn influence the representation of many

¹⁵⁸ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, iv, p. 500, appendix J.

eighteenth-century writers. Kearsley himself would expand on his Johnsonian collection, publishing a series of such authorial *Beauties* from the works of Goldsmith, Fielding, Sterne, and Swift. As Johnson stated in his third *Rambler* essay: 'The task of an author is, either to teach what is known, or to recommend known truths, by his manner of adorning them'.¹⁵⁹ In recontextualising Johnson's works within the format of an anthology, Kearsley's *Beauties of Johnson* presents the authorial Johnson as precisely such a teacher, whose 'known truths', maxims, and observations, are recommended by the manner in which they are adorned and packaged: as a carefully selected bouquet of literary 'beauties'.

¹⁵⁹ *Rambler*, No. 3, Johnson, *Works*, iv, p. 134.

PART II

ANTHOLOGISING THE HUMORISTS

CHAPTER 4

‘POURING ONLY OUT OF ONE VESSEL INTO ANOTHER?’: EDITING
EXTRACTS IN *THE BEAUTIES OF STERNE*

I

Kearsley’s ‘complete Library’

On the 21 January 1782, the *Morning Chronicle* reported that objections had been raised by teachers regarding the price of the *Beauties of Johnson*. These objections led to the third edition of the collection being sold at the reduced price of 2 shillings instead of the 2s 6d. that the earlier edition[s] had cost.¹ Importantly, these objections testify to the fact that the marketing of such *Beauties* anthologies as suitable for the young and for the ‘use of schools’, was influential and more than mere bookseller’s patter. As has been noted, Goethe first came to know Shakespeare through Dodd’s *Beauties of Shakespear*, and doubtless many children likewise gained their first experience of Shakespeare, Johnson, and many other writers through such literary collections.²

Kearsley capitalised on the success of the *Beauties of Johnson* and its captive younger audience and followed it with anthologies devoted to the beauties of various other authors. Collections of the *Beauties of...* Goldsmith, Sterne, Watts, Fielding, and Swift were published in 1782, while a collection of Pope followed in 1783. Kearsley also published a *Beauties of Hume and Bolingbroke*, which, although referred to in an

¹ *Morning Chronicle*, (Jan 1782). Cited in McGuffie, *Samuel Johnson in the British Press*, p. 274.

² See chapter 2, p. 100 above.

advertisement at the end of the *Beauties of Swift* ('both in one volume, price ½ crown'), is not always treated or advertised as part of the series. Advertisements at the end of the collections of both Swift and Fielding suggest that the anthologies of Johnson, Goldsmith, Watts, Sterne, Fielding, Swift, and the forthcoming edition of Pope, were to be regarded as some kind of unified collection. They were 'sold together or separately', and, as one advertisement boasts: 'For so small a Number of Volumes, they form the most complete Library in the English Language, both for useful knowledge, and rational entertainment'.

Such a claim is interesting, not least because of the ironies inherent in the claim of a 'complete Library' compiled from volumes of extracted passages. That a collection of six anthologies (or seven if we include the *Beauties of Hume and Bolingbroke*) should be marketed as a complete library, is especially curious given the authors which Kearsley chose to include in this library of 'knowledge and rational entertainment'. While the individual authors represent some of the most familiar and celebrated writers of the eighteenth century, many of whom figure in most lists of eighteenth-century canonical writers, they are far from being wholly representative. The choices are even curious for a tradition that prided itself on its moral and educational value, and was packaging its contents as especially suited to younger readers. Swift, Sterne, and even Fielding, are often more frequently associated with bawdy humour, satire, burlesque and sexual innuendo, than high moral treatises or improving sentiments. Other authors one might expect to find included are notable by their absence. Where are Richardson, Defoe, or even Smollett, Addison, or Steele?³ Certainly the selection of writers Kearsley

³ Arguably Richardson pre-empted or even excluded himself from such treatment, by publishing his own *Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions and Reflections, Contained in the*

anthologises is significant. As a bookseller, one of Kearsley's prime concerns would be to ensure the largest possible audience, and, therefore, the largest monetary return for his publications. While the genre of the anthology offered a quick and relatively inexpensive means of generating sales, Kearsley had to compete with the countless cheap handbooks and miscellanies which flooded the market. The authors Kearsley chose to anthologise, therefore, had to be capable of selling a volume of 'beauties' by virtue of their reputation, and, furthermore, offer a new approach to texts already owned by many people.

Kearsley selected authors who were popular and modern, writers who had not had an anthology devoted to their works before, or writers whose reputations were such that a certain section of the reading public was excluded from reading their works and who would therefore benefit from the scrupulous selection process which the genre of the anthology afforded. He also selected writers who mainly wrote in the new popular prose form, especially in his initial collections of Johnson, Goldsmith, Sterne, and Fielding: authors who wrote poetry and drama, but whose major works were periodical essays and novels. As Benedict notes, Kearsley's publication of texts such as Chesterfield's *Letters* (1783), the *Moral Tales of M. Marmontel* (1763), and magazines such as the *Royal Female Magazine* (1760), and the *Sentimental Magazine* (1773),

Histories of Pamela, Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison (1755). The contents are laid out in a manner similar to a *Beauties* anthology, with headings arranged alphabetically and various sentiments pertaining to each heading listed beneath. See Samuel Richardson's *Published Commentary on Clarissa 1747-1765*, 3 vols (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1998). The preface testifies to the popularity of such texts: 'Sententious Maxims and Moral Aphorisms, collecting into a point, and concisely, but strongly, expressing elevated thoughts, beautiful sentiments, or instructive lessons, have always been well received by the public', p. vii.

document 'Kearsley's sensitivity to the growing female audience, his belief in prose fiction as the genre of the moment, and his appreciation of the profits to be had with a serial publication'.⁴ In his *Beauties* collections, Kearsley combines these elements, selecting mainly authors noted for their prose fiction, who are then edited in order to appeal to young, and, importantly, female readers and packaged as a series.

Yet while individuals such as Sterne, Swift, and Fielding are all authors who excelled in the genre of prose fiction and were undoubtedly popular authors to choose as a subject for an anthology, their writings are less obviously moral than those of Johnson. They were famed rather for an inextricable mixture of satire, innuendo, bawdy humour and coarse language, alongside elements of benevolence, morality, wisdom, and good-humour. These writers were not simply popular; they were to an extent, notorious. Interestingly, none of them were much admired by Johnson, in whose shadow they were cast within Kearsley's implicit hierarchy of writers. Boswell records that Johnson frequently attacked Swift and 'treated him with little respect as an authour'.⁵ Indeed, Johnson's dislike of Swift has been almost mythologized by many writers, among them William Makepeace Thackeray, who gave us the famous image of 'stout old Johnson', who, when forced to admit Swift into the company of poets, 'receives the famous Irishman, [...] takes off his hat to him with a bow of surly recognition, scans him from head to foot, and passes over to the other side of the street'.⁶ Fielding was equally derided by Johnson, who stated there was 'more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's than in all *Tom Jones*', and further labelled Fielding's most famous novel

⁴ Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', p. 335.

⁵ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ii, p. 65.

⁶ William Makepeace Thackeray, *The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by M. R. Ridley (London: Everyman, 1968), pp. 6-7.

as both 'vicious' and 'corrupt'.⁷ And Johnson's famously inaccurate assessment of Sterne's first novel amply illustrates his response to that writer: 'Nothing odd will do long. *Tristram Shandy* did not last'.⁸

Johnson's evaluation of each of these writers testifies to how far short they fell of his ideal, and how different their writings and characters were from Johnson's own. What Johnson primarily objected to in each of the writers was basically the same; their lack of decorum, propensity to 'low' humour, and the potential to corrupt their readers through the influence of such glaring faults. It is of little surprise then, that in their respective collections of 'beauties', each of these writers were necessarily more heavily edited than Johnson had been. For these writers to be anthologised in a collection which would continue to appeal to teachers and tutors and be utilised as an educational tool for the young and impressionable, Kearsley's *Beauties* would have to ensure, in Johnson's words, 'that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears'.⁹ To fulfil Johnson's ideal, writers such as Fielding and Swift (who are both critiqued within the fourth *Rambler* essay) would have to be carefully edited so that the passages selected from their works 'should not be mischievous or uncertain in [their] effects', as the 'Death' passage in the *Beauties of Johnson* had unintentionally been.¹⁰

Each of the anthologies devoted to Sterne, Fielding, Swift, and, to a lesser extent, Goldsmith, therefore, set about removing anything indecent and mischievous from their representation of their representative authors. Advertisements informed the reader that 'Every loose expression is carefully avoided in the *Beauties of Sterne*', a collection

⁷ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ii, p. 174.

⁸ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ii, p. 449.

⁹ *Rambler*, No. 4, Johnson, *Works*, iii, p. 21.

¹⁰ *Rambler*, No. 4, Johnson, *Works*, iii, p. 22.

which boasted that its contents were selected ‘for the Heart of Sensibility’. Similarly, the *Beauties of Swift* claims its contents are free from the ‘offensive flowers’ which are ‘here and there intermixed’ within Swift’s writings’ and, although not explicitly stated, the *Beauties of Fielding* conforms to a similar practice of excluding unsuitable material. These loose expressions and offensive flowers were removed from the extracts included in Kearsley’s collections of *Beauties* via a number of subtle and systematic editing processes which refashioned elements of the original works into a much more complex reading experience than is often appreciated. Aspects of these techniques were employed and developed within the anthologising of both Shakespeare and Johnson: the selecting of certain passages and omission of others; the use of headings; the deletion of dramatic and narrative detail. However, in the anthologies of Sterne, Fielding, Swift, and Goldsmith, these processes are enlarged upon and applied much more severely, resulting in a more radical reappropriation of these authors. Benedict has stated that ‘Kearsley’s *Beauties* clean books’ and ‘reinvent their authors as exemplary characters’.¹¹ How Kearsley’s anthologies effect this purging and reinvention forms the focus of the following chapters which explore the ways which the eighteenth-century ‘humorists’ are refashioned and repackaged to conform to a more Johnsonian ideal of authorship.

¹¹ Benedict, ‘The “Beauties” of Literature’, p. 339.

II

Emasculating Tristram, 1782-1785

At the opening of the fifth volume of Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, the narrator is to be found comparing the activity of making 'new books' to that of apothecaries making 'new mixtures' by 'pouring only out of one vessel into another'.¹² 'Are we for ever', asks Tristram, 'to be twisting, and untwisting the same rope? for ever in the same track — for ever at the same pace?' His complaint is not unique and is one frequently voiced throughout the eighteenth century. In his *Tale of a Tub* (1704), Swift had described a similar alchemical distillation of '*fair correct Copies*' of books into '*an infinite Number of Abstracts, Summaries, Compendiums, Extracts, Collections, Medulla's, Excerpta quædam's, Florilegia's, and the like, all disposed into great Order, and reducible upon Paper*'.¹³ Johnson had berated those who 'fill the world with books' by doing little more than laying 'two books before them, out of which they compile a third'.¹⁴ Likewise Fielding complained, in *Tom Jones*, that the filling a book with scraps of quotations from learned writers:

may indeed be considered a cheat on the learned world, who are by such means imposed upon to buy a second time in fragments and by retail what they already have in gross, if not in their

¹² Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, ed. by Melvyn New and Joan New, with Richard A. Davis and W. G. Day, 3 vols (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1978-1984), V:I; i, p. 408. All further references are taken from the *Florida Edition of Tristram Shandy* (abbreviated *TS*) unless stated otherwise, giving volume and chapter references followed by volume and page numbers in the *Florida Edition*.

¹³ Jonathan Swift, *A Tale of a Tub, Prose Works*, i, pp. 78-79.

¹⁴ Samuel Johnson, *The Idler*, No. 85, *Works*, ii, p. 264.

memories, upon their shelves; and it is still more cruel upon the illiterate, who are drawn in to pay for what is no manner of use to them.¹⁵

The market was inundated with such books, many of which were little more than the same books with different covers, and these comments testify to the steady rise of similar publications from the early decades of the century through to the 1760s.

Anthologies were precisely the kind of productions which Sterne, Johnson, Swift, and Fielding felt did little more than rearrange the same material in a different order, potentially cheating readers who are enticed to buy a fragmented version of what they already own in full. To avoid such accusations, many literary collections, as we have seen, aligned themselves with an educational and instructive purpose, and, in doing so, offered to make available to younger readers the works of writers previously viewed as unsuited for their perusal. Such was the case with Kearsley's anthologising of those authors later numbered among Thackeray's eighteenth-century 'humorists': Sterne, Swift, Fielding, and Goldsmith.

It was, perhaps, for these reasons that Sterne was viewed as a suitable subject for the next volume of Kearsley's series of *Beauties* collections. As Thackeray was to comment: 'There is not a page in Sterne's writing but has something that were better away, a latent corruption — a hint, as of an impure presence'.¹⁶ This opinion is one of which the editor of the *Beauties of Sterne* was all too aware seventy years earlier. The preface to the first edition, announced in April 1782, observed:

¹⁵ Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*, ed. by Fredson Bowers with an introduction and commentary by Martin C. Battestin, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974), ii, pp. 619, Book XII, chapter I. Henceforth abbreviated as *TJ*.

¹⁶ Thackeray, *English Humorists*, p. 239.

the *chaste* part of the world complained so loudly of the obscenity which taints the writings of *Sterne*, (and indeed, with some reason), that those readers under their immediate inspection were not suffered to penetrate beyond the title-page of his *Tristram Shandy*.¹⁷

Sterne's works were regarded as so obscene and unfit for general consumption that

It was highly necessary on a particular score to make this selection: the *chaste* lovers of literature were not only deprived themselves of the pleasure and instruction so conspicuous in this magnificent assemblage of Genius, but their rising offspring, whose minds it would polish to the highest perfection were prevented from tasting the enjoyment likewise.¹⁸

The anthology, therefore, offered those 'chaste lovers of literature' and their offspring who were prevented from reading Sterne's works by his obscenity and sexual ambiguity, a means of obtaining his writing in a digested, purged, and more accessible format. As the sexual ambiguity of the preface suggests, those chaste readers 'not suffered to penetrate beyond the title page' of *Tristram Shandy*, included female as well as young readers. Sterne himself testifies to this opinion of his first novel. In a letter, dated 30 January 1760, he responds to the view that his book 'cannot be put into the hands of any woman of *character*', exclaiming:

But for the chaste married and chaste unmarried part of the sex – they must not read my book!
Heaven forbid the stock of chastity should be lessen'd by the life and opinions of Tristram
Shandy – yes, his opinions – it would certainly debauch 'em!¹⁹

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ *The Beauties of Sterne*, preface. Howes reprints the part of the preface to the third edition (substantially the same as the first) and to the tenth edition in *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, pp. 256-258.

¹⁹ Sterne, *Letters*, p. 90.

Sterne's reference to the 'chaste married and chaste unmarried part of the sex', echoed in the preface to his *Beauties*, reveals his awareness that not only mature women but young girls should not, according to public opinion, read his book, for fear it may debauch and corrupt. Sterne's hyperbolic sarcasm is evident in his remarks, but for all that they are not exaggerated, being echoed by a number of contemporary voices. Vicesimus Knox, an ordained minister and headmaster of Tonbridge school, included extracts from Sterne in his own compilations of *Elegant Extracts* (1783) and *Elegant Epistles* (1790), but says of him:

I wish it were possible to give him the praise of morality as well as of genius; but the poison he carries is subtle, and the more dangerous as it is palatable. I believe no young mind ever perused his books without finding those passions roused and inflamed.²⁰

Clara Reeve testifies to the view that women ought not to read *Tristram* in *The Progress of Romance* (1785). Euphrasia and Hortenius are discussing literature and the latter asks the former for her opinion of *Tristram Shandy*.

Euph. I must beg of *you* to decide upon its merits, for it is not a woman's book.

Hort. Indeed I will not allow of your excuse. – You have spoken freely enough of many other writers, and if you are a competent judge of them, why not of *Sterne*?

Euph. You urge me closely, - in verity I have never read this book half through, and yet I have read enough to be ashamed of. Fashion which countenances every folly, induced me to begin it; - but what can I say of it with safety?²¹

²⁰ From 'On the Manner of Writing Voyages and Travels', *Essays Moral and Literary*. Cited in Howes, *Sterne: Critical Heritage*, p. 251.

²¹ Howes, *Sterne: Critical Heritage*, pp. 262-263.

That *Tristram* is regarded as a man's and not a woman's book is significant. Euphrasia is ashamed to have read even half of it and tellingly remarks: 'what can I say of it with safety?' To comment on the novel threatens the reputation of the commentator. A woman simply should not have read it in the first place and to have done so reflects badly on her judgement and her morality.

One woman who had read the novel, or at least the first volumes published in 1760, was Richardson's correspondent, Lady Dorothy Bradshaigh. She admits to having read the volumes and that they 'some times made me laugh', but laments, as many also did of Swift and Fielding, that Sterne 'cou'd not contain himself within the bounds of decency'.²² Whether women should read the novel or not was, therefore, a topic of much debate in the years following the novel's publication, and the dominant opinion appeared to be that the most chaste and respectable of women ought not to read the type of book which *Tristram* was seen to exemplify. This opinion is summarised in a letter written by Mary Granville Delany, wife of Dr. Patrick Delany, Dean of Down, to her sister in May 1760 discussing Sterne's novel:

as neither I nor any of my particular set have read it, or shall read it, I know nothing of it more than what you have said about it. Mrs. Clayton and I had a furious argument about reading books of a bad tendency; I stood up for the preserving a purity of mind, and discouraging works of *that kind* – *she* for trusting to her *own strength* and *reason*, and bidding defiance to any injury such books could do her; but as I *cannot presume* to depend on my own strength of mind, I think it safest and best to *avoid* whatever may prejudice it.²³

²² Howes, *Sterne: Critical Heritage*, p. 90.

From such accounts, the opinion voiced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* that the indecency the novel contains will do 'no mischief', and that although 'it will disgust a delicate mind, [...] it will not sully a chaste one', does not seem to be the majority opinion in 1782.²⁴ *Tristram*, of all Sterne's writings, is considered to be a book which belongs firmly in the masculine domain, until, that is, the *Beauties of Sterne* edited the text so that women would, for the first time, be able to become acquainted with the novel without worrying that it will corrupt, debauch, or sully their 'purity of mind'.

The editor of the collection, known only as 'W.H.', claims to have extracted 'the most distinguished passages on which the sun of Genius shines so resplendent' from Sterne's works, while omitting the parts which more 'chaste' readers of whatever age or sex would find obscene or indecent. That Sterne's works were so littered with sexual innuendo and bawdy language that an anthology of his works was necessary for his writing to be accessible to young or female readers otherwise restricted from reading his novels, highlights just how different the subject of Kearsley's second *Beauties* collection was from that of his first. Indeed, the manner in which Kearsley chose to publish his second collection indicates that he saw the choice of Sterne as more radical, and certainly riskier, than that of Johnson. The first edition of the *Beauties of Sterne* states that it was printed for T. Davis, J. Ridley, W. Flexney, J. Sewel, and G. Kearsley.²⁵ That Kearsley joined with a conger of other booksellers to produce this volume is interesting,

²³ Howes, *Sterne: Critical Heritage*, p. 61.

²⁴ *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxxvii (February 1767), p. 756. See also Howes, *Sterne: Critical Heritage*, p. 180.

²⁵ Thomas Davis, who may have been based in Russell Street, Covent Garden; John Ridley, a bookseller based in St. James, Westminster, William Flexney, a bookseller based in St. Andrew, Holborn, and J. Sewel[1] is possibly John Sewell, a Cornhill stationer and bookbinder.

as it is the only one of the 1782 author-orientated *Beauties* series in which he does so.²⁶

The possible reasons for this amalgamation are numerous. Joining with a number of other booksellers would, of course, split the production costs and lessen the financial burden and the risk involved, especially if the collection was a failure. Equally, perhaps Kearsley was not as confident about a collection of a less canonical writer such as Sterne, who, despite his popularity, was a figure about whom opinion was divided regarding the merit or morality of his works. While Johnson's fame was so fixed that he could not fail to sell an edition of his beauties, the anthologising of an author like Sterne was a much more complex venture.²⁷

Sterne was no longer living, as Johnson was, but his death only fourteen years earlier meant that his writings were still known by the present generation and that his memory was still very much alive. Sterne's works had recently been published in ten volumes by a group of London booksellers, which, significantly, included Kearsley in 1780. This was the 'first authoritative collected edition of Sterne's *Works*', and was 'to remain the standard one [...] for nearly 125 years'.²⁸ Sterne's popularity at this time is also illustrated by the publication of *Sterne's Witticisms, or Yorick's Convivial Jester* (1782), a collection of witticisms from Sterne (and others), while extracts from Sterne's

²⁶ He had joined with some of the same booksellers to publish the *Johnsoniana; or a collection of bon mots, &c. by Dr. Johnson, and others*, which was printed for J. Ridley, W. Shropshire, W. Davis, T. Evans, G. Kearsley, Wallis and Stonehouse, Richardson and Urquhart, and W. Flexney, 1776. This text may have given Kearsley the idea for his *Beauties* collections; see Benedict, 'The "Beauties" of Literature', pp. 335-336.

²⁷ Another 'new' edition of the text was published by the same group of booksellers in 1782, possibly a reissue of the same text, although this edition reveals the printer to be C. Etherington. The third edition, also 1782, is, however, no longer the product of the larger group of booksellers, now simply printed by Etherington for Kearsley. All the other London editions are published by Kearsley alone, with the exception of the editions which appeared after Kearsley's death in 1790. The editions of 1793 are printed for 'C. & G. Kearsley' and the 13th edition of 1799 is printed for G. Kearsley, J. Walker, Vernon and Hood, Lackington, Allen and Co., T. Hurst, and Ogilvy and Son.

writings turned up in various other compilations.²⁹ Sterne may therefore have been popular and influential, but his writings were of a nature so different to those of Johnson that it would be difficult to mould Sterne's works into the kind of Johnsonian maxims that had comprised the previous *Beauties* collection. As John Duncan in *An Essay on Genius* (1820), was to point out nearly forty years later, Johnson's abilities lay in 'pointed sayings and comprehensive axioms', rather than in 'flowing eloquence and expanded enumeration'.³⁰ Sterne, in comparison, possesses the inferior powers of mingling facts with arguments: 'How many principles does he give with accuracy; but how much more excellent is he in describing and tracing a train of circumstances, and following nature in her various windings, when conducting events, and displaying the emotions of the heart'.³¹ Sterne does not give us maxims and principles as Johnson does. His strength lies in his ability to play with, and control, narrative. Whereas if Johnson, the century's most famous 'man of maxims', were 'to be judged of by his art in telling a story' he would, in Duncan's view, 'be pronounced a man of no ability'.³²

This contrast in style meant that Sterne and Johnson were often placed in opposition to one another, as, for example, in Charles Dibdin's 1790 defence of Sterne against the 'pretender' Johnson, whom he labels 'Oliver'. 'I have not the slightest doubt', Dibdin remarks, 'that if STERNE had invented a series of dogmas in opposition to those which were daily uttered by Oliver, and credited as gospel by his adherents, an

²⁸ Howes, *Critical Heritage*, p. 246.

²⁹ See Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 180 on *Sterne's Witticisms*. See also Howes, *Yorick and the Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), pp. 63-64 where Howes notes that 'Collections of sermons usually contained one or two of Yorick's and prose anthologies would be sure to include some of the 'pathetic' pieces'. He cites as examples, *The Protestant Preacher* (London, 1781) and *The Narrative Companion and Entertaining Moralist* (London, 1789).

³⁰ Howes, *Sterne: Critical Heritage*, p. 366.

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *ibid.*

universal laugh would have been raised to the honour of STERNE, and at the expense of the pretender, and perhaps the credit of his pretensions'.³³ Despite Dibdin's obvious preference for Sterne, the basic disparity between the two writers is again clear.

Johnson's reputation had come to rest upon the image of him as a dispenser of maxims, or dogmas in this case, whereas Sterne was anything but a maxim writer; his writing so digressive that it barely settles on any one opinion for long enough to form a maxim.

The editor's task in the *Beauties of Sterne* was, therefore, twofold. Not only did he aim to cull Sterne's indelicate elements and render him suitable for a readership which included women and children, he also had to find a technique of editing Sterne's very different narrative style in order to create a collection of 'beauties'. The technique adopted by the editor of the collection was to emphasise the one facet of Sterne's writing which mediated between the extremes of Sterne's own personality and his writing — between the roles of the Anglican clergyman and digressive storyteller — his sentimentalism. The full title of the anthology illustrates the editorial bias that the collection favours: *The Beauties of Sterne; including all his Pathetic Tales, and most distinguished Observations on Life. Selected for the heart of Sensibility*. Sterne's 'beauties' are, therefore, presented as twofold, comprising his pathetic tales and his distinguished observations. The latter indicates he has moral truths to offer, as Johnson did, while the former stresses precisely the element of Sterne's writing which is so different to that of Johnson: his ability to compose stories and tales. The resulting anthology is a mixture of short maxim-like statements, longer extracts, and extensive passages which frequently focus on prominent episodes from the novels. All these are, however, governed by their selection for the 'heart of *Sensibility*' once more suggesting

³³ Howes, *Sterne: Critical Heritage*, p. 282.

that the collection's contents were selected with a female readership in mind.

Of the passages included in the first edition of the *Beauties of Sterne* the majority are extracted from Sterne's *Sermons*. Eighty-two of the total 137 extracts come from this source, while twenty-five are taken from *Tristram Shandy*, twenty-two from the *Sentimental Journey*, and eight from Sterne's letters. The prevalence of the *Sermons* indicates not only their contemporary popularity (Ian Campbell Ross reminds us they were 'more commercially successful than even *Tristram Shandy* itself'), but emphasises the strong moral tendency of the collection, reminding the reader that Sterne was first and foremost, an Anglican clergyman.³⁴ The extracts from the *Sermons* are not significantly internally altered or amended, yet the removal from their original context into that of the anthology does free them from the associations which dogged their original publication. While the *Sermons* themselves were generally well received, the manner in which Sterne published the first volumes, in May 1760, was viewed by the *Monthly Review* as the 'greatest outrage against Sense and Decency, that has been offered since the first establishment of Christianity'.³⁵ The 'outrage' was owing to the inclusion of two title pages; the first announcing the sermons as those of 'Mr. Yorick', the second admitting Sterne's true authorship. The 'impropriety of a clergyman exchanging his gown for a jester's cap' threatened to make a mockery of the church and Sterne's profession, while the authorial ambiguity and instability also threatened the authority of the text itself.³⁶ Transferred into the context of the anthology, this authorial ambiguity is resolved by positioning the *Sermons* as central to the representation of Sterne which it seeks to promote. The *Sermons*, in anthologised form, are restored to the

³⁴ Ian Campbell Ross, *Laurence Sterne: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 245.

³⁵ *Monthly Review*, 22 (May 1760), pp. 422-425. Cited in Howes, *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, p. 77.

authorship of the collection's titular 'Sterne', a Sterne more unified than the clergyman-author who 'depending on his audience [...] was happy to take on the part of the facetious Tristram Shandy or the benevolent parson Mr Yorick'.³⁷

The individual extracts selected from the *Sermons* are also revealing. Unlike Sterne's novels, there is nothing within in the *Sermons* which the 'chaste' reader of the collection's preface would find offensive. Sterne claims, as Parson Yorick does in *Tristram Shandy*, that his sermons have proceeded 'more from the heart than the head', a statement one could read as a claim of their sentimental nature, invoking the familiar sentimental dichotomy of 'heart' and 'head'. For all the reasoned argument contained in Sterne's *Sermons*, which are wholly typical in terms of structure, themes, and argumentation as those of many contemporary clergymen, the *Beauties of Sterne* highlights the elements of Sterne's theological writings which appeal to the heart rather than the head. For example, an extract headed 'Pity', taken from the sermon entitled 'Philanthropy Recommended', can be read as a definition of sentimental feeling in its purest and most laudable manifestation:

In benevolent natures, the impulse to pity is so sudden, that, like instruments of music, which obey the touch – the objects which are fitted to excite such impressions, work so instantaneous an effect, that you would think the will was scarce concerned and that the mind was altogether passive in the sympathy which her own goodness has excited. The truth is – the soul is generally in such cases so busily taken up, and wholly engrossed by the object of pity, that she does not

³⁶ Campbell Ross, *Laurence Sterne: A Life*, p. 15.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 6.

attend to her own operations, or take leisure to examine the principles upon which she acts.³⁸

The benevolent and sentimental person is so moved by the distress of others that he selflessly and swiftly takes action to relieve the distress of others. Of course, as Sterne illustrates in the episode of 'The Monk' in his second novel, *A Sentimental Journey*, such laudable feelings do not always translate into laudable actions. Despite generous intentions, Yorick determines not to give the poor monk begging money from him a 'single sous', and similarly in the sermon, the sudden impulse to pity is not immediately forthcoming.

The good Samaritan, the parable of whom provides the basis of the sermon, is presented as being governed by precisely such impulsive emotions, which spur him to help the injured man by the roadside. Ironically, however, in this instant of impulse the Samaritan is presented engaging in around a page of reflections and reasonings, along the lines of:

Good God! what a spectacle of misery do I behold - a man stripped of his raiment - wounded - lying languishing before me upon the ground just ready to expire [...]. But perhaps my concern should lessen when I reflect on the relations in which we stand to each other - that he is a Jew and I am a Samaritan. [...] let me change conditions with him for a moment and consider, had his lot befallen me as I journeyed in the way, what measure I should have expected at his hands.³⁹

³⁸ Sterne, *The Sermons of Laurence Sterne*, ed. by Melvyn New, 2 vols (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), volumes iv (Text) and v (Notes) of the *Florida Edition of the Works of Laurence Sterne*, iv, pp. 26-27. All further quotations are from this edition and abbreviated as *Sermons*.

³⁹ Sterne, *Sermons*, iv, pp. 27-28.

By the time he has finished another half page of similar pondering it is a wonder the poor languishing fellow is still alive! It is significant that within the original context of the sermon, the apparent disparity between impulse and reflection is explored and critiqued, revealing the sentimental ideal of heart over head, is rarely so simple when its precepts are applied to real life.

The Sermons incorporate a variety of sentimental images and motifs. Many biblical protagonists such as Jacob, Job, David, and St. Peter are transformed into sentimental men of feeling, who weep as a physical manifestation of their sensibility. Pictures are drawn of peasants and poor rustics who are frequently presented as objects of poverty, misfortune, and above all, pity, while the language of the sermons draws upon a sense of theatricality, the physical manifestations of internal feeling upon which the vogue of sentimentalism was based. The sermons are littered with language such as 'drama', 'picture', 'scene', 'sketch'd', and 'spectacle', and invocations such as 'look', 'behold', 'observe', reiterating that the sentimental is in its very essence a 'spectacle'. As it is a man's actions which determine his true nature in the eyes of the world, his sensibility must be observable to his fellow man, as must be the scene or object which inspired it, to have had its desired effect. A passage taken from the sermon entitled 'The House of Feasting and the House of Mourning Described' encapsulates many of these sentimental elements within a single extract. Headed 'House of Mourning', the extract constantly encourages its reader to 'behold' various 'affecting spectacle[s]'; from 'a virtuous family lying pinched with want', to the 'kind and indulgent father' who lies 'breathless', 'torn in an evil hour from his children and the bosom of a disconsolate

wife'.⁴⁰ The reader is encouraged to contemplate 'the miseries and misfortunes, the dangers and calamities to which the life of man is subject'; the sentimental language and imagery drawing a picture of misery designed to inspire pity in the benevolent, feeling heart.

Such extracts portray Sterne, not only as an advocate of sentimentalism, but as a man of feeling himself. The *Sermons* provide material which is edifying and of a moral bent, reinforcing an image of Sterne as first and foremost a clergyman of a more serious cast than his fictional Parson Yorick. This portrayal of Sterne as a sentimental writer is continued in the extracts selected from Sterne's two novels, both of which are edited much more radically than the *Sermons* which are transplanted into the anthology with relatively little editorial alteration. Sterne's first novel, *Tristram Shandy*, is unsurprisingly the most heavily edited to render it suitable for those youthful and female readers not previously permitted to read it. The most famous sentimental episodes are culled from the novel, and these episodes are edited in such a way as to concentrate the sentimentality of the extracts and to remove any extraneous narrative detail.

As Alan B. Howes suggests, 'Sterne fared a little better' at the hand of his compiler 'than did some of his brother authors, since the somewhat disconnected character of his work meant that individual passages could be extracted with less real mutilation'.⁴¹ The point is reiterated by John Mullan, who observes that 'Sterne's writings did [...], lend themselves to the processes of selection and citation by which he was eventually construed as the arch-sentimentalist'.⁴² Sterne, who emphasised the

⁴⁰ Sterne, *Sermons*, iv, p. 16.

⁴¹ Alan B. Howes, *Yorick and the Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), p. 63.

⁴² John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 154.

digressive, episodic, and fragmentary nature of his own writings with the frequent incorporation of numerous interpolated tales and fragments, certainly fared better in this respect than his fellow novelist Henry Fielding. This is partly due to the genre of the novel itself, which is, as Leah Price observes, better placed than most 'to escape the anthology's sphere of influence'.⁴³ Ian Bell suggests that 'the extreme particularity of the novel hindered its abilities to reach towards general moral truths'.⁴⁴ Narrative detail and continuity, characterisation, and the demands of plot, all conspire to prevent the novelist, in the words of Virginia Woolf, from stopping 'in the middle or the beginning of their great scenes to write anything that one could cut out with a pair of scissors or loop around with a line of red ink'.⁴⁵ Although *Tristram Shandy* is undoubtedly episodic and digressive, and follows no linear or chronological narrative sequence which would allow individual passages to be easily extracted, its interconnectedness and particularities would not admit the systematic deletion of characters, locations and authorial injections necessary to transform Sterne's words into universal maxims and truisms. As a result, although many of the headings echo those general heads found in the *Beauties of Johnson* and other commonplace books ('Compassion', 'Slander', 'Pity'), there are also a number which reflect the particularities of the novels from which they are selected. Episodes are entitled 'The Dead Ass', 'Trim's Explanation of the Fifth Commandment', and 'The Pie-Man', focusing on characters or situations in the novels rather than general commonplaces or moral truisms. The representation of Sterne is that of an anti-Johnsonian sentimental storyteller rather than dispenser of maxims, and

⁴³ Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Ian A. Bell, *Henry Fielding: Authorship and Authority* (London & New York: Longman, 1994), p. 193.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*, p. 6.

correspondingly, the passages selected from Sterne's first novel are longer passages than those found in the *Beauties of Johnson*.

One of the shorter extracts anthologised from *Tristram Shandy*, the following passage from the original novel, is included in the anthology under the heading of 'Consolation':

Before an affliction is digested, — consolation ever comes too soon;— and after it is digested, — it comes too late: so that you see madam, there is but a mark between these two, as fine almost as a hair, for a comforter to take aim at.⁴⁶

Within the anthology this short passage is edited, the authorial interpolation of 'so that you see madam' omitted. Not only does this remove the sense of authorial intimacy, but it transforms Sterne's rather disjointed narrative and gives the sentiment a greater sense of coherence and maxim-like authority, spoken by the anthology's titular 'Sterne' rather than the novel's boisterous Tristram. The majority of passages extracted from the novel are longer, more sentimental episodes, and these display a similar preoccupation with rendering Sterne's disjointed narrative (the very quality which aids the extraction of passages) more unified and coherent.

Similar editorial activities are evident in the treatment afforded to what is perhaps Sterne's most famous sentimental episode from *Tristram Shandy*: the story of Le Fevre. Placed prominently as the second extract in the anthology, this is a long passage, spanning eight chapters in the original text.⁴⁷ Although impossible to render

⁴⁶ *TS*, III;XXIX; i, p. 225.

⁴⁷ *TS*, VI:VI-XIII.

such a long passage independent of its particularist roots in the wider context of the novel, the *Beauties of Sterne* nevertheless edits this piece in such a way as to render it a more consistent story, and one more suited to a female readership.⁴⁸ Therefore, while the anthology does not delete all references to characters' names, it does remove interpolations which stress the digressive and intertextual qualities of the novel. The passage begins by setting the scene: 'It was some time in the summer of that year in which *Dendermond* was taken by the allies, when my uncle *Toby* was one evening getting his supper'. In the original novel, the sentence breaks off after 'allies' and informs the reader of the time scale when all this took place in the context of the lives of the characters. The reader is thus informed that it was 'about seven years before my father came into the country', and as many years 'after the time, that my uncle *Toby* and *Trim* had privately decamped from my father's house in town', before the narrative returns to the particular evening when Toby was settling down to supper.⁴⁹ The anthology removes all such unnecessary digressive material not directly related to the story in question; a methodology which endows the narrative with a greater sense of unity than the original, yet which also misrepresents Sterne's skilfully interwoven and digressive narrative structure. The descriptions of Toby lighting and smoking his first and second pipes are also omitted, as is the majority of Chapter XI which relates Yorick's methods of sermon composition and annotation. The sense of unity and cohesion is further enforced by the assimilation of a number of chapters into one extended passage. By deleting the chapter divisions in the narrative, the anthology

⁴⁸ Of course that the passage needs to be edited at all for such a readership is interesting, Sterne having explicitly dedicated the story to Lady Spencer at the beginning of volume V.

⁴⁹ *TS*, VI:VI; ii, p. 499.

removes a sense of the highly self-conscious literary nature of the novel. The accumulative effect of the editing highlighted by this episode seems to attempt to concentrate the sentimentality of the narrative, by stripping it of irrelevancies which detract from the linear progression of the story. One final editorial deletion illustrates the editor's desire to remove not only digressive, but also any indelicate material from the collection. Toby, reminiscing about the story of the ensign and his wife, refers to the fact that they were both 'universally pitied by the whole regiment', the narrative hinting at some suggestive circumstance, which we are told 'his modesty omitted'.⁵⁰ For the sake of modesty also, this hint of immodesty is removed from the anthology, rendering the story more sentimental, and transforming the ensign and his wife into unquestionable sentimental objects of pity, which the ambiguity of Sterne's original narrative resists.

This concentration of the sentimental, by omitting digressive material and the exclusion of suggestive language, seems to emerge from the preoccupation with rendering the novel more suited to female tastes. All indelicate, suggestive, or bawdy material is excluded, and accordingly, the ambiguous descriptions found in the latter half of the story of Trim's brother Tom, in the last volume, which play with images of sausages in describing Tom's courting of the Jew's widow are excluded (IX:VII). Slawkenbergius's tale (vol. IV) is not included, nor is that of Phutatorius's unfortunate incident with the roasted chestnut (IV: XXVII), or Tristram's 'circumcision by fenestration' (V:XVII).⁵¹ Absent too is the reference to Walter Shandy's 'beds of justice'

⁵⁰ *TS*, VI:VII; ii, p. 508.

⁵¹ William R. Siebenschuh, 'Sterne's Paradoxical Coherence: Some Principles of Unity in *Tristram Shandy*', in *Approaches to Teaching Sterne's 'Tristram Shandy'*, ed. by Melvyn New (New York: The Modern Languages Association of America, 1996), pp. 72-79. Quotation at p. 72.

in the episode where Tristram meets the ass at the gate of Lyon.⁵² Indeed, this latter episode is also edited to remove the reference to the abbess of Andoüillet (she of the ‘bou – – ger’ episode), which may inflame the reader’s curiosity about an earlier, and unsuitable, part of the novel. It is furthermore cut short, ending upon Tristram’s cry of ‘*Out upon it!*’ and omitting the information that the pocket of Tristram’s breeches was then ‘rent in the most disastrous direction you can imagine’, thus rendering the cry a little premature and wholly suggestive.⁵³ The editor of the collection viewed the act of reading Sterne’s novel, filling in the dashes and blanks, as one which rendered the reader complicit in Sterne’s game of eschewing authorial responsibility and blaming the reader’s own less than spotless imagination for what they interpret from his ambiguities and innuendoes. Consequently, any passages which entice the reader (especially a female or youthful one) into a position where they have to enter into the dialogue of Sterne’s sexual ambiguity, is carefully avoided. Nowhere is this concern more clearly illustrated than in the anthology’s treatment of the story of Trim and the Beguine.

This episode, entitled ‘The Beguine’ in the *Beauties of Sterne*, spans four chapters in the original novel, and tells the story of Trim, injured in battle and nursed back to health by a young Beguine.⁵⁴ Like the treatment of the Le Fevre story, the chapters are linked together to form one continuous narrative, with various interruptions to the story omitted. One such interruption is omitted for the nature of the dialogue it contains, however, rather than any great divergence from the story at hand: that of Toby and Trim’s discussion as to whether a wound in the knee or a wound in the groin causes

⁵² *TS*, VII:XXXII; ii, p. 630.

⁵³ *TS*, VII:XXXII; ii, p. 632.

⁵⁴ *TS*, VIII:XIX-XXII.

the most 'intolerable anguish'.⁵⁵ Nor is this the only such indelicate passage removed from the story. After remarking that despite the Beguine's attentions he was not in love, Trim confides to Toby:

— I can honestly say, an' please your honour —
 that * * * * *
 * * * * * once.

That was very odd, Trim, quoth my uncle Toby —⁵⁶

The ambiguity of the unprintable speech is just the kind of narrative technique which invites speculation and lures the reader into trying to fill in the gaps: precisely what the editor of the anthology did not want his readers to do. As far as possible, the representation of Sterne the anthology wished to promote, was one which could be controlled and did not leave any ambiguous passages open to interpretation. Furthermore, Toby's suggestive response of 'Not in that place', to Trim's observation that he would never behold another hand as white as the young Beguine's as long as he lived, is also deleted and Trim's narration continues without Toby's interjection.⁵⁷ The final, and perhaps most significant, omission from the story concerns Trim's relation of how the Beguine's hand progressed further and further up his leg as she rubbed it. The anthology begins the description, but vitally omits the following information:

— In saying which she pass'd her hand across the flannel, to the part above my knee, which I had equally complained of, and rubb'd it also.

⁵⁵ *TS*, VIII:XIX, ii, p. 695.

⁵⁶ *TS*, VIII:XX, ii, p. 700.

I perceived, then, I was beginning to be in love —⁵⁸

The anthology, therefore, tries to avoid the associations made in the novel between the movement of the Beguine's hand from below to above the knee and Trim's instantaneous feeling of 'love'. Instead, the anthologised version of the story continues on and finishes: 'As she continued rub-rub-rubbing – I felt it spread from under her hand, an' please your honour, to every part of my frame —'. This renders the object of Trim's 'it' unspecified in the anthology, which refers in the novel to Trim's feeling of love. Here, it seems to refer back to the preceding speech, in which the Beguine proclaims that she would rub Trim's knee 'a thousand times more' for 'the love of Christ'. Ironically, the anthology manages to portray Trim as feeling the love of Christ spread through every part of his frame, and not the altogether more earthly desires suggested in the novel. Although the extract ends here, the chapter does not, and it is interesting to note the care taken by the editor to end the passage on a seemingly uplifting note, rather than continue to the bawdy and humorous climax of the scene, where Trim remarks:

The more she rubb'd, and the longer strokes she took — the more the fire kindled in my veins — till at length, by two or three strokes longer than the rest — my passion rose to the highest pitch — I seiz'd her hand —
— And then, thou clapp'd'st it to thy lips, Trim, said my uncle Toby — and madest a speech.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *TS*, VIII:XXII, ii, p. 702.

⁵⁸ *TS*, VIII:XXII, ii, p. 703.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

Of all the passages included in the *Beauties of Sterne* taken from *Tristram*, this, perhaps more than any other, exemplifies what had been unsuitable for female readers within the novel, and the ways in which the editor of the anthology set about removing such material. This editorial activity ensures that only the least ambiguous and most suitable passages are extracted from *Tristram Shandy*. Many of these are among those lauded as Sterne's most popular and sentimental episodes. Alongside the stories of Le Fevre and Trim and the Beguine, previously discussed, Trim's kitchen eulogy on the death of Bobby Shandy (V:VII-X), the sermon 'On the abuses of Conscience' (II: XVII), and Toby and the fly (II:XII) are all included. The editing of these passages reveals the same concern with the removal of all digressive and suggestive material in order to concentrate upon the sentimental scene itself. Accordingly, the narrative of Trim's eulogy on Bobby Shandy is edited to remove half of chapter VII (ending 'The whole kitchen crouded about the corporal') and chapter VIII, before resuming again at the beginning of chapter IX. Tristram's interjection, interrupting the narrative to replay the 'infinitely striking' moment when Trim drops his hat in order to ensure that the reader gains a 'right understanding of the corporal's eloquence' is cut, as is Tristram's promise of a less than edifying 'chapter of *chamber-maids, green gowns, and old hats*'.⁶⁰

The editing governing the extracts included from Sterne's first novel within the *Beauties of Sterne* is echoed in that afforded to his second, *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy, by Mr. Yorick* (1768). As the preface to the anthology states, this novel, termed by Sterne his 'work of redemption',⁶¹ had 'escaped the general censure' that greeted his first novel, but was, nevertheless, 'not intirely [*sic*] free from

⁶⁰ *TS*, V:VII, ii, p. 431; V:VIII, ii, p. 434.

⁶¹ Sterne, *Letters*, p. 399, n. 3.

the fault complained of' in *Tristram*.⁶² Reeve's Euphrasia, who termed *Tristram* 'not a woman's book', had, however, read the *Sentimental Journey* and praised it:

It is indisputably a work of merit. – Where *Sterne* attempts the Pathos, he is irresistible; the Reviewers have well observed, that although he affected humour and foolery, yet he was greatest in the pathetic style. – His *Maria*, and *le Fevre*, and his *Monk*, are charming pictures, and will survive, when all his other writings are forgot.⁶³

While a female could not read, or safely comment upon, *Sterne*'s first novel, his second was openly discussed by women who particularly commended his sentimental vignettes. Although *Tristram* ought not to be read by the 'chaste married or chaste unmarried part of the sex', the *Sentimental Journey*, argues *Sterne*, must be thought chaste; if not, 'mercy upon them that read it, for they must have warm imaginations indeed!'⁶⁴ That the 'pathetic' scenes highlighted by Reeve were universally held to be *Sterne*'s 'beauties', accounts not only for the overall sentimental orientation of the *Beauties of Sterne*, but for the extracts included within it. The popular stories of the Monk and Maria are reprinted in their entirety, as are those of the dead ass, the caged starling, the dispossessed Marquis, and of course the invocation to 'Dear Sensibility', which was blazoned on the title page of every eighteenth-century edition of the *Beauties of Sterne* (plate 8). The episodes extracted from the *Sentimental Journey* are also careful to exclude any undesirable material, which even in this more 'moral' text, may be deemed unsuitable for the youthful or female reader. Yorick's encounter with the young lady on

⁶² *The Beauties of Sterne*, preface. Quoted in Howes, *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, p. 257

⁶³ Quoted in Howes, *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, p. 263.

⁶⁴ *Sterne, Letters*, p. 403.

the street in Calais is omitted, as is the suggestive episode at the concert in Milan with the Marquesina di F***. Similarly, the episode entitled 'The Rose. Paris' is excluded, as are the episodes with the 'fair *fille de chambre*', so fittingly titled 'The Temptation. Paris', and, most suggestively of all, 'The Conquest'. Such episodes, with their playful treatment of matters concerning female sexuality drawing the reader into premeditating Yorick's actions, as in the ending of the 'Temptation' chapter or the famously ambiguous ending of the novel, typify those elements of Sterne's writing the editor is so careful to avoid throughout the anthology.

Although a small number of shorter maxim-like passages are extracted from the *Sentimental Journey*, for the most part, the collection continues its stress on the representation of Sterne as a sentimental storyteller in its selections. As with the *Sermons*, little internal editing is required. Any omissions are again superfluous elements which detract from the sentimentality of the tale. Such is the case with the story of 'The Captive. Paris' which ends indulging with Yorick upon the force of the 'picture of confinement' his fancy had drawn, and omits the additional narrative detail describing how Yorick subsequently orders a remise and retires to bed.⁶⁵ The dominant and consistent alteration made to the passages from the *Journey* is that of meshing together Sterne's disjointed episodes to form more unified and coherent narratives. For example, the three consecutive segments relating the story of the grisset; 'The Pulse. Paris', 'The Husband. Paris', and 'The Gloves. Paris', are joined together to form one

⁶⁵ Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, ed. by Gardner D. Stout, Jr. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 203. All further references are to this edition, abbreviated as *ASJ*.

continuous narrative, as are the various episodes relating to Maria, and the Monk.⁶⁶

Where episodes are not joined together, the extracts generally account for the majority of, or a whole chapter of, the original novel. This is the case with the story of the dead ass ('Nampont. The Dead Ass') and the portrayal of Yorick at Lorenzo's grave ('The Snuff-Box. Calais'), among others.

The result of this knitting together of narrative and of anthologising substantial chunks means that almost a third of the overall novel is included. Around twenty-two of the seventy 'chapters' of the novel are substantially represented. Although a more chronological and linear novel than *Tristram Shandy*, the *Sentimental Journey* is nevertheless episodic and fragmentary, qualities eliminated in the context of the anthology. Therefore, while the digressive nature of Sterne's novels ensures, as Howes argues, that passages can be 'extracted with less real mutilation', the actual process of anthologising paradoxically presents the reader with a more unified and linear narrative than those found in the original texts. The *Beauties of Sterne*, by focusing on Sterne's talents as a sentimental writer and editing his work in this manner, succeeds in appropriating his literary persona and renders Sterne a more 'conventional' author, whose narratives are more coherent and unified than the original novels themselves.

The editing of extracts in the *Beauties of Sterne* is, therefore, more than simply 'pouring only out of one vessel into another'. Sterne's works are carefully edited and mediated in the process. His authorial persona is refashioned, and his words are recontextualised in order to produce a reading experience which combines 'maximum

⁶⁶ The relevant episodes on the story of the grisset are to be found in *ASJ*, pp. 161-169, those relating to Maria at pp. 268-276, and the Monk at pp. 70-75.

pleasure with minimum discomfort'.⁶⁷ Not only is the reader excused from the time-consuming task of reading the original texts, in the case of Sterne, they are in fact able to read texts which had previously been seen as unsuitable reading matter for large sections of the public. In its stress on the presentation of Sterne as a sentimental clergyman the collection also freed its readers from the discomfort arising from trying to interpret the ambiguities and innuendoes which characterise not only the novels, but which also pervade his treatment of the sentimental. As Paul Moore argues: 'we never feel quite at ease reading the sentimental episodes, because we are uncertain how Sterne expects us to react — with tears, or laughter, or perhaps both'.⁶⁸ The editor's removal of the digressive and suggestive material from these sentimental episodes preserves their sentimentality and guides the reader's response to the extract. The passage from *Tristram Shandy* which tells the story of uncle Toby and the fly is a typically ambiguous example. Is the reader to commend Toby's benevolence or laugh at the depiction of a former soldier displaying such tenderness towards a humble fly? Sterne's narrative revels in such indecisiveness, while the anthology tries to resolve the question of reader response by omitting the paragraph containing Tristram's almost hyperbolic eulogy on the far reaching effects of 'that one accidental impression'.⁶⁹ Ending the passage with Toby's parting sentiment, 'This world surely is wide enough to hold both thee and me', and following it immediately with the narrative pointer informing the reader that, 'This is to serve for parents and governors instead of a whole volume upon the subject', focuses the attention exclusively on the sentimental tableau depicted. Avoiding

⁶⁷ Paul Moore, 'Sterne, Tristram, Yorick, birds and beasts', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 10 (1987), pp. 43-54. Quotation at p. 43.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ *TS*, II:XII, i, p. 131.

Tristram's intervention, which threatens to undermine the sincerity of the scene, simplifies the range of responses available to the reader and confirms Toby as an exemplary man of feeling. The *Beauties of Sterne* in its 'twisting and untwisting' of the strands which make up the narrative of Sterne's sermons and novels, succeeds in simplifying a complex and ambiguous author, repackaging him for the 'chaste' readers who had previously not been permitted to read his works, and disseminating them to a new audience of youthful, and most significantly, female readers.

III

Balancing the '*utile* and the *dulce*': 1787 and beyond

The bias towards selecting extracts for the 'heart of Sensibility' evident in the first editions of the *Beauties of Sterne* results in an authorial representation of Sterne as a benevolent clergyman and good-natured sentimental novelist. Of the two sides of the character common to both Sterne's novels and the *Sermons*, Mr. Yorick, the collection eliminates the persona of the jester and emphasises that of the parson. Yet as the century progressed the vogue of sentimentalism declined, with many seeing the outward action deemed necessary to illustrate man's inner emotions as little more than spectacle.

Goldsmith and Sheridan were only two of many writers who used the stage to expose the theatricality and insincerity of sentimentalism, critiquing it as something which could be performed and, therefore, false. Moreover, a surfeit of sentimentalism could be dangerous, especially for young, impressionable and female readers, such as those as whom the *Beauties of Sterne* was aimed. Vicesimus Knox certainly felt that reading too

much sentimental literature would be as damaging to a young female mind as Charlotte Lennox portrayed the reading of romances to be to Arabella, the heroine of her *Female Quixote* (1752). He satirises the effects of sentimental literature in his description of his female protagonist, Belinda:

Belinda was always remarkably fond of pathetic novels, tragedies and elegies. Sterne's *sentimental beauties* were her particular favourites. She had indeed contracted so great a tenderness of sensibility from such reading, that she often carried the amiable weakness into common life, and would weep and sigh as if her heart were breaking at occurrences which others, by no means deficient in humanity, viewed with indifference. She could not bear the idea of killing animals for food. She detested the sports of fishing and hunting, because of their ineffable cruelty. She was ready to faint if her coachman whipt his horses when they would not draw up hill; and she actually fell down in a fit on a gentleman's treading on her favourite cat's tail as he eagerly stooped to save her child from falling into the fire.⁷⁰

That the effect of reading Sterne's 'sentimental beauties', possibly in anthologised form, could lead to such disillusion that a woman would care more for her pet than her child is a disturbing picture, yet one which illustrates the fear of the extremes which the cult of sentimental literature could reach. Knox exposes the paradox which lies in the assumption that the sensitivity of women renders them particularly suited to both write and read such literature, for they are also the sex most in danger from its effects.

That the editor of the *Beauties of Sterne* also recognised the valid possibility of such a powerful influence is evident from the preface to the first edition, which claims

⁷⁰ *Critical Heritage*, p. 255. From Knox's 'On the Affectation of excessive Sensibility', *Winter Evenings*, i, p. 469. Italics are mine.

that the arrangement of its extracts is owing to precisely such a concern. An alphabetical arrangement, similar to that employed in the *Beauties of Johnson* was preferred, until the editor discovered that 'the stories of *Le Fever*, the *Monk*, and *Maria*, would be too closely connected for the *feeling reader*, and would wound the bosom of *sensibility* too deeply'. He therefore 'placed them at a proper distance from each other'. That the three famous episodes praised by Reeve, among others, as 'irresistible', are here thought to be too moving to be printed in close proximity is telling, as is the gendered language which again seems to imply the 'feeling reader' possessed of the 'bosom of sensibility' is none other than the same chaste female reader discussed earlier. In practice, the extracts are not placed as far apart as the preface indicates. The Le Fevre story is the second extract in the anthology, Maria the tenth, and the Monk the seventeenth, in a collection which contains one hundred and thirty-seven extracts. The arrangement of passages does not seem to follow a logical or planned sequence, but can be seen to break down into segments which alternate between the two novels and the sermons, creating a sense of variety both in the tone, subject, and length of passages. That the alphabetical arrangement was abandoned due to the perceived danger of placing such sentimental episodes too close together, emphasises just how central the representation of Sterne as sentimentalist was in the selecting, editing, and arranging of the contents of the anthology.

This was a representation, however, which was, in turn, questioned, as sentimentalism came under fire and as the understanding of Sterne's portrayal of the sentimental altered. When the *Beauties of Sterne* reached its tenth edition in 1787, the contents underwent an important change, which eschewed the sentimental bias of the

earlier collections and both encouraged and reflected a more balanced approach to the portrayal of Sterne and the evaluations of his 'beauties'. Boasting a new editor, 'A. F.', the collection also carried an altered titular description which indicated that while the anthology continued to collect Sterne's 'Pathetic Tales' and 'most distinguished Observations on Life', it also now contained his 'Humorous Descriptions' (see plate 9).⁷¹ 'It has', the preface states

been a matter of much general complaint, that the selections hitherto made were of rather too confined a task, - and that, contrary to the original, the *utile* and the *dulce*, were not sufficiently blended, or in equal quantities.⁷²

The earlier editions 'dragg'd on rather too serious a system of grave morality', their editor having kept his eye 'rather upon [Sterne's] *morality*, than his *humour* – upon his *judgement*, than his *wit*'. As a result, the anthology was comparable to Sterne's '*Cane chair, deprived of the one of its knobs* – incomplete and ununiform'.⁷³ By introducing several scenes which display a more 'Shandean colouring', such as 'Mr. Shandy's Beds of Justice', 'Dr. Slop and Susannah', and 'Parson Yorick's Horse', the new editor seeks to restore the missing knob to Sterne's cane chair rendering it, and the anthology, balanced, complete, and uniform.

The tenth edition of the *Beauties of Sterne* again highlights the flexibility of the

⁷¹ *The Beauties of Sterne*, tenth edition (London: G. Kearsley, 1787). This edition was also ornamented with plates, illustrating the most sentimental and famous passages, for example, that of Le Fevre, Trim and the Beguine, and Trim's kitchen eulogy.

⁷² *The Beauties of Sterne*, preface to tenth edition, p. v. Quoted in Howes, *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, p. 257.

⁷³ *The Beauties of Sterne*, preface to tenth edition, p. vi. Quoted in Howes, *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, p. 258.

genre of the anthology and its ability to adapt and change in line with literary tastes and expectations. Its inclusion of more humorous episodes, along with a greater representation from Sterne's letters, the entire text of the sermon, 'The Case of Elijah and the Widow of Zerephath Considered' and *The History of a Watch Coat*, undoubtedly offers a more representative and balanced selection from Sterne's literary output. In this edition Sterne's reputation is less dependent on his clerical persona and sentimentalism — the title page no longer states the contexts are 'selected for the heart of Sensibility' — but the passages anthologised in the previous editions remain as they were originally edited. The dashes and asterisks do not return and the Beguine's hand stays firmly below Trim's knee. In 1787, Sterne's beauties are less moral and sentimental and more humorous and exuberant, but those more offensive and bawdy episodes continue to be omitted.

The alterations between the first and tenth editions of the *Beauties of Sterne* published throughout the eighteenth century, despite their changing orientation and extended contents, effectively illustrate the power of the anthologist, editor, and publisher to manipulate the representation of authorial and textual authority. As Benedict notes:

The publisher contextualizes the literature for the reader, and presents it as constructed by responsive reading rather than authorial control. The author has virtually disappeared from the presentation of his texts; the reader now 'takes' the text as he wills where once he took it as the author's lesson. The mediator of the cultural context — the publisher — comes center stage.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Benedict, 'Literary Miscellanies: The Cultural Mediation of Fragmented Feeling', *ELH*, 57 (1990), pp. 407-430. Quotation at p. 409.

Sterne, the author who variously adopted the personae of his fictional characters Parson Yorick and Tristram Shandy, using them in daily life and in his letters, is eliminated from the text, and his persona is simplified into the less complex and more accessible 'Sterne' of the anthology's title. Kearsley and his various editors mediated between author and audience, and in their editing and selection of extracts directly affected the presentation of Sterne sold to their readers. The alterations in the collection undoubtedly aided its success: the text was in its thirteenth edition by the end of the century.⁷⁵ It was, along with the *Beauties of Johnson* (which ran to nine editions by 1800), the most popular of Kearsley's *Beauties* collections, illustrating that although Johnson and Sterne were 'men of nearly opposite personalities and talents', they were also, as Alan B. Howes comments, possibly 'the two most influential writers of the latter half of the eighteenth century'.⁷⁶ The *Town and Country Magazine* for April 1782 classed the collection of Sterne 'under one head with the *Beauties of Johnson*' and the two anthologies were often bound together in one book.⁷⁷ Despite being very different authors, the processes by which their works were reduced to a collection of 'beauties' subtly unified the authorial representations of Sterne and Johnson. Their works were edited to form extracted anthology-pieces, were collected beneath similar headings, and recontextualised within the format of the anthology. The editorial activity may have been more severe in the collection of Sterne, but the motivation behind the methodology was the same. Kearsley's anthologising of Johnson and Sterne sought to render them both 'moral' authors whose identities were refashioned to present their writings as

⁷⁵ There were also three Dublin editions and four published in America by the end of the century.

⁷⁶ Howes, *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, p. 218.

⁷⁷ *Town and Country Magazine*, 14 (April 1782), p. 213. An edition of the *Beauties of Sterne*, published in New York in 1853 was bound together with the *Beauties of Johnson*.

storehouses of wisdom containing extractable passages, maxims, observations, sentiments, and stories which held a universal appeal. Finally, by marketing the collections as part of his new series or 'library' of *Beauties* anthologies, Kearsley establishes a bond between Johnson and Sterne; their authorial identities determined and appropriated by the selection of their 'beauties'.

CHAPTER 5

THE *BEAUTIES OF FIELDING*: AUTHOR AND AUTHORITY

I

Fielding and the 'Art of Swaggering in Print'

Like Sterne, Henry Fielding's literary persona was ambiguous; he too adopted a variety of masks and explored issues of identity and authority in his writing. Fielding was an undoubtedly popular dramatist, essayist, and novelist, yet was often criticised and derided. The frequent comparisons between Fielding and his novelistic 'rival' Samuel Richardson are often oversimplified, yet the basic division between Richardson as the sensitive, moral, sentimental writer, and Fielding as the robust, coarse, and less moral of the two, is one which reflects the basic objections to Fielding the man, and his work, in the eighteenth century. Sir John Hawkins was not alone in his opinion that Fielding had 'done more towards corrupting the rising generation than any other writer we know of'.¹ Johnson, as we have seen, criticised Fielding invoking the comparison with Richardson in his comment that there is 'more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's than in all *Tom Jones*'.² The moral qualities of Fielding's works created controversy; those of Richardson were obvious to all. That Johnson disapproved of Fielding is perhaps not surprising: it is Fielding's narrative technique to which he refers in the fourth *Rambler* essay when he remarks upon writers who:

¹ Ronald Paulson and Thomas Lockwood, eds., *Henry Fielding: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 446.

So mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness for being united with so much merit.³

For Johnson, it is 'not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears'. The mingling of 'good and bad qualities' leads to precisely the situation characterised as 'Splendid Wickedness' in the *Beauties of Johnson*; those characters whose 'endowments threw a brightness on their crimes'.⁴ Such a method of characterisation was championed by Fielding, who not only placed villains as the central protagonists in his writings, as for example, in *Jonathan Wild*, but created characters who were a complex mixture of good and bad qualities. While Richardson created exemplary creatures of virtue in his *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, Fielding portrayed human nature with a 'warts and all' attitude, being firmly convinced, as he states in the prefatory chapter to the tenth book of *Tom Jones*, that one ought 'not to condemn a character as a bad one, because it is not a perfectly good one'.⁵ Rather, faults and 'blemishes' should be included: 'The foibles and vices of men in whom there is a great mixture of good, become more glaring objects, from the virtues which contrast them, and shew their deformity'.⁶ Where Johnson argued that the portrayal of virtuous qualities alongside faults leads the reader to 'lose the abhorrence' of the latter, Fielding

² See chapter 4, p. 171 above.

³ Johnson, *Rambler* No. 4, *Works*, iii, p. 21.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *TJ*, ii, p.526.

⁶ *TJ*, ii, p. 527.

argues that faults are necessary as they act as a foil, teaching us to fully appreciate the virtues. In fact, 'nothing can be of more moral use than the imperfections'.⁷

Fielding's attitude to the portrayal of the 'beauties' and 'faults' in human nature can be seen to reflect the beauties/faults discourse at large and is evident in his critical approach to literature. In this, his view can be seen to echo that of Johnson, who, although willing to favour beauties over blemishes in the portrayal of literary characters, felt that a critical approach to literature required a more balanced appreciation of the whole. Fielding similarly desires that his critics regard his works as a whole, rather than as a number of component parts. He cautions that: 'for a little reptile of a critic to presume to find fault with any of its parts, without knowing the matter in which the whole is connected, and before he comes to the final catastrophe, is a most presumptuous absurdity'.⁸ Yet despite this apparent agreement with Johnson, it is the Scriblerians with whom Fielding's critical approach is most closely aligned. Fielding frequently sought to associate his writings with those of Pope and Swift; some of his early 'Haymarket' plays including the *Tragedies of Tragedies*, purport to be written by 'Scriblerus Secundus'. In *The Covent-Garden Journal*, posing as 'Misotharus', Fielding ironically critiques the 'Art of Swaggering in Print' through the opinions of his anonymous 'friend' who has written the *Peri Tharsus*, or 'A Treatise on the Confident and Pert'. This treatise follows in the tradition of the Scriblerian *Peri Bathos*, which was, in turn, of course, a parody of Longinus's *On the Sublime*.⁹ Misotharus's 'friend'

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ Henry Fielding, *The Covent-Garden Journal*, no. 46, 9 June 1752. See *The Covent-Garden Journal and A Plan of the Universal Register-Office*, ed. by Bertrand A. Goldgar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988). All references to this edition will be cited as *CGJ* hereafter.

advises that to become accomplished in the 'Art of Swaggering in Print' one should dive into and dwell on 'exaggerating the Faults and Defects of Writers'. That the pupil may 'see and perceive these the more fully and distinctly', he advises him to 'keep their Beauties and Excellencies out of his View as much as possible'.¹⁰ Here, the practice of highlighting beauties and faults is ridiculed and exposed as being directly antithetical to what Fielding holds to be true. The great flaw of the *Peri Tharsus* is its attempt to argue for the separation of beauties and faults, in its description of

those Artists, who daily pore upon Miniatures, [and] become near-sighted, their Eyes being by Force of Habit rendered unable to descry Hills, Woods, or Palaces, at a Distance; so the true Critic, whose Business it is to spy out every little Flaw or Blemish in a great Work, of course becomes incapable of perceiving the Beauties of its Disposition, and its principal Parts, they lying far beyond the Reach of his Discernment'.¹¹

Such criticisms are reminiscent of those levelled at fault-finders such as Rymer, arguing that a constant focus upon faults dulls discernment and leads to an incapability of perceiving beauty. Fielding, in his imitation of Pope, subscribes to a Longinian approach to criticism, stating that 'No Author is to be admitted into the Order of Critics, until he hath read over, and understood, Aristotle, Horace, and Longinus, in their original language' and echoes this sentiment in *Tom Jones*.¹² Unsurprisingly, many of his works reflect the ongoing beauties/defects debate, weighing up the benefits and

¹⁰ *CGJ*, p. 257.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² *CGJ*, No. 3, 11 January 1752, p. 30. Longinus is again listed with Aristotle and Horace as part of a triumvirate of ancient 'proper Judges of Writing', in *TJ*, ii, p. 568, XI:I. Furthermore, in describing Tom's journey in XII:VIII, Fielding states, 'we will follow him therefore, according to our Custom, and to the rules of *Longinus*', *TJ*, ii, p. 674.

drawbacks of highlighting such elements in a literary work.¹³ Fielding quotes Horace and elaborates on the Horatian (and indeed Longinian) standpoint in the prefatory chapter to the eleventh book of *Tom Jones*:

tho' there may be some Faults justly assigned in the Work, yet if those are not in the most essential Parts, or if they are compensated by greater Beauties, it will savour rather of the Malice of a Slanderer, than of the Judgement of a true Critic, to pass a severe Sentence upon the whole, merely on account of some vicious Part.¹⁴

Once again Fielding stresses that just because a work contains some faults, it does not necessarily render the whole work faulty. Beauties can, and do, compensate for faults in literature just as they do in human nature. And, like Longinus, Gildon, Pope, and Johnson, Fielding agrees that if one element is to be favoured, it is the beauties, for it is beauties which teach and promote virtue:

¹³ Indeed, Fielding had in fact discussed the beauties/defects discourse in a poem, 'Of True Greatness', published in the *Miscellanies* (1743):

Thro' Books some travel, as thro' Nations some,
Proud of their Voyage, yet bring nothing home.
Criticks thro' Books, as Beaus thro' Countries stray,
Certain to bring their Blemishes away.

Great is the Man, who with unwearied Toil
Spies a Weed springing in the richest Soil.
If *Dryden's* Page with one bad Line be blest,
'Tis Great to shew it, as to write the rest.

Others, with friendly Eye run Author o'er,
Not to find Faults, but Beauties to restore;
Nor scruple (such their Bounty) to afford
Folios of Dulness to preserve a Word:
Close, as to some tall Tree the Insect cleaves,
Myrids still nourish'd by its smallest Leaves.
So cling these Scriblers round a *Virgil's* Name,
And on his least of Beauties soar to Fame.

See Fielding, *Miscellanies*, ed. by Henry Knight Miller, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), i, p. 24, l. 122-137.

When we are employed in reading a great and good Author, we ought to consider ourselves as searching after Treasures, which, if well and regularly laid up in the Mind, will be of use to us on sundry Occasions in our Lives.¹⁵

The appreciation of beauties is more useful than the collecting of faults, but the two cannot be separated, the understanding of one depending on knowledge of the other. For Fielding, this argument is as applicable to human nature as it is to works of literature and to the portrayal of human nature within literature. Portraying characters of ‘angelic perfection’ (such as Richardson did with his *Clarissa*), or of ‘diabolical depravity’ (Lovelace), in a work, does not serve any ‘good purposes’, ‘since from contemplating either, the mind of man is more likely to be overwhelmed with sorrow and shame, than to draw any good uses from such patterns’.¹⁶ Like Johnson, therefore, Fielding views beauties and faults as endowed with moral implications, representing virtue and vice respectively. Fielding, however, does not subscribe to the view that ‘the best examples only should be exhibited’, instead extending the balance between beauties and faults called for by literary critics, and applying it to the portrayal of characters within his own writing.¹⁷

Within the *Beauties of Fielding* however, Fielding is, like Sterne, subject to the Johnsonian maxim that ‘the best examples only should be exhibited’. His ‘beauties’ are retained while his ‘faults’ are carefully excluded from the passages included in the anthology. All that could be viewed as immoral or unsuitable; anything low, bawdy, or coarse, is carefully avoided in its selections from Fielding’s writings. There is no

¹⁴ *TJ*, ii, p. 570.

¹⁵ *CGJ*, No. 10, 4 February, 1752, p. 75.

¹⁶ *TJ*, ii, pp. 526-527.

¹⁷ See chap 3, p. 149 above.

reference to brothels, no adultery, no nakedness, no swearing, no mention of Lady Booby's attempted seduction of Joseph Andrews, nor of Tom Jones's many indiscretions throughout the novel of the same name. All references to incest, sexual misdemeanors, and immorality are carefully avoided, and, as a result, Fielding appears as a much more serious, conventionally moral writer than he actually was. While Fielding himself argued that 'a man may speak truth with a smiling countenance' (XI.I), the editor of the *Beauties of Fielding* saw this 'smiling countenance' as one which threatened to undermine the representation of Fielding which the collection sought to promote. Fielding was a serious and moral writer; however, that his writing embraced a humorous, and at times, ironic stance, exposed his work to the charges of innuendo and ambiguity that also plagued the reputation of Sterne. As Henry Knight Miller points out in the introduction to the Wesleyan edition of Fielding's *Miscellanies*, 'comedy is, in truth, a most serious business': 'Fielding thought of himself as intrinsically a moralist and would have scorned any conception of art that ignored this primary definition of literature'.¹⁸ For the editor of the *Beauties*, however, to present Fielding as a moralist and one who would appeal to the 'youth of both sexes', demanded the removal of some of Fielding's humour, and, most significantly of all, the removal of the humorous, and at times ambiguous, personae that Fielding adopted; from the Scriblerian editor of *The Tragedy of Tragedies*, to the jovial omniscient narrator of *Tom Jones*.

¹⁸ Fielding, *Miscellanies*, i, p. xvii.

II

Transplanting Fielding's Dramatic 'Flowers'

One extract anthologised within the *Beauties of Fielding* entitled 'Criticism', which is taken from the *Journey from This World to the Next* (1743), offers an insight into Fielding's opinions upon the editing of Shakespeare and the highlighting of his beauties, from which the tradition of author-orientated *Beauties* emerged. The *Journey's* narrator finally arrives in Elysium and meets the spirits of many celebrated authors, from Homer and Virgil, to Addison and Pope. Shakespeare is present, portrayed between the actors Betterton and Booth, who are engaged in disputing the position of an accent in a line from *Othello*. Finally, the disputants, who exemplify the attitudes of the many critics and editors of Shakespeare discussed in chapters one and two, turn to Shakespeare himself for the authoritative reading. The lengthy reply is interesting as it offers a critique of the various editions of Shakespeare and the practice of searching for beauties and commenting on them, upon which Dodd had based his anthology:

Faith, Gentlemen, it is so long since I wrote the Line, I have forgot my Meaning. This I know, could I have dreamt so much Nonsense would have been talked, and writ about it I would have blotted it out of my Works: for I am sure, if any of these be my Meaning, it doth me very little Honour.

He was then interrogated concerning some other ambiguous Passages in his Works; but he declined any satisfactory Answer: Saying, if Mr *Theobald* had not writ about it sufficiently, there were three or four more new Editions of his Plays coming out, which he hoped would satisfy every one. Concluding, 'I marvel nothing so much as that Men will gird themselves at discovering obscure Beauties in an Author. Certes *the greatest and most pregnant Beauties are ever the plainest and most evidently striking; and when two Meanings of a Passage can in the*

*least ballance [sic] our Judgements which to prefer, I hold it matter of unquestionable Certainty, that neither of them are worth a farthing.*¹⁹

Here Fielding offers an examination of authorial authority which seems to question the validity of such an idea on all counts. Shakespeare is not the authority on his own works which he is perceived to be, denying he can remember his original meaning, just as Johnson did in response to the 'Death' episode. Furthermore, Shakespeare refers the critics to the notorious Theobald, or to any one of the numerous editions of his works, ironically undermining the authority of these editions and the opinions of the commentators. Of course, the ridiculous ongoing rivalry and extended footnotes of the editions, each expanding and commenting on those which had gone before, is Fielding's primary target here, but his ridicule of the situation raises the question of where, if anywhere, does the authority of a work lie? As Ian Bell notes, many of Fielding's works display a concern with ideas of authorship and control of the text, the intrusive narrator of the novels being just one expression of such concerns. Fielding, following in Scriblerian footsteps, enjoyed playing with the idea of textual authority and uses the portrayal of the congregation of poets in Elysium to ridicule the idea that such authority can be found in the persona of a dead author, or in any number of editions of their works which claim to be authoritative. While Fielding does not locate meaning with the author, the editor of the *Beauties of Fielding* works to refashion the image of Fielding as author, which paradoxically creates a sense of authority on which the reputation of the anthology rests. It does so by stripping Fielding of the

¹⁹Henry Fielding, *A Journey from This World to the Next*, ed. by Ian A. Bell and Andrew Varney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), chapter VIII, p. 35. The passage in italics is that included in the anthology.

authorial masks adopted in his works and refashioning a 'new', less ambiguous 'Fielding' to which the contents are attributed.

One of Fielding's earliest experiments with issues of authorial control and authority is manifest in *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great*. This play, extended from an afterpiece to *The Author's Farce*, originally entitled *Tom Thumb*, was extended in 1731 as Fielding 'wanted to improve it as a "reading play"'.²⁰ This conversion and internalization from public spectacle into private reading drama is significant, as is the means Fielding adopts to accomplish this 'readerliness'. The preface by 'H. Scriblerus Secundus' pays homage to Pope, as does the text itself, weighed down with pseudo-scholarly footnotes in imitation of *The Dunciad Variorum*. The footnotes attached to the text render the play a very different experience for the spectator or the reader; one free to simply enjoy the action of the piece, the other 'inundated with footnotes' and swamped with commentary.²¹ Hume suggests one of Fielding's intentions in revising and extending the piece was to burlesque 'false scholarship', and indeed, the commentary and abundant quotations culled from other poets is more than a little reminiscent of the commentary appended to the various editions of Shakespeare.²² Fielding swamps the play with notes, citing examples from various authors who expressed similar sentiments or supposedly plundered the 'present' text in their own works. He thus informs the reader that, 'This speech has been taken to pieces by several tragical authors, who seem to have rifled it and shared its beauties among them', or, like a Shakespearean commentator, cites

²⁰ Robert D. Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), p. 86.

²¹ Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre*, p. 87.

²² *ibid.*, p. 88.

various readings offered by various critics.²³ The self-burlesque of the commentary is directed at figures such as Bentley or Theobald, and engages in mocking the scholarly footnotes which had begun to dominate editions of Shakespeare.

The commentary also can be seen to adopt the nature of an anthology, collecting examples from poets and dramatists and engaging in the discourse of beauties highlighted in the quotation above. Ironically, it is precisely this sort of comparative commentary, interweaving quotations upon similar sentiments or utilising similar imagery, which Dodd introduces into his *Beauties of Shakespear* twenty-one years later. While Fielding's quotations mock the idea of the commentator's learning and produce a kind of anthology of the bathos, Dodd's quotations are designed to illustrate the learning which Fielding here portrays as weighing down the text.

It is perhaps unsurprising then, that a text purportedly written not by Fielding but an adopted Scriblerian persona, and whose 'readerly' properties undermine the editorial principles behind *Beauties* collections, does not provide many extracts in the *Beauties of Fielding*. In fact, only one passage from the play is included, under the heading of 'Greatness':

Greatness is like a lace coat from Monmouth Street, which fortune lends us for a day to wear: tomorrow puts it on another back.²⁴

Spoken by the choleric Grizzle, it is curious that a speech by such a character is included

²³ Henry Fielding, *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great*, 1.3, n. 4, in *The Beggar's Opera and other Eighteenth-Century Plays*, introduced by David W. Lindsay, (London: Everyman, 1997), p. 224. All other references to this play are from this edition.

²⁴ *Tragedy of Tragedies*, 1.4, p. 226.

as a worthy moral sentiment. Like Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear*, the speech is rendered anonymous in the anthology and placed in the mouth of the titular 'Fielding'. Moreover, the anthology adapts the form of the speech to render it more maxim-like and less dramatic, turning the verse structure into prose, and, removing not only the Scriblerian editor but the character who originally made the speech.

That Fielding's plays are anthologised at all is, to an extent, curious and ironic, given his own opinion on the extracting of dramatic passages included in the apparatus to the *Tragedy of Tragedies*. The preface, in explaining the skill and hardship involved in reading and extracting the 'flowers' of other authors, comments that

it is very often difficult to transplant them at all; they being like some flowers of a very nice nature, which will flourish in no soil but their own: for it is easy to transcribe a thought, but not the want of one.²⁵

The tone may be ironic, but behind it lies a valid critique concerning the validity of culling 'beauties' from plays, in a similar vein to that voiced in the portrayal of Shakespeare in the *Journey*. By toying with the idea of authorial control, and positioning himself as a scholarly commentator upon his own play, Fielding skilfully derides the practice of editing authors and highlighting their shining passages.

The idea that dramatic flowers are 'difficult to transplant' is pertinent to the *Beauties* tradition as a whole, but is especially pertinent to the treatment of Fielding's own drama within the *Beauties of Fielding*. Seventeen of Fielding's twenty-seven plays are represented in the anthology, accounting for around seventy-three separate extracts.

²⁵ *Tragedy of Tragedies*, Preface, p. 214.

The vast majority of the 385 extracts in the collection are, therefore, prose, and it is interesting that all of the dramatic extracts (excepting one extract from *The Lottery* (1731), and the odd rhyming couplet), seem to represent the plays in a prose, maxim-like form, devoid of characterisation, or other dramatic apparatus. This results in a situation reminiscent of Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear*, where the plays are stripped of all contextual material and isolated in time and space as moral sentiments or maxims.

Another of Fielding's plays, also purportedly penned by 'Scriblerus Secundus' included in the anthology, is *The Grub-Street Opera* (1731). This piece began life as the *Welsh Opera*, as an afterpiece to the *Tragedy of Tragedies*, but was later revised, although never performed in its altered state. The example of one extract, entitled 'Love', highlights the editorial alterations the text of the play underwent to render it suitable for inclusion in the anthology. In act one, scene four of the play a speech between young Owen and Parson Puzzletext reads as follows:

OWEN: [...] There is nothing so ridiculous as to hear an old fellow railing at love.

PUZZLETEXT: It is like a young fellow's railing at age –

OWEN: Or a courtier out of place in court.²⁶

The anthology splices together the first two speeches by these two different characters and gives a sense of completion and finality to an unfinished statement. Indeed, the

²⁶ Henry Fielding, *The Grub-Street Opera*, ed. by L. J. Morrissey (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1973), p. 33.

anthology transforms a scene of light-hearted banter between two characters and transforms it into a Johnsonian maxim which reads:

It is as ridiculous to hear an old fellow railing at love, as a young fellow railing at age.

Not only does the *Beauties of Fielding* create maxims from different speeches from different characters, but, as with Dodd's anthology, the removal of the characters also results in a levelling and unifying of speech, whereby the comments of servants and kings, and men and women, are all rendered equal by virtue of their anonymity.

Remarking on Fielding's plays, L. J. Morrissey, observes that 'In his dramas he seems too willing merely to reduce fine moral sentiment by putting it in the mouths of bawds and sharpers', a criticism which is both utilised and remedied within the *Beauties of Fielding*. Owen, the son of Lord and Lady Apshinken, is portrayed as a rake, who, during the course of the play tries to seduce the servants of the household and the daughter of his father's tenant, and is, therefore, hardly a suitable candidate to deliver a moral truism. Similarly, the other extracts included from this play are spoken by Sweetissa, the servant perused by Owen (who supplies an entry on the topic of servants), and the tenant's daughter Molly, who is responsible for an entry on the necessity of decency in women of lower rank. That all the extracts are originally spoken by those of the lower orders, or by rakish gentlemen, illustrates that Fielding may indeed be seen to 'reduce fine moral sentiment' by placing it in the mouths of the least likely characters. In its selection of such extracts *The Beauties of Fielding* confirms this observation to be true, yet its means of reprinting extracts without dramatic apparatus attributes these speeches not to characters of a particular sex or station, but to Fielding himself.

That many of the extracts taken from the plays display the same traits of editorial activity as those highlighted by the *Beauties of Shakespear*, illustrates that the 'flowers' of dramatists are not easily transplanted without affecting the original plant. The editing of the passages from the plays included in the anthology illustrates the editor's preoccupation with refashioning Fielding's authorial persona. As Hume notes: 'Fielding's plays have a strong moral bent, despite their tearing high spirits and exuberant jokiness'.²⁷ It is this 'strong moral bent' which pervades the dramatic selections included in the anthology, and which undoubtedly accounts for their inclusion within the collection. As the prologue to *The Modern Husband* (1732) argues:

The Stage which was not for low Farce design'd,
But to divert, instruct, and mend Mankind.²⁸

That the plays do divert, instruct, and mend, accords perfectly with the anthology's aim to entertain and educate. Although some of their humour remains, the editing of the extracts from the plays ensures they are presented as authoritative maxims and truths, rather than humorous exchanges. For example, a passage from *Rape Upon Rape*, act 4, scene 3, reads:

RAMBLE: 'Tis as I have acted in all affairs of life; my thoughts have ever succeeded my actions:
the consequence hath caused me to reflect when it was too late. I never reasoned on what I

²⁷ Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre*, p. x.

²⁸ *The Modern Husband*, Prologue, *The Works of Henry Fielding, Esq.*, ed by Leslie Stephen, 10 vols (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1882), ix, p. 74. All remaining dramatic quotations are taken from this edition unless stated otherwise.

should do, but what I have done; as if my reason had her eyes behind, and could only see backwards.²⁹

Within the anthology the extract is headed 'Reason' and is reprinted as follows:

There are those who never reason on what *they should do*, but *what they have done*, as if reason had her eyes behind, and could only see backwards.

With personal pronouns removed the passages become more general. The opening, 'There are those', renders the passage a universal maxim applicable to all, and not a particular speech spoken by a particular character. With character references, act and scene divisions, and other dramatic indicators removed, a reader of the anthology would be forgiven for thinking that Fielding wrote almost exclusively in prose, and that the extracts were taken from moral essays, rather than boisterous and lively plays. Thus, while the *Beauties of Fielding* recognises Fielding as a dramatist and the value of his plays, it also, through its editorial techniques, transforms them into prose maxims.

Utilizing methods of extraction and arrangement similar to those employed by Dodd, the compiler refashions Fielding the dramatist and presents him as a writer of prose maxims in a distinctly Johnsonian mould.

²⁹ *Rape Upon Rape*, 4.3, *Works*, viii, p. 25.

III

Mediator v. Magistrate: Authorial Appropriation in Fielding's Prose

That over 290 of the extracts anthologised in the *Beauties of Fielding* are prose reinforces the image of Fielding as a predominantly prose writer. Around 190 of the prose extracts are from Fielding's four novels; *Joseph Andrews* (1742), *Jonathan Wild* (1743), *Tom Jones* (1749) and *Amelia* (1751). Nearly half of the whole anthology is made up of passages from the novels and nearly a quarter from *Tom Jones*, which provides around ninety-two entries. Such a high majority from the novels is significant, revealing that, in 1782, Fielding was prized mainly for his novel writing.³⁰ Significant too, is the percentage from *Tom Jones*, Fielding's most famous and most notorious novel. While the relatively impressive count of sixty-two extracts taken from Fielding's last and more serious novel *Amelia* is unsurprising, that such a large part of the anthology is extracted from a novel seen variously as dissolute, immoral, lewd and corrupting, as *Tom Jones* was in some quarters, is interesting. Not only did Johnson describe the novel as 'vicious'; Hawkins saw it as having an effect entirely antithetical to the intended aim of a *Beauties* collection. He describes *Tom Jones* as:

A book seemingly intended to sap the foundation of that morality which it is the duty of parents and all public instructors to inculcate in the minds of young people, by teaching that virtue is upon principle imposture, that generous qualities alone constitute true worth, and that a young man may love and be loved, and at the same time associate with the loosest women.³¹

³⁰ Unsurprisingly, Fielding's *Shamela* (1741) is not included in the anthology, undoubtedly regarded as wholly unsuitable with its bawdy and highly sexual burlesque of Richardson's *Pamela* (1740).

³¹ *Fielding: Critical Heritage*, p. 445. From Hawkins's *Life of Johnson* (1787).

Tom Jones, like *Tristram Shandy*, was viewed as a novel not suitable for young readers and is similarly edited to ensure that it promotes and does not 'sap' morality in its audience. The extracts selected from *Tom Jones* included in the anthology reflect Hawkins's criticisms, avoiding mention of loose women, riotous behaviour, bawdy or sexual encounters. Instead, the novel is plundered for the kind of statement which reads like a moral aphorism, similar to those included in the collections of Johnson. In editing the novels, the editor was faced with the particularity inherent in the genre which 'hindered its abilities to reach towards general moral truths'.³² As suggested in the previous chapter, however, Fielding's novels were edited even more severely than those of Sterne, not only to remove ambiguity and innuendo, but to eliminate the particularities of character, location, and time. Unlike Sterne's digressive and episodic narrative structure, Fielding's novels were more unified, with a linear narrative and chronological plot. To extract from this narrative sentiments and maxims would require a more intensive editorial process: a process that systematically deleted Fielding's authorial voice and presence from his writing.

Given the anthology's preoccupation with presenting Fielding as a writer of maxims in Johnsonian mould, it is, perhaps, unsurprising, that a ninth of the extracts from *Tom Jones* included in the collection are taken from the introductory chapters to each of the books of the novel, where the tone is less specifically concerned with the action of the narrative, and the subjects pursued are more general and less particular. One such extract, from the opening chapter to Book Eleven, anthologised under the heading of 'Criticism', returns, appropriately enough for a collection of 'beauties', to the familiar theme of fault-finding:

³² Ian A. Bell, *Henry Fielding: Authorship and Authority* (London & New York: Longman, 1994), p. 193.

There is another light in which these modern critics may with great justice and propriety be seen; and this is that of a common slanderer. If a person who prys into the characters of others, with no other design but to discover their faults, and to publish them to the world, deserves the title of a slanderer of the reputations of men; why should not a critic, who reads with the same malevolent view, be as properly stiled the slanderer of the reputation of books?³³

The inclusion of such a passage is interesting, not just because of the universal and unspecific nature of its subject matter. If a finder and publisher of faults is to be termed a 'slanderer of the reputation of books', then a finder and publisher of beauties is, perhaps, by implication, to be viewed as a beneficent, rather than malevolent figure. As in the *Beauties of Johnson*, the editor, through his selection of passages, subtly appropriates Fielding's personal venom as a means of justifying the anthology and the editor himself.

While the tone and subject of the introductory chapters is less particular than the rest of the novel, they are not all so general that they can be anthologised without editorial refinement. The following example is typical. One of the twenty-four extracts under the heading 'Women', it reads:

The finest woman in this world, would lose all the benefit of her charms in the eye of a man who had never seen one of another cast; the ladies themselves seem so sensible of this, that they all are industrious to procure foils, nay, they will often become foils to themselves, as appears by the morning and evening dresses of a woman of fashion.

³³ *TJ*, XI.I, ii, p. 567.

This is not, however, how the original passage in the novel reads. Both are identical up to the point which states, 'they will often become foils to themselves', but the ending of the passage in the novel continues as follows:

they will become foils to themselves; for I have observed (at *Bath* particularly) that they endeavour to appear as ugly as possible in the Morning, in order to set off that Beauty which they intend to shew you in the Evening.³⁴

The original ending is more obviously humorous; more biting in that it imputes a greater sense of premeditated cunning, and more specific in that the reference to the particular location of Bath is mentioned. The treatment of the passage suggests that the genre is indeed inherently particular, and that for the novel to provide any moral truths, all traces of its 'extreme particularity' must be removed. That the anthology omits such a pointed portrayal of the female sex is significant, but perhaps even more important is the omission of the personal pronoun in the passage. The deletion of 'I have observed' from the extract is vital to understanding the editorial technique at work in the *Beauties of Fielding* and to the 'departicularisation' of the novels. The role of the omniscient narrator in Fielding's novels has been often discussed, and the centrality of the 'Fieldingesque' authorial voice is all too familiar to any reader of the novels.³⁵ The intrusive authorial voice in *Tom Jones* is one which comments on the action, fills in the gaps, and passes judgement on the action, as well as creating a sense of intimacy or even

³⁴ *TJ*, V.I, i, p. 212.

³⁵ As Bell notes, the narrative voice in Fielding's novels has been labelled variously as, 'the implied author', 'the dramatized Fielding', 'the narrator', 'Fielding-as-narrator', 'Fielding's dramatic version of himself', 'the author' and 'this self'. See *Authorship and Authority*, pp. 28-29.

antagonism with the reader. Removing such a presence from the anthologised extract removes not only this sense of intimacy, but the very figure and voice which Fielding purposely placed in the novel, whether we regard the narrator as an extension of Fielding as author, or as a separate character in its own right. However the narrative voice is defined, virtually all critics agree it cannot be ignored. For some, the intrusive narrator is, as Bell summarises, ‘something of an embarrassment’, an ‘amiable anachronism’, or a structural fault within the novel itself.³⁶ Viewed as problematic or otherwise, the persistent presence of the narrative voice cannot be seen as anything less than a very deliberate part of Fielding’s novelistic style. Thus its removal in the *Beauties of Fielding* leads to a wholly paradoxical state of affairs. ‘Fielding’, the narrator/voice of the novel is omitted, and the passage in its altered form is attributed in turn to the authorial ‘Fielding’ of the collection’s title. Fielding, the jovial narrator of *Tom Jones*, or at very least Fielding the author behind the persona of the narrator, is not the ‘Fielding’ that the *Beauties of Fielding* wishes to promote. Instead, the ‘Fielding’ with which the anthology is concerned, is one more uniformly moral and serious, one who is not just a novel writer, essayist, or dramatist, but significantly, a maxim writer.

The intrusive narrator is of course not unique to *Tom Jones*; it is also present in *Joseph Andrews*, and a strong authorial presence is found in both *Jonathan Wild* and *Amelia*. A few examples from each of the texts amply illustrate the effect which the removal of the authorial voice has on the original context of the passage and on the resultant representation of Fielding himself. Under the heading of ‘Habits’ the opening two sentences of the seventh chapter of the fourth book of *Joseph Andrews* are anthologised. The first sentence in the original text reads:

Habit, my good Reader, hath so vast a Prevalence over the human Mind, that there is scarce any thing too strange or too strong to be asserted of it.³⁷

The anthology, however, omits the authorial interpolation of ‘my good reader’, removing the sense of the narrator/ reader relationship and rendering the passage a more authoritative maxim as a result. Similarly, in *Jonathan Wild*, a change in personal pronouns alters the subject of the passage from the ‘reader’ addressed in the novel, to a more general, universal audience. Entitled ‘Injustice’ within the anthology, the corresponding extract in the novel reads as follows:

[T]hough as a Christian thou art obliged, and we advise thee, to forgive thy enemy, NEVER TRUST THE MAN WHO HATH REASON TO SUSPECT THAT YOU KNOW HE HATH INJURED YOU.³⁸

The above is the final component in a much longer sentence; however, the *Beauties* transforms the piece into a new sentence which reads:

Though as Christians we are obliged to forgive our enemies – *Never trust the man who has reason to suspect that you know he hath injured you.*

Despite the slightly dubious moral lesson of the passage itself when removed from the overall context of the novel, the rendering of the extract in the anthology reveals a

³⁶ Bell, *Authorship and Authority*, pp. 26-27.

³⁷ Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, ed. by R. F. Brissenden (London: Penguin, 1985), 4.7, p. 299. All further references are to this edition.

³⁸ Henry Fielding, *The Life of Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*, ed. by David Nokes (London: Penguin, 1986), 3.4, p. 134.

number of subtle, yet significant, alterations. The specific, singular reader addressed in the novel, is, by the change from 'thou' to 'we' and 'thy' to 'our', made plural, general and applicable to all man (and woman) kind in the anthology. The removal of the authorial 'and we advise thee', not only excludes the mentor-like role assumed by the narrator towards the reader, but disregards all trace of its original context, resulting in a more forcefully worded maxim, the command, 'we are obliged to forgive our enemies', becoming a unified, undeniable duty, rather than something the shadowy narrator 'advises' should be done.

The intrusive narrator of the novels is thus undermined by his omission from the anthology, but yet is also reinforced by the transformation of the narrator's opinion into a universally acknowledged maxim. What the narrator advised in the above extract becomes unquestioned truth, which, through the titular attribution to the 'Fielding' of the anthology, is offered as a piece of wisdom from 'Fielding' himself, and not from the persona created in the novels. This is especially observable in the extracts anthologised from *Amelia*, where the authorial 'I' is constantly obliterated from the text. One such example is taken from Book four, chapter two of the novel, where the latter half of the final paragraph reads as follows:

There is, I believe, something so outrageously suspicious in the nature of all vice, especially when joined with any great degree of pride, that the eyes of those who we imagine privy to our failings, are intolerable to us, and we are apt to aggravate their opinions to our disadvantage far beyond the reality.³⁹

³⁹Henry Fielding, *Amelia*, ed. by David Blewett (London: Penguin, 1987), 4.2, p. 155.

Entitled 'Vice', within the anthology the authorial 'I believe' is replaced with the less subjective and less personal 'perhaps'. Similarly, a passage under the heading of 'Beneficence' begins, in the original novel, 'Nay, give me leave to wonder that pride...', but in the anthology becomes, 'It seems extraordinary that pride...'⁴⁰ These various omissions and alterations, however small, all contribute to the elimination of the authorial persona from the novels, which subtly shifts the distribution of authority within the anthology. The narrative voice with which Fielding controls and directs the novels is omitted and made more general, thereby gaining a kind of objective authority associated with the sense of universal truism encapsulated in the maxim form. That this universal truism is, however, ultimately returned to Fielding's possession through the title of the anthology, and by the mediation of an editor, only complicates the issue of authorial authority even further.

The editor of the collection is, moreover, not simply content with removing all 'physical' traces of the authorial Fielding from the anthology. He removes all aspects of the passages which betray their origins; those other elements of particularity which supposedly inhibit the imparting of moral truth in the novel. This includes reappropriating speech into prose maxims and eliminating all references to characters or situations mentioned within the novels. One example, of a conversation between Blifil and Allworthy in Book seventeen, chapter two of *Tom Jones*, portrays the deceitful Blifil engaging in yet another attempt to blacken Jones's reputation in order to hide his own guilt. Allworthy, in response to the possibility of yet more villainy from Jones, remarks: 'I fear I have shewn Kindness in my Life to the Unworthy more than once. But Charity

⁴⁰ *Amelia*, 4.4, p. 165.

doth not adopt the Vices of its Objects'.⁴¹ Entitled 'Charity', in the *Beauties* the extract is rewritten, generalizing Allworthy's 'I' and turning the whole from speech into the form of a maxim:

Though we may sometimes unintentionally bestow our beneficence on the unworthy, it does not take from the merit of the act. For charity doth not adopt the vices of its objects.

Other passages remove the third person reference to characters within the novel, such as the following example, which deletes all references to the eponymous hero of the novel itself. Within the original text the statement reads, 'As Jones had the vices of a warm disposition, he was entirely free from those of a cold one'.⁴² Placed in the context of the anthology, all reference to Jones is excluded and the passage now reads: 'Those who have the vices of a warm disposition are generally free from those of a cold one'. Replacing the character of Jones with the all encompassing 'those' widens the potential application of the statement and gives it a relevance beyond the bounds of the novel itself; fully realizing Fielding's claim that he describes 'not Men, but Manners; not an Individual, but a Species'.⁴³

Removing all references to the characters of the novels in this way is, in effect, a further method of eliminating Fielding from his own works. Fielding's novels, after all, depend upon the presentation of his characters as the voice of morality, and as a means of illustrating various facets of human nature. Aside from the authorial narrative voice, the novels' characters are Fielding's most effective means of expressing his opinion of

⁴¹ *TJ*, ii, XVII.II.

⁴² *TJ*, ii, XII.XIII.

⁴³ *JA*, 3;1, p. 189.

human nature, of exposing its follies and vices, and of giving the moral preoccupation of the texts a sense of authority. For example, *Tom Jones* is, in Martin Battestin's view:

an exercise in the fictive definition of Virtue, or moral Wisdom – just as Fielding's earlier novels, *Joseph Andrews* and *Jonathan Wild*, may be regarded as attempts to represent through word and action the true meaning of concepts such as Charity, Chastity, and Greatness.⁴⁴

One of the ways in which Fielding realises this purpose, is identified by Battestin as characterization; 'by which certain figures in the novel become "Walking Concepts"'.⁴⁵ Although Fielding's characters are not portrayed as exemplary characters of only one particular attribute, they do serve, at times, as stock characters in a more burlesque mould. Allworthy is therefore the personification of his name and is the novel's representation of true benevolence, just as Blifil is the black-hearted villain of the piece, encapsulating the abhorrent qualities of deceit, greed, and selfishness. Without the original context, and knowledge of who the passage refers to, or who it is spoken by, the anthology not only loses the sense of irony or humour available to the reader of the novel, who is familiar with the characters and knows how to interpret their actions, but also risks placing the speeches of characters who are drawn to represent certain qualities into the mouth of the authorial 'Fielding' who presides over the whole. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this is true of many of the speeches of Allworthy in the novel. Two of his main speeches are transferred into the context of the anthology. Part of his speech to the unfortunate Jenny Jones in the first book is included under the heading of 'Chastity',

⁴⁴ Martin C. Battestin, 'The Definition of Wisdom: *Tom Jones*', in Harold Bloom, ed., *Henry Fielding* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 163-191, quotation at p. 165.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

subtitled 'A Lecture on the Loss of it'. That the words of the benevolent and wise Allworthy provide such a lengthy entry reflects the overall tone and morality desired by the editor of the collection; however, the subject matter and the addressee of this speech is also significant. As with the passage on 'Women' discussed earlier, the particular audience of this passage is the female sex, who are reminded that the loss of their chastity renders them 'infamous', and will result in them being 'driven, like lepers of old, out of society'.⁴⁶ Such passages, along with the advice from Mrs. Fitzpatrick that 'the silliest fellows are [generally] the worst husbands', fulfill much the same role as the editing for the 'heart of Sensibility' in the *Beauties of Sterne*. They purport to give advice to young female readers while endeavoring to present writers that women were often restricted from reading, as authors who, in fact, have within their works much of sense to say to young women. As illustrated in chapter one, the very use of the term 'Beauties' in the title invokes an implicit link with femininity, which renders the collection the 'female' counterpart to the original, complete 'male' works, and seems to demand a female readership. The inclusion of Allworthy's speech on chastity is, therefore, not only addressed to women, but the reappropriation of the speech of a character into a lecture delivered by 'Fielding' alters the authority of the speech and the persona of its author.

The second of Allworthy's speeches to be anthologised is that given to Tom on the subjects of prudence and goodness of heart towards the novel's denouement. Two passages are included from this long speech, headed 'Faults' and 'Prudence'. No significant new editorial alterations are made to the passages, and the sentiments they express are wholly in keeping with the tenor of the original speech in the novel. Yet

⁴⁶ *TJ*, I.VII, i, p. 52.

perhaps a lack of editorial activity may also contribute to the undermining of authority in a less immediate sense. By removing the extracts from the context of the novel and placing them under a specific heading within the anthology, the spoken words of a particular character become the extended maxims of the authorial persona 'Fielding', which are, in turn, offered as representing Fielding's own views. This is not to say that Fielding did not share the advice he has Allworthy impart to Jones in book eighteen, chapter ten of the novel, simply to state the obvious: that words spoken by a character in the novel, no matter how laudable, are not necessarily the sentiments of their author. After all, in the context of the novel as a whole, Allworthy, despite being benevolent and good hearted, is also somewhat gullible, deceived by Blifil and blind to the virtues of Jones. Such complexities of character influence the interpretation of such speeches within the novel itself, and so stripped of its context and offered as a 'beauty' of Fielding rather than a 'beauty' spoken by a particular character, it takes on new meanings and different implications.

Of course, reappropriating words spoken by Allworthy and transforming them into maxims is hardly misrepresenting the novel or Fielding himself to any great degree. Certainly, they do no significant harm to his literary persona, however much they may confuse ideas of authorial or narrative authority. However, other passages which place character's speeches into the mouth of the titular 'Fielding' manage to endow the anthologised passage with a sense of authority which is actually undermined within the context of the original novel. This is the case with an example from *Joseph Andrews*, included in the anthology under the heading of 'Resignation'. The passage is taken from a speech made by the quixotic Parson Adams to Andrews upon the latter's request to be

joined in marriage to Fanny. Adams discourses on the true purposes of matrimony and the right reasons for entering into such a state. He dismisses fear as an admissible motive, and it is Adams's reasoning on this topic which is included in the anthology:

When any Accident threatens us, we are not to despair, nor when it overtakes us, to grieve; we must submit in all things to the Will of Providence, and not set our Affections so much on any thing here, as not to be able to quit it without Reluctance.⁴⁷

Within the context of the novel, this seemingly laudable sentiment is exposed as impractical by none other than Adams himself. No sooner has Adams finished the speech recommending resignation in the face of disaster, from which the above extract is taken, than he receives the news (later shown to be inaccurate), that his youngest son has drowned. Ironically, he begins to 'stamp about the room and deplore his loss with the bitterest agony', ignoring all the advice that Andrews offers recollected from the Parson's own arguments.⁴⁸ Notwithstanding Adams's excuse for such contradictory behaviour — 'No man is obliged to impossibilities, and the loss of a child is one of those great trials where our grief may be allowed to become immoderate' — the passage is rendered ironic within the context of the novel itself. Indeed, the sentiment is exposed as precisely the kind of 'impossibility' to which Adams refers, whether the loss is that of a favourite child or any other. That the passage is printed within the anthology as a 'straight' piece of advice from Fielding and not Adams, renders its inclusion as an example of universal wisdom wholly ironic in turn. The passage is endowed with authority by its removal into the context of the anthology, authority which is not present

⁴⁷ *JA*, 4.8, p. 308.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 309.

within its original context.⁴⁹ Other passages, such as the parenthetical remark from *Tom Jones* (XII.X), ‘we are as often ashamed of thinking right as of thinking wrong’, anthologised under the heading ‘Thought’, are rendered more authoritative within the context of the anthology than they appear to be within the original narrative.⁵⁰ Thus, there is a two-fold system of authorising at work within the anthology regarding the treatment of Fielding’s novels. On the one hand, authorial comment and characterisation is removed from the extracts, thereby stripping the passages of their authority and attributing them to an altogether less defined ‘Fielding’ figure, as part of his ‘beauties’. On the other, passages which have less obvious authority, including speeches made by characters and those which are exposed as false or idealistic within the original, are given a greater sense of authority from being presented as universal maxims within the wisdom-text format of the anthology. Some, of course, are simply altered to bring the passage in line with the editorial desire to remove all indelicate material from the novels. Therefore while less delicate episodes are not included, the subtle substitution of ‘cunning man’ for ‘rogue’ and ‘corrupt’ for ‘thieves’ in extracts from *Jonathan Wild* seems to indicate a less obvious but equally systematic attempt to temper Fielding’s language. This concern with the avoidance of causing offence is also responsible for the omission of the reference to the priesthood, who, in Dr. Harrison’s opinion, are answerable along with the ‘governors of the world’, for encouraging wickedness and

⁴⁹ Much the same is true of the extracts taken from Dr. Harrison’s letter in *Amelia*. Two extracts are included from the letter which was delivered by the young bucks at the masquerade. Within the novel the letter is read ironically, and it is not until later that the reader discovers that it was intended as a serious lecture on the subject of adultery penned by Harrison. The inclusion of the passages in the anthology as serious moral advice no doubt reflects the sermon-like quality of the letter, but the original context in which the letter appears in the context of the novel itself endows the passages with an ambiguity of authority not reflected in the anthology. See *Amelia*, 10:2.

⁵⁰ *TJ*, XII.X, ii, p. 660.

vice, as well as for the substitution of 'inventor' and 'minister' in two separate passages, with the more general, 'artist' and 'statesman' respectively.⁵¹

Above all, the extracts from the novels are altered in all or a number of the various ways indicated above, with varying degrees of severity, to transform them into maxim-like statements with no obvious connection to the original texts and genre from which they were extracted. While one reason for Kearsley's preference for anthologising mainly prose writers (or at very least, stressing the prose of writers also viewed as poets), may be the ease with which prose can be transformed into maxims or suitable sentiments, it is ironic that the genre of the novel was in fact regarded as unsuitable for such purposes due to its inherent 'extreme particularity'.⁵² As the *Critical Review* commented on the collections of both Fielding and Watts, these writers 'seem to have suffered severely, because a greater share of their merit is owing to a continued chain of adventures, or to a connected perspicuous view of their subjects'.⁵³ By transforming extracts from the novels into maxims and moral truths, the anthology also renders them equal to, and on one level, indistinguishable from, the other prose works in the anthology, which are also purged of any extraneous signs of particularity. Were it not for the references appended to each extract, the nature of the source would be unidentifiable and certainly those with no previous knowledge of Fielding's works would be hard pressed to determine which of the prose extracts originated in a novel, periodical essay, or treatise.

⁵¹ *Amelia*, 9.5, p. 381.

⁵² Interestingly, one of the novels, *Jonathan Wild*, has its own set of maxims, 'as to the certain methods of attaining greatness' purportedly written by Wild. Two of these (with only minor alterations so that the

The headings and the arrangement of passages within the collection also reflects the authorial appropriation to which Fielding is subjected. Unlike the *Beauties of Sterne*, whose contents were not arranged alphabetically owing to the sentimental orientation of the collection, the *Beauties of Fielding* did arrange its headings alphabetically, often placing more than one extract beneath the relevant head. Most of the 181 headings have only one or two passages each, but a few headings have a significant number of extracts beneath, suggesting that Fielding has more to say about these particular subjects than any other. Of course, this is not always necessarily the case, yet the greater number of extracts collected beneath a particular heading reveals, at the very least, the editor's concern to attribute the quality or subject in question to the authorial Fielding. Headings which contain more than five extracts each include: Friendship (7), Love (21), Law (14), Marriage (7), Vanity (8), and Women (24). That 'Women' is the heading with the largest number of extracts is significant, suggesting that the collection is trying to cater for, appeal to, and educate, the female sex. That Love and Marriage are also among the most frequently anthologised subjects stresses this preoccupation with the female sex, and perhaps, most importantly, with the relationship between both sexes which the collection claims to address.

Law is also among the most popular subjects, illustrating the way in which the collection draws attention to various specific elements of Fielding's life in order to strengthen a particular representation of his persona within the anthology as a whole. Fielding was of course a magistrate for the city and liberty of Westminster and county of Middlesex from 1748-1749, and around this time his writing became more serious and

tense is correct), nos. 12 and 14 are included in the anthology, creating a confusing string of paradoxes surrounding the irony of the maxims in the various contexts.

legally orientated. Of course, the law, politics, and social issues pervade his plays and novels to various degrees, but in the years from 1745 onwards, Fielding's writings displayed an active interest in legal matters. These include the *Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* and the *Charge to the Grand Jury*, as well as the periodical writings found in *The Covent-Garden Journal*, *The Jacobite's Journal* and *The True Patriot*. All of these are represented in the *Beauties of Fielding* and stress Fielding's role as a justice of the peace, and his concern for social and political issues. This is not to say that the anthology engages in any partisan representation of Fielding's complex and often changing political views. No direct anti-Walpole or anti-ministerial comment is evident in the anthology. The editing of passages removes the context of the original text, rendering any political comment of a solely unspecific nature, perhaps more suited to a new generation of reader unfamiliar with the political situation of forty years previous. In fact, to term the contents of the anthology political, is perhaps misleading; if it is political it is so in a socio-political way, addressing issues of law, justice, and the government, alongside issues of drunkenness, public executions and corruption, in an uncompromising, but nevertheless unspecific and non-partisan manner. The subjects included in the anthology range from 'Envy' and 'Joy' to 'Gaming', 'Charity', 'Honesty', 'Learning', 'Absolute Monarchy', and 'Opera', presenting Fielding as a figure who has wisdom to impart on a variety of subjects, and who is, within the context of the collection, a 'magistrate' dispensing advice and maxims for the good of mankind. As Bell comments: 'Unlike the novelist, the "Justice" could really command the full and undivided attention of his listeners, and he had genuine sanctions in his

⁵³ *Critical Review*, 55 (1783), pp. 157-158.

power should they prove inattentive'.⁵⁴ Fielding's legal writings have a stronger, more authoritative moral voice, a voice which is not removed, but utilized and emphasized within the anthology in its appropriation of Fielding's authorial identity. The extracts included under the heading 'Law' come, not only from the *Enquiry* or the *Covent-Garden Journal*, but from the novels, *Tom Jones*, *Jonathan Wild* and *Amelia*, as well as his earlier drama, including *Rape upon Rape*, *Love in Several Masques* and *Don Quixote in England*. By arranging passages from all genres of Fielding's works in this way, the anthology presents Fielding as a writer whose works are filled with such worthy moral truths, and as such, emphasises the magisterial qualities of his literary persona. This persona is undoubtedly more serious and moral than the boisterous dramatist or jovial novelist, and commands more authority and respect from the reader. By refashioning and repackaging Fielding, the *Beauties* positions him as a magistrate with unquestionable wisdom and a moral judgement on all manner of subjects, not dissimilar to the portrayal of Johnson. By eliminating unsuitable or ambiguous material, by the editing, arranging, and titling of extracts, Kearsley's anthology once again creates a persona suitable for teaching the 'youth of both sexes', endowing Fielding with a sense of respectability, and allowing him, like Sterne, to be marketed as a literary and moral exemplar alongside Samuel Johnson.

⁵⁴ Bell, *Authorship and Authority*, p. 225.

CHAPTER 6

THE BEAUTIES OF SWIFT: A 'GAUDY TULIP RAISED FROM DUNG'?

I

Swift and the '*Sieves and Boulders of Learning*'

With the popularity of the collections of Johnson and Sterne and the publication of the *Beauties* of Goldsmith, Fielding, and Watts, Kearsley's 'library' of digested classics followed each other off the press in quick succession. The *Beauties of Fielding* appeared in July 1782 and the dedication to the *Beauties of Swift* is dated 15 August. Although the advertisement at the end of the *Beauties of Fielding* states that 'The BEAUTIES OF POPE AND SWIFT will be published next month', those of Pope seem to have been postponed. An advertisement in the Swift collection promises that the *Beauties of Pope* 'are in the press', and again 'will be published next month', but the collection did not appear until the following year. The collections of both Swift and Pope, it was stated, would complete 'the Editor's plan, as it is not his intention to extend these Selections any further'. That Kearsley chose to anthologise Pope and Swift and to position them as the final figures in his series is both curious and fitting. In general, the *Beauties* follow a pattern of reverse chronology, Kearsley starting with the most recent authors and working backwards to Pope and Swift. Johnson was ill, but still living; Goldsmith had died in 1774, Sterne in 1768, Fielding in 1754. Watts, a contemporary of Swift's died in 1748. Swift himself died in 1745, the year after Pope, the last to be anthologised.

Kearsley seems to have had no desire to continue anthologising all the major figures in literary history, and Pope and Swift seem to have suggested an appropriate place to end a series of modern authors.

While Watts may seem a rather anachronistic presence in the series (not to mention the collection of Hume and Bolingbroke), the collections of *Beauties* of Swift, and particularly Pope, seem to mark a departure in the orientation of Kearsley's anthologies. While Johnson, Goldsmith, Sterne and Fielding were all predominantly prose writers, and packaged as such, Swift and Pope were, in contrast, considered as poets. Although both wrote prose, and Swift wrote sermons and numerous prose treatises, the *Beauties* of Pope and Swift contain more poetry than any of the other collections. Prose forms, especially that of the novel, were still popular; certainly there was no sudden shift in the popularity of prose and poetry in mid-1782. One contemporary event, however, may have prompted Kearsley to broaden the scope of his collections to include poetry: the publication of the large scale, sixty-volume poetic collection *The Works of the English Poets*, for which Johnson supplied the *Lives of the Poets*. The project was first announced in 1777 and Johnson's *Lives* were to form the first ten volumes.¹ The first volumes (i-iv) appeared in 1779, volumes v-x in 1781, when Kearsley began his series. That each of the *Beauties* collections is prefaced by a short 'Life' of the author, perhaps suggests that Kearsley was attempting to do on a smaller scale what the large conger of around thirty-six of his contemporaries were achieving in this extensive anthology of English poets.² His inclusion of poets like Pope

¹ Greg Clingham, 'Life and Literature in the *Lives*', p. 162, in *The Cambridge Companion to Samuel Johnson*, ed. by Greg Clingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 161-191.

² The booksellers involved were: C. Bathurst, J. Buckland, W. Strahan, J. Rivington and Sons, T. Davies, T. Payne, L. Davis, W. Owen, B. White, S. Crowder, T. Caslon, T. Longman, B. Law, C. Dilly, J.

and Swift perhaps illustrates an attempt to offer a smaller, more affordable, edition of these poets to those who could not afford the new collection of the *Works*, much as he had done for those who could not afford the complete works of Johnson, Goldsmith, or Fielding.

Whether the anthologising of Pope and Swift was in any way a response to the large scale collection published the previous year, or not, these collections provided a fitting conclusion, both writers being more than familiar with the beauties/defects discourse from which Kearsley's collections had grown. Both writers lived at the time when the critical debate was at its peak and had their writings assessed by its standards. They also fully engaged with the discourse in their works, from their mutual parody of Longinus in the *Peri Bathous* to the derision of those critics who constantly pointed out a writer's faults to the exclusion of their beauties. Pope, of course, had highlighted the 'beauties' in his edition of Shakespeare, which influenced William Dodd and his *Beauties of Shakespeare*. Swift was equally vocal in his dislike of the practice and its corrupting and diluting effects. His *Tale of a Tub* is peppered with references to the critical practice of highlighting beauties and faults. At one point the writer states:

I hold myself obliged to give as much light as possible into the beauties and excellencies of what I am writing, because it is become the fashion and humour most applauded among the first authors of this polite and learned age, when they would correct the ill nature of critical, or inform the ignorance of courteous readers. Besides, there have been several famous pieces lately published both in verse and prose, wherein if the writers had not been pleased, out of their great

humanity and affection to the public, to give us a nice detail of the *sublime* and the *admirable* they contain, it is a thousand to one whether we should ever have discovered one grain of either.³

Of course, Swift's stance here is wholly ironic. It is precisely the 'fashion and humour' of 'this polite and learned age' which he is intent on mocking. It seems the highlighting of beauties and faults has, in Swift's opinion, become a means of bestowing worth on writing which in actuality has little or none. The discourse is also responsible for creating chaos in the literary hierarchy of authors, commentators, and critics.

Commentators strayed beyond their role as explicators and styled themselves as critics; authors turned commentators and so on. One 'commentator' upon the *Tale* itself is derided for such presumption in the 'Apology':

It is agreed, this Answerer would have succeeded much better, if he had stuck wholly to his Business as a Commentator upon the Tale of a Tub, wherein it cannot be deny'd that he hath been of some Service to the Public, and has given very fair Conjectures towards clearing up some difficult Passages; but, it is the frequent Error of those Men (otherwise very commendable for their Labors) to make Excursions beyond their Talent and their Office, by pretending to point out the Beauties and the Faults; which is no part of their Trade, which they always fail in, which the World never expected from them, nor gave them any thanks for endeavouring at.⁴

Here Swift's satire is aimed at commentators such as Gildon and those Shakespeare editors who strayed beyond the task of elucidating difficult passages and presumed to inflict their own assessment of beauties and faults upon the text. Interestingly, Pope is

³ Swift, *A Tale of a Tub*, *Prose Works*, i, p. 81.

⁴ Swift, *Tale*, 'An Apology', *Prose Works*, i, p.8.

not wholly exempt from such a charge. It is not a commentator's, but a critic's territory to point out the beauties and faults in a piece of writing. However, the critics have also been failing in their duty. As Swift sardonically explains, the definition of a 'true critic' is

a Discoverer and Collector of a Writers Faults. Which may be further put beyond Dispute by the following Demonstration: That whoever will examine the Writings in all kinds, wherein this ancient Sect has honour'd the World, shall immediately find, from the whole Thread and Tenor of them, that the Idea's of the Authors have been altogether conversant, and taken up with the Faults, and Blemishes, and Oversights, and Mistakes of other Writers; and let the Subject treated on be whatever it will, their Imaginations are so entirely possess'd and replete with the Defects of other Pens that the very Quintessence of what is bad, does of necessity distill into their own: by which means the Whole appears to be nothing else but an *Abstract* of the *Criticisms* themselves have made.⁵

Swift voices that common complaint of critics who focus exclusively on authors' faults with a doggedness that seems determined to deny any writer, besides the critic, the possession of a beauty or excellency in their writing. Interestingly, the image of distillation raises a new approach to the derision of such critics. Swift subtly introduces the idea that the removal of faults from one work into another somehow contaminates the secondary work. A fault is a fault whatever the context, and a critic, by appropriating the fault in his own work, even if only to expose the original author, only succeeds in perpetuating the fault by making it his own. His work becomes an abstract of the faults of another and little else. The same may be said of beauties, the logical conclusion being that a collection of beauties is endowed with all the sublimity and

⁵ Swift, *Tale, Prose Works*, i, p. 58.

excellencies of that from which it is composed. However, for Swift, a collection of either beauties or faults will not make the resultant work a sum of its parts, but rather a distillation, the residue of something more complete and original. Thus a critical essay or anthology of beauties would be as offensive and as biased in Swift's view as the critic who points out only the faults of a writer. They represent what appeared to Swift to be dissolution in the standards of learning, and significantly, of reading, in the early-eighteenth century. In the 'Digression in Praise of Digressions' he picks up this familiar theme, first voiced in the *Battle of the Books* (1697), of the disparity between the learning of the 'ancients' and 'moderns.' 'We of this Age,' he states:

have discovered a shorter and more prudent Method, to become *Scholars* and *Wits*, without the Fatigue of *Reading* or *Thinking*. The most accomplisht Way of using Books at present, is two-fold: Either first, to serve them as some Men do *Lords*, learn their *Titles* exactly, and then brag of their Acquaintance. Or secondly, which is indeed the choicer, the profounder, and politer Method, to get a thorough Insight into the *Index*, by which the whole Book is governed and turned, like *Fishes* by the *Tail*.⁶

Highlighting of beauties, or even faults, ultimately affects the way one reads a text, encouraging what may be termed 'index reading'. One does not read a book cover to cover, but first examines the index to determine what the text is about and which part of

⁶ Swift, *Tale*, *Prose Works*, i, p. 91. A similar opinion is echoed in 'A letter of Advice to a Young Poet.' This piece is of doubtful attribution, but nevertheless echoes similar concerns to those voiced here in the *Tale*: 'Perhaps you may think it a very severe task, to arrive at a competent Knowledge of so many of the Antients, as excel in their Way; and indeed it would be really so, but for the short and easie Method, lately found out, of Abstracts, Abridgements, and Summaries &c. which are admirable Expedients for being very learned with little or no *Reading*, and have the same Use with Burning-Glasses, to collect the diffus'd rays of Wit and Learning in Authors, and make them point with Warmth and Quickness upon the Reader's Imagination. And to this is nearly related that other modern Device of consulting Indexes, which is to read Books *Hebraically*, and begin where others usually end; and this is a compendious Way of coming to an Acquaintance with Authors'. See Davis's comment in *Prose Works*, ix, pp. 333-334.

it is relevant to you. In this way, books become the distilled residue of their former selves, as Swift laments in his critique of modern learning:

YOU take fair correct Copies, well bound in Calfs Skin, and Lettered at the Back, of all Modern Bodies of Arts and Sciences whatsoever, and in what Language you please. These you distil in balneo Mariæ, infusing Quintessence of Poppy Q.S. together with three Pints of Lethe, to be had from the Apothecaries. You cleanse away carefully the Sordes and Caput mortuum, letting all that is volatile evaporate. [...] It will dilate itself about the Brain (where there is any) in fourteen Minutes, and you immediately perceive in your Head an infinite Number of Abstracts, Summaries, Compendiums, Extracts, Collections, Medullas, Excepta quædams, Florilegias, and the like, all disposed into great Order, and reducible upon Paper.⁷

As Swift implies in his parody of scientific distillation processes, any great work is likewise potentially ‘reducible upon Paper’ and rendered submissive to the ‘great Order’ of the index. What began as the seemingly harmless practice of highlighting beauties and faults, when misapplied and corrupted, now threatens the very core of literary stability, the state of learning, and reading of books. Swift concludes:

What remains therefore but that our last recourse must be had to large *Indexes*, and little *Compendiums*? *Quotations* must be plentifully gathered and bookt in Alphabet; To this end, tho’ Authors need be little consulted, yet *Critics*, and *Commentators*, and *Lexicons* carefully must. But above all, those judicious Collectors of *bright Parts*, and *Flowers*, and *Observanda*’s, are to be nicely dwelt on, by some called the *Sieves* and *Boulters* of Learning; tho’ it is left

⁷ See chap, 4 p. 174, n. 13 above.

undetermined, whether they dealt in *Pearls* or *Meal*; and consequently, whether we are more to value that which *passed thro'*, or what *staid behind*.⁸

Uncannily, Swift foresees the precise situation which would dominate the literary marketplace when he himself would be reduced to such a collection of '*bright Parts* and *Flowers*', nearly eighty years after he wrote the *Tale*. Repackaged in a collection of *Beauties*, Swift's works are indeed 'gathered and bookt in Alphabet'. His words were distilled and mediated by an editor and governed by an index which led the reader to examples of Swift's 'wit' and 'genius' upon a wide variety of topics, from 'Learning' or 'Satire', to 'Jilting' and 'National Debt'.

II

Cursing the Drapier...

Swift's warning that when dealing with collectors of beauties or the '*Sieves and Boulders of Learning*', we are often left 'undetermined whether they dealt in *Pearls* or *Meal*', is one which is applicable to all anthologies, although particularly apt when assessing the contents of *Beauties* collections. The question of whether 'we are more to value that which *passed thro'*, or what *staid behind*' is vital when considering the representation of any author in an anthology. The title may suggest a gathering of 'beauties', but the result may not necessarily be a collection of pearls. As Swift suggested, such

⁸ Swift, *Tale, Prose Works*, i, p, 93.

evaluations are subjective and frequently carried out by those who are not qualified for the task. What is omitted from a collection, the residue from the distillation process, is often as revealing as what is refined and makes it through the editing process to the finished text.

This is particularly relevant to Kearsley's anthologising of the 'humorists', which, as we have seen in the cases of Sterne and Fielding, were carefully edited to remove all unsuitable material and to retain only 'pearls' of wisdom and morality. This editing is again evident in the selections and editing of passages within the *Beauties of Swift*. As with these two writers, Swift was often considered unsuitable reading material for young minds, especially those of young females. This attitude is expressed within Richardson's *Clarissa*, where Anna Howe writes to Belford relating Clarissa's opinion of Swift:

She often pitied the celebrated Dr. Swift for so employing his admirable pen that a pure eye was afraid of looking into his works, and a pure ear of hearing anything quoted from them. 'Such authors, she used to say, were not *honest* to their own talents, nor grateful to the God who gave them.' Nor would she, on these occasions, admit their beauties as a palliation; on the contrary, she held it an aggravation of their crime, that they, who were so capable of *mending the heart*, should in any places show a *corrupt one* in themselves; which must weaken the influences of their good works; and pull down with one hand what they built up with the other.⁹

⁹ Richardson, *Clarissa*, iv, p. 504. The Penguin edition of *Clarissa*, ed. by Angus Ross (London: Penguin, 1985), reprints [C1] and not [C3] and reveals the reference to Swift to be part of Richardson's revision. In [C1] this passage reads, 'In all her readings, and in her conversations upon them, she was fonder of finding beauties than blemishes: yet she used to lament that certain writers of the first class, who were capable of exalting virtue and of putting vice out of countenance, too generally employed themselves in works of imagination only, upon subjects merely speculative, disinteresting, and unedifying; from which no good moral or example could be drawn'. See Letter 529, p.1469.

Like Mary Delany and Reeve's Euphrasia, young women are portrayed as 'afraid of looking into' Swift's works, just as they were of being corrupted by reading Sterne's. Moreover, Clarissa's belief that his beauties are not a palliation, but an 'aggravation of their crime', echoes that of Johnson when he argued that the mingling of good and bad qualities results in the loss of the abhorrence of faults rather than in the acquisition of virtue. Adopting the flower motif on which the genre is based, the preface of the *Beauties of Swift* reveals Clarissa's objections to Swift to be still current in 1782. The compiler compares Swift's writings to 'a bouquet of extraordinary beauty, notwithstanding an offensive flower here and there, which his zeal for rectitude placed among the rest'.¹⁰ Like Pausanias, who saw critics as men who 'lop the *Luxuriant*, the *Rotten*, the *Dead*, the *Sapless*, and the *Overgrown Branches from their Works*', the editor of the collection has pruned Swift of his 'offensive' flowers.¹¹ Such, the preface claims, are 'his Ladies Dressing- Room, Corinna, &c. which have been deemed by the million very indelicate'. Interestingly, these pieces all share a female subject matter which could be deemed offensive to sensitive female readers. Strephon's realisation that 'Celia, Celia, Celia shits!' or the description of Corinna's 'running Sores' are no less shocking today, but were often regarded with disgust by Swift's contemporaries.¹² Throughout the eighteenth century and beyond, such pieces were regarded as indelicate and 'beyond the bounds of decorum'. W. H. Dilworth commented in 1758, that 'The Lady's Dressing Room' had been 'universally condemned as deficient in point of delicacy', and Sir Walter Scott in 1814, wrote of his 'poems of a coarse and indelicate character, where

¹⁰ *The Beauties of Swift* (London: George Kearsley, 1782).

¹¹ See *Tale, Prose Works*, i, p. 60.

¹² Harold Williams, ed., *The Poems of Jonathan Swift*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958). See 'The Lady's Dressing Room', ii, p. 529, l. 118 and 'A Beautiful Young Nymph going to Bed', ii, p. 583, l. 30.

[Swift's] imagination dwelt upon filthy and disgusting subjects'.¹³ Even the less than impartial Deane Swift acknowledged that some of Swift's poems were 'somewhat liable to censure on account of their indelicacy'.¹⁴ They were certainly not considered as suitable material to be included in an anthology aimed at the young and impressionable. As the compiler claims, to produce an 'instructive and entertaining' text, the volume had to be 'free from such pieces'.

Significantly, or rather, ironically, the collection is dedicated to Johnson and contains a quotation from his *Life* of Swift on the title page:

No writer can easily be found that has borrowed so little, or that in all his excellencies and all his defects has so well maintained his claim to be original.

Not only does a quotation from the greatest living author recommend Swift as a writer; the terminology used also reflects the genre of the text and the basis on which it is compiled. The dedication itself reads like a premature eulogy to Johnson:

The republic of letters has more obligations to you than any character now living: every polished member of society is anxious at this hour to pay that homage to your genius the Parisians paid to Voltaire's, in the last stage of his immortal career, when the myrtle honours of gratitude and affection were placed upon his brows in a crowded and exulting theatre!¹⁵

The editor, again W.H., admires Johnson's *Life* of Swift which 'challenges the applause

¹³ See Kathleen Williams, ed., *Swift: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 390, 295.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁵ *The Beauties of Swift* (London: G. Kearsley, 1782), dedication.

of all his admirers', and Johnson's opinion of Swift himself, which he views as being 'as just as it is elegant'. Indeed, the dedication seems to be more in praise of Johnson's writings on Swift than Swift's own work, revelling in praise of Johnson's humility and 'blameless life', and is signed with good wishes for Johnson's felicity, by his 'ardent admirer, and obliged servant'. Such ardent praise of Johnson is perhaps not so very unusual, nor is the warmth of the praise or the language used. The dedication may be owing to a simple excess of admiration, or represent a tactical device to appease Johnson after the unpleasantness created by the 'Death' episode in the *Beauties of Johnson*. Johnson's very public decline, charted day by day in the papers, placed the idea of the mortality of the great literary genius uppermost in everyone's minds. The dedication to the *Beauties of Swift* was no doubt only one manifestation of such pieces all clamouring to shower praise on the great Johnson during his final days. Johnson stood as the literary model to which all writers should aspire. Expectations and ideals which he championed exerted a powerful influence upon the literary climate in the years preceding his death. The editor's obvious admiration of Johnson and his apparent agreement with Johnson's evaluation of Swift, suggest that the collection of Swift will be likely to interpret and represent Swift as Johnson would have wished Swift to have been. Moreover, the dedication to, and praise of Johnson, in a series of *Beauties* collections which began with an anthology of that writer, not only reminds the reader of the earlier collection, but encourages them to compare Johnson and Swift and to view them as writers who belong within the same literary tradition.

The *Beauties of Swift*, therefore, sets out to transform Swift into a more Johnsonian author, in the same way that the anthologies of Sterne and Fielding had done

for those authors. Excluding Swift's 'offensive flowers' from the presentation of his poetry and prose, the compiler mediates between the numerous authorial personae that Swift adopted, repackaging Swift as a moral poet and maxim writer. While Swift almost always published his works anonymously, he also adopted the persona of the Drapier in the *Drapier's Letters*; in the *Examiner* we meet Isaac Bickerstaff, and in *Gulliver's Travels* the title page pronounces Swift's authorial disavowal stating the tale was, in fact, penned by Lemuel Gulliver. The anthology removes each of these identities from its portrayal of Swift and reinstates the less ambiguous author represented by the anthology's titular 'Swift'.

Thirty-eight poems are included among the one hundred and fifty-two extracts in the anthology. Interestingly, almost all of these are reprinted in their entirety, accounting for the smaller number of extracts in the collection in comparison to those of the predominantly prose writers. The poems appear to occupy even more space than the often shorter maxims and passages which make up the rest of the collection, and introduce a variety of tones and genres within the anthology. Among the poems included are 'Baucis and Philemon', 'Atlas', 'The Grand Question Debated', 'A Pastoral Dialogue between Richmond Lodge and Marble Hill', the 'Progress of Marriage' and of 'Poetry', as well as a few imitations of Horace, a handful of epigrams, and two of the 'Description' poems, the 'City Shower' and 'Morning.' Many of the poems are occasional, focusing on political and social issues and are addressed to, or directed at, the individuals involved. The fact that many of the poems are more 'particular' than they are 'general' possibly suggests why they are included in their entirety, rather than reduced to short stanzas or couplets, as was often the case in early

Beauties collections of poems.¹⁶ Curiously, this particularity which Bell and Price highlighted as a factor which hindered the anthologising of prose, is precisely that which prevents Swift's poems from being reduced to shorter anthology-pieces.

Johnson termed Swift's poetry 'clear,' but 'shallow,' a critique Hugh Blair, in the year following the publication of the *Beauties of Swift*, more tactfully termed, the 'Plain Style'.¹⁷ Another review of Swift's poetry is recorded in the *European Magazine* in 1790, which claimed: 'They are nothing more than prose in rhyme. Imagination, metaphor, and sublimity constitute no part of their merit'.¹⁸ This harsh evaluation reflects a frequent attitude to Swift's poetry, still voiced today. Irvin Ehrenpreis, for example, in his biography of Swift, stresses the immediate appeal of Swift's poetry, which is owing to his 'Clarity of sense and ingenuity of versification, didactic purpose and humorous tone'.¹⁹ 'Clarity of sense' and 'didactic purpose' alone may arguably seem sufficient reasons to explain the inclusion of Swift's poetry in an anthology aimed at 'youth of both sexes'. Yet however clear and didactic Swift's poetry may be, he rarely supplies, as Ehrenpreis states, 'the intense lyric pathos that makes the modern standard of "poetry", as distinct from "mere verse"'.²⁰ The effect of Swift's poetry is not achieved by lyric pathos, sublimity or sentimentalism, but by the continuous flow of the narrative of the poem. Swift rejected forms such as the lyric: 'If one does seek a pathetic sublime – that Longinian excellence possessed by Gray, [...] he will miss it in Swift precisely because Swift repudiated it'.²¹ It is ironic that Swift is lacking in the

¹⁶ This is true, for example, of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* in the *Beauties of Goldsmith*.

¹⁷ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, iv, p.44; Williams, ed., *Critical Heritage*, p. 211, from Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 2 vols, 1783.

¹⁸ *European Magazine*, 18 (Nov 1790), 329-32. Cited in Williams, *Critical Heritage*, p. 254.

¹⁹ Irvin Ehrenpreis, *Swift: the Man, His Works and the Age*, 3 vols. (London: Methuen, 1983), ii, p. 24.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 25.

Longinian sublime, as the *Beauties* tradition finds its most eminent ancestor in Longinus. Nevertheless, in the same way that the discourse evolved from its preoccupation with sublime language to that of moral sentiments, so a beauty extracted from either Swift or Gray in 1782 would have to contain wisdom and morality above sublime description. Swift was more concerned with writing the 'didactic, moral and satirical' kinds of poem, which may not be what Warton termed 'the most *poetic* species of *poetry*', but the kind of poetry he did write; plain, moral, humorous, and structured, rendered Swift a poetic storyteller akin to Sterne's sentimental storyteller.²² Extracts could not be easily removed from Swift's poetry without destroying the sense of the narrative, and so the particularity of the poems ensured that they would be anthologised in the *Beauties* in full.

The only poem to be edited is 'Verses on the Death of Dr Swift' (1739), which is printed in the anthology with several lines of asterisks denoting the removal of a number of lines. These lines (183-188) refer to the medals promised to Swift by the Queen, which were never received:

'He's dead you say, why let him rot;
 I'm glad the medals were forgot.
 I promised them, I own; but when?
 I only was a princess then;
 But now as consort of the King,
 You know 'tis quite a different thing.'²³

That lines which may be considered offensive to the monarchy would be omitted is in

²² *ibid.*

²³ See Williams, ed., *Poems*, ii, pp. 559-560.

keeping with the collection's aim to purge Swift of his indelicacies. However, considering the textual history of the poem, and the fact that this was not the first time these lines were expunged, the omission takes on a new level of interest. As Arthur H. Scouten and Robert D. Hume note: 'the poem exists in four distinct but entangled versions'.²⁴ Of these, only one was authorised by Swift himself. In 1738, he gave the manuscript of a poem based on one of La Rochefoucauld's maxims: 'Dans l'adversité de nos meilleurs amis nous trouvons quelque chose, qui ne nous deplaist pas' (which Swift translated as, 'In the adversity of our best friends, we find something that doth not displease us'), to Dr. William King. King was to supervise the printing of the poem in London, which Charles Bathurst duly performed in 1739. However, the first edition of the London 'Verses' was markedly different from the original manuscript which Swift had sent. Swift's 'Verses' was 484 lines long; the version Bathurst printed was only 381 lines in length. King himself seems to be responsible for some of the cuts to the poem, one of which significantly was that of the lines referring to the medals. In his correspondence he explains:

There are some lines, indeed, which I omitted with a very ill will, and for no other reason but because I durst not insert them. I mean the story of the medals: however, that incident is pretty well known, and care has to be taken that almost every reader may be able to supply the blanks. That part of the poem which mentions the death of queen *Anne*, and so well describes the designs

²⁴ Arthur H. Scouten and Robert D. Hume, 'Pope and Swift: Text and Interpretation of Swift's Verses on the Death', in *Essential Articles for the Study of Jonathan Swift's Poetry*, ed. by David M. Veith (Connecticut: Archon, 1984), pp. 295-305, p. 295.

of the ministry, [...] I would likewise willingly have published, If I could have done it with safety.²⁵

King also omitted the Wolston lines and the final two lines of the poem, which he did not understand.²⁶

These deletions do not, however, account for all the omissions or changes made to the poem. While various politically sensitive or seemingly ambiguous lines were removed, so too were various other episodes in which Swift, imagining the situation after his own death, turned to portraying himself. These cuts were not made by King, but by the 'Doctor's friends', whom King had consulted. They were of the opinion that 'the latter part of the poem might be thought by the public a little vain, if so much were said by himself of himself'.²⁷ Of the 'Doctor's friends' consulted, the predominant figure is Pope, who is now generally held responsible for the majority of the alterations made in the first London edition of the 'Verses'. These alterations not only included various omissions, but various additions to the poem which were extracted from another of Swift's poems, also based on the same La Rochefoucauld maxim, 'The Life and Genuine Character of Doctor Swift' (1733).²⁸ The result is in itself 'a well-constructed poem', which sets out to prevent ridicule of Swift and to cull from the poem any offensive sections, much as the *Beauties of Swift* set out to do to the whole of Swift's works.²⁹ It was comprised of 319 lines of the 'original' poem and sixty-two from the

²⁵ Williams, *Correspondence*, v, p. 135. See Scouten and Hume, 'Pope and Swift', p. 326. Letter to Swift of 23 January 1738-9. King had previously expressed his 'great fear' that Swift would not approve of the 'liberties I have taken' in an earlier letter to Swift, dated 5 January 1738-9, p. 133.

²⁶ For fuller details of the matter and King's deletions see the letters from King to Swift and Mrs. Whiteway, *Correspondence*, v, pp. 133-139.

²⁷ Williams, *Correspondence*, v, 139-140; Scouten and Hume, p. 327.

²⁸ Scouten and Hume in their notes (pp. 342-343) set out the construction of the Bathurst printing from both the manuscript (Faulkner's edition) and the 'Life and genuine Character'.

²⁹ Scouten and Hume, 'Pope and Swift', p. 328

'Life and Genuine Character' and omits Swift's footnotes. That it is Pope who is responsible for these alterations is not without an element of irony.³⁰ That he should edit Swift in a way similar to that which Swift, and even he himself, often derided, is curious and significant. Admittedly, Pope seems to have edited Swift's poem to protect his friend and not with the explicit intention of reappropriating his literary persona. Curiously, by rebuilding the poem on the model of 'The life and Genuine Character', Pope seems to attempt to make Swift more Swiftian, if such a thing were indeed possible.

Whatever the intentions and motivations behind the alterations to the 'Verses', Swift was furious, and quickly had his Dublin bookseller, George Faulkner, publish the original 484 line version, much to the mortification of King, who in a letter to Mrs. Whiteway records that:

The bookseller brought me the Dublin edition, and at the same time put into my hands a letter he had received from Faulkner, by which I perceive the Dean is much dissatisfied with our manner of publication, and that so many lines have been omitted [...]. Faulkner has sent over several copies to other booksellers, so that I take it for granted this poem will soon be reprinted here from the Dublin edition, and then it may be perceived how much the Dean's friends have been mistaken in their judgement, however good their intentions have been.³¹

The poem was reprinted from the Dublin edition, but the story does not end there. The fourth version of the 'Verses' was an entanglement of all the previous versions: 'a monstrosity of a 545-line poem, a maze without a plan'.³² This amalgamation of the

³⁰ Nor is the fact that despite the omission of lines which may portray Swift as vain, the lines referring to Swift's envy of Pope's own poetical talents are left intact (ll. 47-52).

³¹ Swift, *Correspondence*, vi, pp. 114-115.

³² See Scouten and Hume, 'Pope and Swift', p. 319.

Faulkner text with the Bathurst text was thought to have originated with Sir Walter Scott, who appended the Bathurst alterations to the poem in footnotes to his edition of Swift (1824), as lines 'rejected by Swift, when he revised the piece'. However, as Scouten and Hume have shown, the process had begun many years earlier, in fact, as early as 1756.³³ They draw attention to its appearance in a Scottish eight-volume edition of Swift's *Works* and in subsequent Edinburgh editions of 1757, 1759, 1766, 1768, 1774, 1778 and so on. It also appears in Dublin editions of 1758 and 1767 and found its way into the *Works of the English Poets*, for which of course Johnson had written the *Lives*, including that of Swift, so extolled in the dedication to the *Beauties*.³⁴

Of these various versions of the poem, the version which made its way into the *Beauties of Swift*, from the 'last complete edition of Swift's works in 27 volumes', was Swift's 484 line long original poem.³⁵ That this version is reprinted in the *Beauties of Swift* with the six lines referring to the medals the only lines now omitted is curious. Certainly Pope's concern that Swift should appear vain is alleviated somewhat by the passing of time; the 'Verses' somehow becoming prescient in their account of Swift's death. With the passing of time also, Swift's lines criticising the government and Wolston become less potentially problematic historical details, which have less currency and less potency. The lines on the medals too should fall into this category, but it seems that their criticism of the English monarchy falls into that area of political comment which the editor of the anthology seems keen to remove from his representation of Swift.

³³ See Scouten and Hume, 'Pope and Swift', pp. 319-320.

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ Although the *Works of the English Poets* does not reprint Swift's footnotes, the version in the *Beauties* does, a further example of how Swift's poems deal in particulars which need to be explained, especially to later readers.

The anthologising of Swift's poetry is therefore careful to delete not only poems of an unsuitable or indelicate nature, in favour of less offensive 'pearls', but also seeks to refrain from presenting Swift as overtly political and in opposition to the crown.

The political aspects of Swift's prose writings are also carefully edited and presented within the collection. The inclusion of various tracts, for example the *Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners* (which ironically Kearsley's collections could be seen as a part of), the *Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man* (1708), or the *Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions Between the Nobles and the Commons in Athens and Rome* (1701), all stress the social and political element of Swift's writings and present him as a champion of the underprivileged, the oppressed, and of the Irish.³⁶ Swift's reputation as a campaigner for the Irish cause is primarily represented by two pieces in the anthology; the *Proposal for the Universal use of Irish Manufacture* (1720), and *A Full and true Account of the solemn Procession to the Gallows, at the Execution of William Wood* (1724). Both works address serious political and economic questions facing the Irish people in Swift's early years as Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. However, the use of these pieces within the *Beauties of Swift* tends to minimise the political impact either of Swift's work, or the situation which inspired it.

The *Proposal for the Use of Irish Manufacture* was Swift's first Irish pamphlet after his installation as Dean in 1713. The piece was published anonymously and timed to coincide with King George's sixtieth birthday celebrations. It was an attack upon the oppression by the English and defence of local Irish weavers, which called for a boycott

³⁶ Other prose pieces anthologized include passages from the *Tatler*, the *Battle of the Books*, *The History of the Last Four Years of Queen Anne's Reign*, *Hints towards an Essay on Conversation*, a *Tritical Essay*, the *Essay on the Fate of Clergymen*, the *Letter to a Young lady on her Marriage* and the *Consideration upon two Bills*. Most of these only supply one or two extracts each.

on the use of English manufacture in favour of Irish goods. The writer comments: 'I hope, and believe, nothing could please his Majesty better than to hear that his loyal Subjects of both Sexes, in this Kingdom, celebrated his *Birth-Day* (now approaching) *universally* clad in their own Manufacture'.³⁷ The piece caused 'legal uproar', the printer was taken to court, but the case was dropped.³⁸ Interestingly, the extract included in the *Beauties* is not Swift's political and scathing attack on the injustice and oppression of the Irish by the English, or at least, not explicitly so. The piece is given the heading 'Fable of Arachne and Pallas. Applied to England and Ireland' and portrays the situation symbolically and allegorically as follows:

The Goddess had heard of one *Arachne* a young Virgin, very famous for *Spinning* and *Weaving*: They both met upon a Tryal of Skill; and *Pallas* finding herself almost equalled in her own Art, stung with Rage and Envy, knockt her *Rival* down, turned her into a *Spyder*, enjoining her to *spin* and *weave* for ever, *out of her own Bowels*, and *in a very narrow Compass*. I confess that from a Boy, I always pitied poor *Arachne*, and could never heartily love the Goddess, on Account of so *cruel and unjust a Sentence*; which however, is *fully executed* upon Us by *England*, with further Additions of *Rigor* and *Severity*. For the greatest Part of *our Bowels and Vitals* is extracted, without allowing us the Liberty of *spinning* and *weaving* them.³⁹

The comparison between the classical fable and the relationship between the English and Irish was no doubt very effective in the 1720s, but would perhaps be less so in the 1780s. By that stage, the inverse is possibly true, the fable belittling the political import of the

³⁷ Swift, *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture, &c.*, in Joseph McMinn, ed., *Swift's Irish Pamphlets* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1991), p. 50.

³⁸ McMinn, *Swift's Irish Pamphlets*, p. 48.

³⁹ McMinn, *Swift's Irish Pamphlets*, pp. 51-52.

comparison and rendering it more literary. Although the addition to the heading instructs the reader that the fable is 'Applied to England and Ireland', out of its original context, a reader, especially a young one, in the 1780s, would need a history lesson to understand the politics, or to appreciate the 'beauty' of the comparison drawn. As if in an attempt to play down the hostility of the passage, a note is appended to the entry stating that, 'Since this was wrote, the oppression complained of has been in some measure lightened'. A violently political and savage tract is, by the selection of this one passage, reduced to an allegorical tale appealing to children and rendered less overtly damning to Swift's authorial reputation and to national pride.

A similar choice of a more fable-like version of Swift's writings on his opposition to the government and the patent they had granted to William Wood for the introduction of new copper coinage into Ireland, is also included in the anthology. Related to the *Drapier's Letters* but not among the serious politically motivated tracts on the affair, is the *Full and true Account of the solemn procession to the Gallows, at the Execution of William Wood*. Instead this is something of a 'skit' commemorating the occasion when Wood's appropriately wooden effigy was carried through the streets of Dublin.⁴⁰ It is light and humorous, with its portrayal of the tradesmen of Dublin all deriding Wood and threatening the effigy with fates suited to their professions. It is, of course, not without its political implications. However, the fact that the ironic fable version which was one of Swift's peripheral writings on the affair (which also included various poems), was fully anthologised rather than the *Letters* themselves, seems to turn Swift into a humorous political satirist, rather than a serious activist.

⁴⁰ Swift, *Prose Works*, x, pp. 143-149.

This is not, of course, to suggest that the *Beauties of Swift* intentionally attempts to depoliticize Swift. On the contrary, in many ways the collection draws attention to the political element of his works. There is a great deal of political writing included, indeed much of Swift's writing, whether poetry or prose, is inherently political in nature.⁴¹ Much of Swift's work is occasional, in that it is inspired by, or a response to, current situations (hence the need for the note to the 'Fable of Arachne and Pallas'). The only excerpt included in the anthology from the *Tale of a Tub* is from one of the additions, 'The History of Martin.' From the 'Digression on the nature of usefulness and necessity of Wars and Quarrels', a paragraph defining and discussing 'War' is included. Similarly, only two extracts are included from Swift's, *Gulliver's Travels*, both of which are political in orientation. They are grouped together early in the collection and are both taken from the first part of the novel, the 'Voyage to Lilliput.' The first, entitled 'Services to Princes' reads as follows:

Of so little weight are the greatest services to princes, when put into the balance with a refusal to gratify their passions.⁴²

Given Swift's own personal disappointments at the hands of eminent men such as Sir William Temple, various members of the government including Walpole, and the King himself, it is tempting to read this maxim, out of context, as echoing Swift's own life. The same could also be said of the second extract, if it were not tinged with Swiftian irony. Entitled 'Ingratitude' the passage reads

⁴¹ There are for example, several lengthy extracts taken from the *Contests and Dissensions in Athens and Rome* which is a highly political work.

⁴² Swift, *Gulliver's Travels, Prose Works*, xi, p. 54 (I;V).

Whoever makes ill returns to his benefactor, must needs be a common enemy to mankind, from whom he hath received no obligation, and therefore such a man is not fit to live.⁴³

The fate for the ungrateful seems rather harsh, as indeed it should; the episode from which the passage is taken being one discussing the fact that, for the Lilliputians, ingratitude is a 'capital crime.' That such a maxim should be based on the laws of a country which had been ridiculed for going to war as a result of a dispute as to which end an egg should be broken, seems to negate the validity of the maxim, or of the editorial process. Swift's reputation as a political writer is therefore not in dispute; however, the anthology highlights the political pieces which are of a more socio-political nature, favouring a view of Swift which is political in a more universal, general sense, avoiding explicit reference to people and places.

Although numerous poems included in the *Beauties* remind the reader of Swift's residence or 'exile' in Ireland (examples being, 'The Description of an Irish Feast', the motto for 'Mr Jason Hassard, a Woollen Draper in Dublin', and what the *Beauties* calls 'Dean Swift at Sir Arthur Acheson's, in the North of Ireland', commonly entitled, 'Lady Acheson Weary of the Dean'), the collection is careful to remove any pointed references to the political situation in Ireland, where Swift could once again be seen to criticise the monarchy. Within the content of the anthology, Swift's adopted persona of the Drapier is stripped away and replaced with a less subversive representation of Swift as political satirist rather than political activist.

⁴³ Swift, *Gulliver's Travels, Prose Works*, xi, p. 60 (I;VI).

III

... and blessing the Dean

As with Sterne, it is easy to overlook the fact that Swift was an Anglican clergyman, in favour of his other roles as novelist, poet, essayist or satirist. As Peter Steele argues in his book *Jonathan Swift: Preacher and Jester*, the two facets of Swift, that of satirist and priest, are often seen as conflicting and contradictory, much as they are with Sterne.⁴⁴

The *Beauties of Swift* is conscious of these elements and, to some extent, seems preoccupied with stressing the preacher rather than the jester. Following the earlier collections, the *Beauties of Swift* moulds Swift's work, particularly his prose writings, into a more Johnsonian model of authorship, his writings becoming a sort of wisdom text, just as those of Johnson had done. At times, Swift even sounds positively Johnsonian. One passage, entitled 'Wit' reads as follows:

'Tis as offensive to speak wit in a fool's company, as it would be ill manners to whisper in it; he is displeas'd at both for the same reason, because he is ignorant of what is said.

Apart from the subtle wit employed in the sentence itself, its structure, building one component upon the next, and the parallelism of the whole, is more than a little reminiscent of Johnson. Here, of course, Swift's words are not altered in any way; it is simply that his prose is often as serious, moral, and as highly structured as that of

⁴⁴ Peter Steele, *Jonathan Swift: Preacher and Jester* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

Johnson. Perhaps the link lies with La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes*, on which the *Beauties of Johnson* was based. Swift was, of course, a great admirer of the *Maximes*. The 'Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift' were inspired by one of La Rochefoucauld's maxims and, in a letter to Pope on November 26 1725, Swift declares La Rochefoucauld to be his 'Favorite because I found my whole character in him'.⁴⁵ Swift moreover wrote his own 'maxims', which he published as 'Thoughts on Various Subjects' in his *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*. The first 'Thoughts' appeared in the 1711 miscellany and 'were afterwards extended to almost twice their original length' (possibly with the help of Pope and others) for the 1727 volume.⁴⁶ As Davis suggests, the 'Thoughts' were owing to Swift's admiration of the *Maximes*, which 'may well have prompted and shaped' them.⁴⁷

Significantly, twenty-one of the 'Thoughts' are included among the 152 extracts contained in the *Beauties of Swift*. They undoubtedly offered an obvious and easy choice for selection, their form and content ideal for inclusion. Not all the extracts were so easily extractable as the already maxim-like 'Thoughts', but Swift's prose nevertheless provided a wide range of material and supplied over one hundred and ten entries. Among the prose works represented in the anthology, the most anthologised works aside from the 'Thoughts' are Swift's sermons (fourteen separate entries), and the unfinished *Directions to Servants*, which supplies nine different extracts. Interestingly, these two works can be seen to embody the two contradictory elements of Swift's authorial persona: the preacher and the jester.

That the *Directions to Servants* is included at all is perhaps surprising. It was left

⁴⁵ Swift, *Correspondence*, iii, p.118.

⁴⁶ Swift, *Prose Works*, iv, pp. xxxix – xl.

⁴⁷ Davis, *Prose Works*, I, p. xxxv.

unfinished at Swift's death, with only the first three 'chapters', to the Butler, Cook, and Footman complete. The rest are comprised of an unequal measure of brief sketches or hints to be expanded upon, with only a few more complete sections. It seems curious to include extracts from what is often roughly drafted work, and that maxims should be formed from incomplete jottings. While the opening sections, to 'All Servants in general', to the Butler, Cook, and Footman, are almost fully included, some signs indicate that the less complete areas have been trimmed to render them suitable for inclusion. For example, the last sentence of the Butler section which reads 'Do all in the Dark (as clean Glasses, &c) to save your Master's Candles,' and which seems to suggest the parenthetical remark is a hint to be expanded upon later, is omitted in the anthology. Likewise, the already brief section on the Children's Maid is cut down to one short sentence, by the omission of the following jottings, 'Tell the Children Stories of Spirits, when they offer to cry, &c. Be sure to wean the Children, &c.'

Perhaps even more curious than the anthologising of such a fragmentary piece is the subject matter and nature of the *Directions* themselves. Taken as a whole, they form a humorous and ironic set of directions to various types of servants, which invariably address ways of short-changing one's master and benefiting oneself as thriftiness, loyalty, and prudence on the part of the servant. W. H. Dilworth found them to be 'written in so facetious a kind of low humour, that it must please many readers,' and found the subject to be one that 'the worst strain of wit can scarce sustain from sinking'.⁴⁸ The satiric tone and obvious irony which infuses the *Directions* prevents them from being read as seriously intended maxims, even in anthologised form. The

⁴⁸ Williams, ed., *Critical Heritage*, pp. 174-175.

presence of the *Directions* therefore introduces some of Swift's humour into the collection, but significantly, the figure of Swift as Jester is not suffered to stand unedited. All hints of sexual misconduct, the taking of money for permitting liberties and helping one's mistress with her secret assignations, are, for example, omitted from the section addressed to the Waiting Maid, ensuring that the jester does not over-step the bounds of delicacy.

The persona of the jester is further kept in check by the presence of Swift's sermons, which account for one tenth of the total prose extracts within the anthology. These excerpts are taken from four of the twelve sermons attributed to Swift. Four extracts are included from his sermon 'On the Testimony of Conscience', four from 'On the Trinity', one from 'On Brotherly Love' and five from the sermon 'On Mutual Subjection'. Swift apparently did not intend to publish his sermons and would have written a great many more in his lifetime than the dozen that exist today. However, three of the sermons included in the *Beauties*, those on 'Conscience', the 'Trinity' and 'Mutual Subjection' were published together by Dodsley in 1744.⁴⁹ The sermon 'On Brotherly Love', although preached in 1717, was not published until 1754. The first three Louis Landa describes as being, of a 'non-topical nature,' which no doubt accounts for their relative popularity, compared with that 'On Brotherly Love,' which was more overtly political.⁵⁰

Unsurprisingly, the extracts taken from the sermons are serious in tone and moral in context, extolling forgiveness, tolerance, and moderation; ideas which are as Landa

⁴⁹ For more detail on the history of the sermons and their publication, see Louis Landa's introduction to the sermons in Davis, ed., *Prose Works*, ix, pp. 97-137.

⁵⁰ Swift, *Prose Works*, ix, p. 137.

points out, 'less profound and original than they are orthodox and conventional'.⁵¹ The most frequently anthologised sermon, that on 'Mutual Subjection', echoes these themes while also dealing with the disparity between the various social classes and addressing the desired approach to the question of social hierarchies. Each of the five extracts taken from this sermon are quite lengthy and represent a large proportion of the whole sermon. The headings given to each reflect the subject matter addressed: 'Great Riches,' 'Advantages of Life,' 'Charity,' 'Wisdom of Princes' and 'Obedience'. The argument of the overall sermon, which is not unrelated to the themes underlying the humour of the *Directions to Servants*, is summarised by Landa as follows. Society 'is hierarchical in its nature, necessarily divided into king and subjects, master and servant, rich and poor'.⁵² As a result, 'those in inferior stations must serve without repining, but particularly those in superior stations or possessed of greater talents must recognise their responsibility as a whole'. In short, the theme of the whole could be represented by the statement that: 'If the servant is subject to the master, the master is no less subject to the servant'.⁵³ The extracts themselves illustrate this maxim, arguing for example to the poor, that 'great Riches are no Blessing in themselves', and to the wealthy: 'What is there, that can give a generous Spirit more Pleasure and Complacency of Mind, than to consider, that he is an Instrument of doing much Good?'⁵⁴ They mix Christian doctrine with social and economic practicality:

In all Relations between man and Man, there is a mutual Dependence, whereby one cannot

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 101.

⁵² Swift, *Prose Works*, ix, p. 124.

⁵³ *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Sermon 'On Mutual Subjection,' *Prose Works*, ix, p. 148.

subsist without the other. [...] where there is a mutual Dependence, there must be a mutual Duty, and consequently a mutual Subjection. For instance, the Subject must obey his Prince, because God commands it, human Laws require it, and the Safety of the Publick maketh it necessary.⁵⁵

In these passages Swift argues for mutual tolerance between different classes in society, the obligations the rich have to the poor and vice versa. The sermons stand in opposition to the ironic stance taken in the *Directions to Servants* which would seemingly undermine such an expression of mutual regard. The sermons, however, not only outweigh the extracts taken from the *Directions* in number, their moral and authoritative tone counters the satire, replacing the jester with the more moral, serious, and authoritative figure of the preacher. The inclusion of the sermons and such sentiments therefore not only remind us of Swift's clerical occupation and his Christian morality, but present him as an author with serious social concerns, rather than simply indulging in trivial and humorous topics. The collection therefore reaffirms Swift's role as clergyman as the *Beauties* had done for Sterne, both anthologies favouring those extracts which tipped the balance from the attributes of the jester to those of the respectable clergyman.

The *Beauties of Swift* can, therefore, be seen to refashion its authorial representation of Swift by, on the one hand, eliminating indelicate, bawdy, and humorous passages in order to stress a more serious and dignified representation of their author. On the other, when the material is so politically sensitive or specific, a more humorous, allegorical representation is deemed preferable to remove the specific references to a particular situation and thus render the description more general and

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 144.

universally applicable. In doing so, the anthology eliminates the masks of the anonymous pamphleteer or the seditious Drapier, and focuses on a more unified representation of Swift, who becomes, like Johnson, an author of universal truths and moral observations unburdened by associations with a specific time or with particular events. Rather than the situation envisaged by Swift in the 'Verses' on his death, that the 'Grub-street wits' would 'Curse the Dean, or bless the Drapier', the *Beauties of Swift* sets about establishing the reverse; eliminating the ambiguity of the Drapier from its representation of Swift and stressing the persona of the Dean. By highlighting Swift's beauties and by eliminating his faults and 'offensive flowers', the compiler distilled and ordered Swift's works, separating the 'pearls' from the 'meal'. In doing so, Swift's writings were rendered, along with those of Sterne and Fielding, suitable to be read by the 'pure eye' and heard by the 'pure ear' of an exemplary model of female youthful virtue, even one such as Clarissa Harlowe. Without entirely depriving these 'humorists' of their humour, Kearsley's anthologies of Sterne, Fielding, and Swift refashion the representation of each author, transforming them into 'moralists', a transformation not dissimilar to that achieved by Swift's Celia in that unanthologised poem 'The Lady's Dressing Room':

Such order from confusion sprung,

Such gaudy *tulips* raised from *dung*.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Williams, *Poems*, ii, ll 143-144, p. 530.

CHAPTER 7

OLIVER GOLDSMITH: AN ANTHOLOGIST ANTHOLOGISED

I

'Building a book': *Poems for Young Ladies* and *The Beauties of English Poesy*

Of the eighteenth-century 'humorists', Oliver Goldsmith is one of the few to be admired and praised by Thackeray, who termed him 'the most beloved of English writers'. Unlike Sterne, Fielding, and Swift, Goldsmith's works were not marred by sexual innuendo or bawdy humour and so required less severe editing to be recontextualised into an anthology of literary 'beauties'. Of all the authors anthologised in Kearsley's 'series' Goldsmith was undoubtedly the most Johnsonian. Goldsmith himself not only admired and emulated his friend and mentor, but wrote upon topics and themes which occupied Johnson. Goldsmith appeared a more 'moral' author whose works seemed designed to instruct and improve youthful readers, yet, despite this, the *Beauties of Goldsmith* employed similar editorial techniques to those evident in the *Beauties of Sterne, Fielding, and Swift* in honing its representation of the authorial 'Goldsmith'.

That Goldsmith is included in Kearsley's 'library' of *Beauties* is significant; not only because he requires least editing to render him a suitable subject for their intended readership of women and children, but because Goldsmith was the editor of a *Beauties* anthology himself. That Goldsmith, himself an anthologist, should become the subject of an anthology, offers a unique chance to compare his editorial methods to those by

which he was in turn anthologised. Of course, the nature of eighteenth-century authorship is such that any given author could be termed an 'anthologist'. As Johnson commented: 'a man will turn over half a library to make one book'.¹ Most authors utilised the techniques of extraction and compilation in composing their own works, and few would have identified themselves as anthologists by trade. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, his edition of Shakespeare, and his *Dictionary of the English Language*, for example, all display elements of the compiler's art. In the opening book of *Tom Jones* Fielding comments, 'we do not disdain to borrow wit or wisdom from any man who is capable of lending us either', and frequently does so within the course of the novel, rarely acknowledging his sources. Sterne too hints at the processes of compiling inherent to writing in *Tristram Shandy* when he lists the 'archives at every stage to be look'd into [...], rolls, records, documents, and endless genealogies' which hinder the author's progress (I:XIV). Similarly, Samuel Richardson famously incorporated passages originally anthologised in Edward Bysshe's *Art of English Poetry* (1702) into his novels *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, and anthologised excerpts from his own novels in his *Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflections, Contained in the Histories of PAMELA, CLARISSA, and Sir CHARLES GRANDISON* (1755).

The presence of compilation and anthologising within the literary output of an author such as Oliver Goldsmith is, therefore, not unusual. Many of Goldsmith's works reflect the characterization of himself found in his final poem, *Retaliation*, published 15 days after his death in 1774. Amid a critique of contemporary literary, political and theological figures the following lines appear:

¹ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ii, p. 344.

Macpherson write bombast, and call it a style,
 Our Townshend make speeches, and I shall compile;

Here Goldsmith draws attention to an aspect of his literary persona which underpinned much of his work, yet which has often gone unrecognized among studies of his novel writing, his poetry, drama, or journalism. His *Citizen of the World*, a collection of letters from the Chinese traveller Lein Chi, originally published in the *Public Ledger*, is made up of elements extracted, compiled, enlarged upon and rewritten from texts such as D'Argens *Lettres Chinoise*. Likewise, his *History of England*, or that of *Animated Nature*, as well as his 'Lives' of Parnell and Nash, all relied on informed selection and the ability to compile a narrative from anecdotes or information from a variety of sources. Ralph Wardle, in commenting on Goldsmith's literary output between the years 1770 and 1772, remarks that: 'one of the biographies, one of the poems, both the histories, and *Animated Nature* were in part what he euphemistically called "compilations"'.² Goldsmith thus recognized aspects of anthologising in many of his own productions and even actively adopted the role of anthologist twice in his career, editing two collections: *Poems for Young Ladies* in 1766 and the *Beauties of English Poesy* in 1767.

In September 1766, whilst 'preparing the outline of his play' (the *Good Natured Man*), Goldsmith undertook what Prior describes as 'one of those compilations for the booksellers'.³ This compilation, which finally appeared in December, was the

² Wardle, *Oliver Goldsmith*, p. 228-229.

³ James Prior, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith, M. B.*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1837), ii, p. 124-125.

duodecimo volume *Poems for Young Ladies*, inspired by John Fordyce's *Sermons to Young Women*.⁴ Goldsmith received ten guineas from the bookseller J. Payne for a project which required only a 'little time, and a moderate portion of taste for its arrangement' and which, Prior tells us, Goldsmith 'familiarily termed "building a book"'.⁵ The building blocks for this compilation were poems, with which he was to construct a book containing 'such pieces as innocence may read without a blush', and in which 'a lady may find the most exquisite pleasure, while she is at the same time learning the duties of life'.⁶ Like the editor(s) of Kearsley's *Beauties*, Goldsmith selects the contents of his collection with an eye to the sensibilities of the female reader, and, like Bysshe's *Art of Poetry*, Goldsmith divides the collection into three parts, here labelled, devotional, moral, and entertaining.

The section of 'devotional' pieces, in which 'our English poets have not very much excelled', includes 'Boyce's Deity; the Morning Hymn of Adam from Paradise Lost; Pope's Messiah and Universal Prayer; the first and third of the Night Thoughts; three Hymns of Addison; and the first book of Ogilvie's Day of Judgement'.⁷ In the 'moral' section he includes his own ballad *Edwin and Angelina*, often referred to as *The Hermit*, along with 'three fables of Moore; the story of Lavinia from the Seasons; Advice to a Lady by the Hon. Mr. N--- (Nugent); Fairy Tale and Night Piece on Death, by Parnell'.⁸

⁴ *Poems for Young Ladies. In three parts. Devotional, Moral and Entertaining. The whole being a Collection of the Best Pieces in our Language* (London: J. Payne, 1766). The preface is dated 1767, although the work appeared in December of the previous year. As Prior notes, the publisher Payne was also responsible for Fordyce's *Sermons*. See Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 126.

⁵ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 125.

⁶ *Poems for Young Ladies*, Preface. Reprinted in Friedman, *Works*, v, p. 314.

⁷ Goldsmith, *Works*, v, p. 315; Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 125.

⁸ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 125.

Of the third, 'entertaining' section Goldsmith remarked that his 'greatest difficulty was what to reject. The materials lay in such plenty that I was bewildered in my choice'.⁹ He finally settled on:

The parting of Hector and Andromache from the Iliad; the Death of Dido from the Æneid; the stories of Narcissus, and of Leyx and Alcyone, from Ovid; Baucis and Philemon, by Swift; Teribazus and Ariana, by Glover; Marriage, by Dr. Cotton; the Fan, by Gay; a Winter Piece, by Philips, two short pieces by Waller; Collin's Oriental Eclogues; and Addison's Letter from Italy.¹⁰

The preface to the collection gives further information regarding Goldsmith's method of selection in this latter section. He claims he was 'solely determined by the tendency of the poem'; where he found one 'however well executed, that seemed in the least tending to distort the judgement or to inflame the imagination', he excluded it 'without mercy'.¹¹ As is typical of Goldsmith's less than reverential treatment of the idea of 'text', he freely exercised his editorial right to alter and amend the poems he included. In marketing his collection for the female reader Goldsmith rejects and excludes unsuitable material, just as the later *Beauties* collections were to do in the 1780s. His collection offered, he claimed, 'the very flower of our poetry [...] of a kind adapted to the sex supposed to be its readers'.¹² In order to achieve this goal, Goldsmith pruned his text. When a poem of 'particular beauty' contained a 'few blemishes', he simply 'lopt off the defects'.¹³ As

⁹ Goldsmith, *Works*, v, p. 315.

¹⁰ Prior, *Life*, ii, pp. 125-126.

¹¹ Goldsmith, *Works*, v, pp. 315-316.

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*

the editor of the *Beauties of Swift* was to do, Goldsmith employed the appropriate horticultural image to illustrate the pruning of his gathering of literary 'flowers'. The anthologist's role was one of selection, judging what was appropriate and excluding anything inappropriate. Goldsmith's remarks illustrate the potential cultural and literary power wielded by the anthologist. 'Like the tyrant who fitted all strangers to the bed he had prepared for them', Goldsmith inserted pieces in his collection, 'adapting them to my plan'.¹⁴ It is the anthologist's 'plan' which determines the collection's contents, firmly positioning the anthologist as mediator between author and audience. Portraying the compiler as a 'tyrant' who forces literary 'strangers' into one bed, Goldsmith highlights the possible editorial tyranny often disguised behind prefatory remarks lauding the anthologist's role as literary benefactor. Like the tyrant in his *Deserted Village*, 'One only master grasps the whole domain'; the compiler's voice dominates and controls all the other voices included in his selection.

While Goldsmith set out to collect 'the Best Pieces in our Language', he was too practical a man to entertain notions of the sacred nature of his texts. In aiming the collection at young women, and attempting to supply 'the highest and most innocent entertainment', he is all too aware some material would be considered unsuitable for such a readership and had no qualms about chopping up the texts and printing what remained. Not only is this approach consistent with his practice in compiling essays, histories, and biographies, it also reflects Goldsmith's own critical position on the issue of beauties and defects in literary writings. Throughout his reviews, Goldsmith adheres to the preference of beauties over faults, stating: 'Works of Genius are not to be judged

¹⁴ Friedman, *Works*, v, p. 316.

from the faults to be met with in them, but by the beauties in which they abound'.¹⁵ In another review for the *Critical* of R. Kedington's *Critical Dissertations upon the Iliad of Homer*, the same sentiment is echoed: 'the truth is, the merit of every work is determined, not from the number of faults, but of its beauties'.¹⁶ Goldsmith saw faults resulting from what Friedman terms 'a failure to follow "the rules" prescribed by the critic', which is, in itself, 'relatively unimportant', being 'more the business of industry than of genius'.¹⁷ Faults are inherent in writing and exist in relation to critical rules. Beauties, on the other hand, 'are the result of genius', and it is these which determine the true value of a work.¹⁸

Following this line of thinking, it is easy to see how faults can be unceremoniously 'lopt off' and the 'beauties' retained as marks of genius. Furthermore, it suggests why anthologies of 'beauties' could be seen as representative of a particular writer's work, their faults ignored as universally present and, therefore, of no great import. Goldsmith's collection of poems is by no means a collection of beautiful passages, for despite his freedom with his texts, his appreciation of beauties in comparison to faults rests ultimately on their relationship within the text as a whole. After all, 'our noblest works are generally most replete with both'.¹⁹ His assessment of John Home's tragedy *Douglas* in a review from the *Monthly Review* of May 1757, summarises his critical position effectively:

¹⁵ *Critical Review*, 7 (1759), pp. 434-440. Review of Murphy's *The Orphan of China*. Reprinted in Goldsmith, *Works*, i, p. 173.

¹⁶ *Critical Review* (January 1760). See Friedman, *Works*, iv, p. 79 and also the Advertisement to *The Vicar of Wakefield*, where Goldsmith states, 'There are an hundred faults in this thing, and a hundred things might be said to prove them Beauties. But it is needless. A book may be amusing with numerous errors, or it may be very dull without a single absurdity', *Works*, iv, p. 14.

¹⁷ Goldsmith, *Works*, i, p. 173, note 4.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ Goldsmith, *Works*, i, p. 429. From *The Bee*, on 'The characteristics of Greatness'.

We could, indeed enter on a particular examen of the beauties or faults discoverable in the diction, sentiment, plot, or characters; but, in works of this nature, general observation often characterises more strongly than a particular criticism could do; for it were an easy task to point out those passages in any indifferent Author, where he has excelled himself, and yet these comparative beauties, if we may be allowed the expression, may have no real merit at all. Poems, like buildings, have their point of view, and too near a situation gives but a partial conception of the whole.²⁰

Employing an architectural metaphor, similar to that of Johnson in his comparison of selecting 'beauties' to Hierocles's pendant carrying a brick as a specimen of the whole house, Goldsmith, in his *Poems for Young Ladies*, similarly argues that the extraction of 'beauties' results in a 'partial' appreciation of the poem as a whole. The anthology then juggles two juxtaposing editorial concerns: the anthologising of complete poems rather than 'beauties', with the seemingly contradictory aim to nevertheless omit any faults, or unsuitable material.

Despite these attempts to ensure a 'complete', yet appropriate selection for his consumer market, and despite pointing out that the poems included would 'if sold singly', 'amount to ten times the price' of the present volume, the compilation did not sell well.²¹ It was criticised in the *Critical Review* and received only slight attention in the *Monthly*, which did not review it until the following March.²² Significantly, Goldsmith did not sign the preface to the first edition, his name only appearing on the title page of the 1770 edition (see plate 10). No other London edition was published, although the collection was published or sold in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Kilkenny, Derry

²⁰ *Monthly Review*, (May, 1757). Goldsmith, *Works*, i, p. 11.

²¹ *Poems for Young Ladies*, preface. See Friedman, *Works*, v, p.316.

²² *Critical Review*, 22 (1766), p. 469; *Monthly Review*, 36 (1767), p. 240. See Friedman, *Works*, v, p. 314.

and Newry, making it the most widely sold of all Goldsmith's works in Ireland.²³ The text was, therefore, not a complete failure, and fared considerably better than Goldsmith's next anthology, published the following year, this time bearing Goldsmith's name on the title page (plate 11). As Prior remarks: 'Whatever credit accrued from the preceding compilation, was lost by another of a similar kind in two volumes which appeared in April 1767'.²⁴ Again aimed at youth, this time young men, *The Beauties of English Poesy* was a selection designed to answer his bookseller's complaint that, 'there was no collection of English Poetry among us of any estimation'.²⁵ William Cooke, whom Hazen suggests is the compiler of the *Beauties of Johnson* (and therefore possibly of the other *Beauties* collections), in reviewing the work for the *European Magazine*, comments that Goldsmith: 'did nothing but mark the passages with a red lead pencil, and for this he got *two hundred pounds*'.²⁶ Prior thinks this sum for the compilation along with the use of Goldsmith's name on the title page, was an exaggeration 'which although not circulated by himself, he took no pains [...], to contradict'.²⁷ Instead he estimates the payment was more likely to be fifty pounds.

Whatever the price, Goldsmith was paid for selecting the poems and writing the preface, just as he had been for *Poems for Young Ladies*. Anthology compilation could prove a lucrative sideline, requiring as Prior said 'little time, and a moderate portion of

²³ Richard C. Cole, 'Oliver Goldsmith's Reputation in Ireland, 1762-74', *Modern Philology* 68 (1970-71), pp. 65-70. See pp. 68-69.

²⁴ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 128.

²⁵ Oliver Goldsmith, *The Beauties of English Poesy*, 2 vols (London: William Griffin, 1767), preface. The preface and introductory criticisms to each poem are reprinted in Friedman, *Works*, v, pp. 317-329.

²⁶ *European Magazine*, 24 (1793), p. 94.

²⁷ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 130.

taste', or as Cooke claimed, simply marking 'the passages with a red lead pencil'.²⁸

Goldsmith himself reportedly answered enquiries about the large amount paid, arguing:

A man may be many years working in obscurity before his taste and reputation are fixed, or estimated, and then he is, as in other professions, only paid for his previous labours.²⁹

Such a comment can be seen to reflect Goldsmith's own struggle to rise to eminence in literary circles, yet whether this, or Cooke's variant, is wholly accurate, we can only speculate. What can be said of Goldsmith's response is that it is directly at odds with the public remarks made in his preface. Here, Goldsmith remarks on the absurdity of 'affectation in criticism', commenting, 'the desire of being thought to have a more discerning taste than others, has often led writers to labour after error, and to be foremost in promoting deformity'.³⁰ There is no talk here of estimation of taste or cultivation of judgement in personal terms. Goldsmith talks of taste being 'various' and his intention being, 'to advance the reader's taste, and not impress him with exalted ideas of mine'.³¹

The preface is a complicated, often contradictory piece of writing, attempting to balance his own need to be recognised as a critic with both judgement and taste, with his desire to avoid affectation and a sense of exclusivity. Indeed, the sense of humility created from his recognition that he did not pen the pieces, but merely compile them, and his claim that, 'I have nothing to boast, and, at best can expect, not applause, but pardon', are overshadowed by Goldsmith's self-appointed role as literary mediator,

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 130. Cooke records a variant in the *European Magazine*, 24 (1793), 94: 'a man shews his judgement in these selections, and he may be often twenty years of his life culminating that judgement'.

³⁰ *The Beauties of English Poesy*, preface; Friedman, *Works*, p. 318.

³¹ *ibid.*

distancing himself from both the genre and its readers.³² His opening remarks are less than flattering and hint at the editorial 'tyranny' voiced in the preface to Goldsmith's earlier anthology:

Compilations of this kind are chiefly designed for such as either want leisure, skill, or fortune, to choose for themselves; for persons whose professions turn themselves to different pursuits, or who, not yet arrived at sufficient maturity, require a guide to direct their application.³³

Here, the busy tradesman, merchant, lawyer or gentleman are grouped alongside the uneducated, less wealthy and young, immature boys, as prospective readers of the selection, in alienating prose, described by John Langhorne as 'unaccountable' and 'uncouth'.³⁴ Goldsmith's remarks reveal the kind of audience these collections were aimed at as well as his genuine belief that writing should be available and comprehensible to all. Again, the compiler is central to the collection; here a more benevolent 'guide' to direct the reader through the selections. Like the *Poems for Young Ladies*, the best pieces are pre-selected and printed at a price cheaper than individual purchases.

Primarily, however, the text is aimed at young boys and is concerned with their literary education and is, as such, a companion piece to the previous anthology. The preface to Headley's *Select beauties of English Poetry* (1787), describes it as 'for the use of boarding schools', and Goldsmith himself desires that it should not only be 'amusing

³² *The Beauties of English Poesy*, preface; Friedman, *Works*, pp. 317-318.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ *Monthly Review*, 36 (1767), pp. 490-491.

in the closet', but 'useful in schools'.³⁵ The introductory criticisms prefixed to each poem 'are rather designed for boys than men'; indeed, a 'publication of this sort' is deemed useful for 'our youth'.³⁶ Such an anthology, claims Goldsmith, 'if compiled with any share of judgement', may, 'at once unite precept and example'. Significantly, it will 'shew them what is beautiful, and inform them why it is so'.³⁷ Goldsmith, as arbiter of taste, presents himself as an instructor to the younger generation in his collection, which consists of complete works, rather than altered or extracted passages. Moreover, Goldsmith does not state that any passages have been removed, suggesting that such a practice was gender biased, necessary only for a female readership.

In aiming to instruct his readers as to 'what is beautiful', it is fitting that the collection aligns itself with the *Beauties* tradition. The collection follows in the wake of Hinton's collection of poetical 'beauties', and is an example of those genre-based *Beauties* published in the years between Dodd's collection of Shakespeare and the authorial *Beauties* which began to appear after the abolition of perpetual copyright. The title promises 'beauties' alone; faults and defects are still present as complete poems are included, but of less comparative importance.

Ironically, and unfortunately for Goldsmith, he could not have chosen a more inappropriate title. The compilation became notorious for its defects, and one defect in particular. As James Prior records it, the collection 'included two tales of [Matthew] Prior, unfit for the class of readers for whom the volumes were intended'.³⁸ Percy

³⁵ Headley, *Select Beauties of English Poetry*, 2 vols (1787), i, p. ix; *English Poesy*, preface; Works, v, p. 318.

³⁶ Goldsmith, *Works*, v, p. 318.

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 128.

claims Goldsmith 'carelessly, without reading it, marked for the printer one of the most indecent tales of Prior', which, 'as might be supposed, prevented the sale of the book'.³⁹ The 'indecent tale' was 'Hans Carvel', and the second poem alluded to by Prior was 'The Ladle', also deemed unsuitable for its readership. The selection of both poems, particularly the former, was, however, unlikely to be due to a careless slip of the pencil. As Prior states: 'from the introductory remarks such appears not to have been the case'.⁴⁰

Goldsmith included short introductory remarks at the head of each poem throughout the anthology, that for 'Hans Carvel' commenting that 'this bagatelle [...] was from a tale told in all the old Italian collections of jest and borrowed from thence by Fontaine.' He then explains it had been translated into English, but received no notice until Prior's version, serving for Goldsmith as a 'strong instance of how much everything is improved in the hands of a man of genius'.⁴¹ The poem itself tells the story of old, impotent Hans Carvel, who, at the poem's opening, has just married his young bride. Her frivolous behaviour soon arouses the suspicion of her husband, who imagines all sorts of 'strange Fancies'. In exasperation, he enters into an agreement with the devil, who then gives Hans a magic ring to remedy the situation. The suggestive tone of the piece is sustained to its last couplet. Hans, having just placed the ring on his finger is exalting in his satisfaction:

'Tis done— What's done You drunken Bear?

³⁹ Percy, *Memoirs*, p. 84. See *Works*, v, p. 317, note 1. The British Library copy of the text (11609p22), was owned by Robert Travers of Trinity College, Dublin. At the end of the second volume he has written, 'Although this selection of the Beauties or best short pieces of English Poetry was chiefly intended for use in Schools, the learned Editor by an extraordinary inadvertence admitted into it one of the most indecent compositions in our language [...] otherwise his choice has great merit indicating his poetic taste and critical judgement'.

⁴⁰ Prior, *Life*, ii, pp. 128-129.

You've thrust your Finger G-d knows where.⁴²

It is unlikely, but not impossible, that Goldsmith marked the poem and wrote an introductory comment without actually reading the piece. A perusal of the opening line and its reference to impotence would surely provide sufficient warning as to the tone of the piece. Prior tries to excuse Goldsmith, by shifting the blame on to Johnson, who 'maintained that Prior might be read by the modest and delicate' and who may have influenced Goldsmith's opinion.⁴³ Whether intended in earnest or not, the inclusion of the poem 'proved a bar to the complete success of the work', which 'otherwise contained many of the shorter and more beautiful pieces of our poetry'.⁴⁴

Forty-eight poems in all were included in the anthology, twenty-four in each volume. Among them; Pope's 'Eloisa to Abelard' and *The Rape of the Lock*, Milton's 'Il Penseroso' and 'L'Allegro', Gray's *Elegy*, Johnson's *London*, Dryden's *MacFlecknoe*, Smollett's 'Tears of Scotland', as well as pieces by Savage, Tickell, Collins, Young, Shenstone, and Rowe. Interestingly, some of these echo pieces selected in *Poems for Young Ladies*. Swift's 'Baucis and Philemon', Addison's 'Letter from Italy', and the story of Lavinia from Thomson's *Seasons* are included in both collections and, while the first and third of Young's *Night Thoughts* are included in *Poems for Young Ladies*, the first and second are included in the *Beauties of English Poesy*. Also duplicated are Parnell's 'Fairy Tale' and 'Night Piece' and Addison's undoubtedly moral 'Hymns', 'When all they mercies, O my God' and 'The Spacious firmament on high'.

⁴¹ *English Poesy*, introduction to 'Hans Carvel'. See *Works*, v, p. 326.

⁴² Matthew Prior, 'Hans Carvel' in, *The Literary Works of Matthew Prior*, ed. By H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), i, p. 188, l 147-148.

⁴³ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 129.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

With such duplication, Goldsmith's claim that he would spend 'a few hours' making 'a proper selection' is probably not so exaggerated as it might seem, and, given the male/female orientation of the texts, is it interesting to note the poems Goldsmith considers suitable for both. Both collections reprint parts of Young's *Night Thoughts*, but while *Poems for Young Ladies* includes the first and third of these, the *Beauties of English Poesy* anthologises the first and second. Within the first 'Night', which both collections include, it is interesting to note that extracts are excluded from the version in *Poems for Young Ladies* which are retained in the *Beauties of English Poesy*. The extract in the former is significantly shorter than that in the latter. For example, the following two passages are deleted from Goldsmith's earlier anthology edited for a female audience and retained in the selection for a mainly male audience:

Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.

I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams

Tumultuous; where my wrecked desponding thought

From wave to wave of fancied misery

At random drove, her helm of reason lost.

Though now restored, 'tis only change of pain,

(A bitter change!) severer for severe:

and,

Silence and darkness! Solemn sisters! twins

From ancient Night, whose nurse the tender thought

To reason, and on reason build resolve

(That column of true majesty in man),

Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;

The grave, your kingdom. There this frame shall fall

A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.

But what are ye?—

Thou, who didst put to flight

Primeval Silence, when the morning stars,

Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;⁴⁵

Precisely why Goldsmith chose to omit these lines in reprinting the poem in *Poems for Young Ladies* is unclear, but perhaps the melancholy theme of death and frequent mention of the grave prompted their exclusion. Also, both passages refer to reason, heralded in the second passage as that 'column of true majesty in man' and indeed often viewed as a distinctly male quality which many females lacked. Whatever Goldsmith's motivation, the extracts omitted from the *Poems for Young Ladies* illustrates that Goldsmith, like many similar anthologists, was particularly careful when selecting and editing passages for a female readership.

Despite the claim that his choice of poems was 'obvious', and that they were all 'well known' and of 'superior merit', the *Beauties of English Poesy* did not meet with widespread approval. The *Critical Review* complained of the 'meek spirit of diffidence and indecision' displayed in the selections and the criticism.⁴⁶ The *Monthly* was even more critical, concluding that 'the introductory observations on the several poems are still more wrong-headed, more singular, more affected, and more absurd' than the preface had been.⁴⁷ Aside from the two unsuitable pieces by Prior, the poems

⁴⁵ Edward Young, *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality*, ll. 8-14 and 28-37, *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse*, ed. by Roger Lonsdale (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 344-345.

⁴⁶ *Critical Review*, 23 (1767), 408-411; Goldsmith, *Works*, v, p. 317.

⁴⁷ *Monthly Review*, 36 (1767), 490-491.

themselves were not the problem. They were, as Goldsmith claimed, 'obvious' choices, included in many anthologies both earlier and later in the century. Perhaps that was sufficient criticism in itself. Goldsmith set his collection up as a model for such compilations, but it was, at best, a selection that compiled the best of other selections, the 'beauties' of other *Beauties*; at worst, a typical choice of poems, several of which had appeared in Goldsmith's anthology the previous year.

The originality of the *Beauties of English Poesy* as an anthology lay in its affiliation with Goldsmith and in his introductory remarks. The two *Reviews*, as we have seen, thought little of what Goldsmith had to say. They were of course, 'rather designed for boys than men', and Goldsmith further states that in them he 'declined all refinement satisfied with being obvious and sincere'.⁴⁸ His comments proved even less 'obvious' than his selection and while they may have been sincere, John Langhorne found them 'wrong-headed', 'singular', 'affected' and 'absurd'. Perhaps Langhorne was too harsh, but nevertheless some of them make interesting reading. Pope's *Rape of the Lock* is 'perhaps, the most perfect in our language', Milton's imagination is both 'correct and strong', but the irregular metre at the opening of 'Il Penseroso' and 'L'Allegro', 'hurts an English ear'.⁴⁹ Grays's *Elegy* is 'overloaded with epithet', yet the latter parts are 'pathetic and interesting', while Savage is 'but an indifferent poet'. Although he dislikes 'imitation of our old English poets in general' he enjoys in Shenstone's 'The School-Mistress', the 'very ludicrous solemnity' produced by the 'antiquity of style'. Similarly, Gay's 'The Shepherd's Week', is commended as attaining the 'true spirit of pastoral poetry' and is praised for its 'strain of rustic simplicity', although it is guilty of

⁴⁸ *English Poesy*, preface; *Works*, v, p. 318.

⁴⁹ Goldsmith's comments can all be found in *Works*, v, pp. 319-329.

recurring to 'obsolete antiquity'.

The majority of poems are treated in this way, Goldsmith drawing attention to what may be regarded as the poem's particular defects or beauties. The 'great fault' of Parnell's 'Night Piece on Death', for example, is that it is written in 'eight syllable lines' which are 'very improper for the solemnity of the subject'. Shenstone's 'Pastoral Ballad' seems to have no redeeming features whatsoever:

These ballads of Mr Shenstone are chiefly commended for the natural simplicity of the thoughts, and the harmony of the versification. However, they are not excellent in either.

One is tempted to ask why he decided to include them at all. Significantly, however, the ballads are followed by Byrom's 'Phoebe. A Pastoral', which Goldsmith notes, 'is a better effort than the preceding'. The comment promotes comparison, consideration of similar forms alongside one another, and evaluation of their language. Goldsmith thus directs his reader towards literary comparison, a technique again used in relation to Prior's 'The Ladle', which is printed without an introductory notice, following as it does, on the heels of the ill-chosen 'Hans Carvel'. 'The Ladle' is followed by Swift's 'Baucis and Philemon', which is termed 'very fine' and 'though in the same strain as the preceding, is yet superior'.

The poems, like the beauties and faults they contain, are not to be critiqued in total isolation: they are also to be subjected to 'general observation'. Just as 'poems, like buildings have their point of view', so too does Goldsmith, and, more specifically, so too does his anthology. He set out to 'unite precept and example', to show his readers,

‘what is beautiful and to inform them why it is so’.⁵⁰ This is achieved not only by his introductory remarks themselves, but also by the chain of comparison and evaluation which they establish. In the absence of commonplace topoi or headings, Goldsmith uses his introductory remarks to instruct his readers how to read the poems and how to contextualize them within other works of the same poetic form.

Of course, the poems not only instruct the reader as to how to appreciate beauty; they also reveal something of Goldsmith’s own taste and judgement concerning poetry. The collection is, he states, ‘to the best of my judgement’, ‘the best collection that has yet appeared: though as tastes are various, numbers will be of a very different opinion’. Goldsmith knew that people would question his judgement, as indeed they did, so he invoked the ubiquitous nature of taste in his defence. Yet, as Cooke records, Goldsmith used to say that of all his compilations, his “‘Selections of English Poetry” shewed more “the art of profession””.⁵¹ He took his criticism seriously and it is, therefore, revealing as a record of Goldsmith’s own poetic preferences. Prior evaluated the collection in terms of its insight into Goldsmith’s private poetic opinions:

In the selections from the Poets it will be remembered; he characterises Elosia to Abelard as “drawn out to too tedious a length;” he calls Thomson “a verbose poet;” and if we are to believe Mr. Cradock, he considered even the lines of Gray’s Elegy capable of being curtailed with advantage; he praises Parnell’s Hermit as being “perspicuous and *concise*;” and his own example proves that he considered expansion fatal to the generality of poetry.⁵²

⁵⁰ *English Poesy*, preface; *Works*, v, p. 318.

⁵¹ *European Magazine*, 24 (1793), 94.

If Goldsmith preferred concise and short poetry, he also preferred simplistic expression and description. As Wardle summarises it: 'He insisted that writers should strive for simplicity, should speak to all men'.⁵³ The example of his own poetry again illustrates the point. Subjects such as human experience, nature, rustic life, and simple, evocative descriptions are found in his own works, as well as being those features most highly commended in the anthology. As we have seen, the 'latter part' of Gray's *Elegy* is 'pathetic and interesting' and Gay's pastorals are praised for their 'rustic pleasantries'. Thomson, although 'verbose and affected', is commended for his 'unusual simplicity' in his 'Palemon and Lavinia'. Lastly, Smollett's 'Tears of Scotland', does 'more honour' to its author's 'feelings than his taste', the 'mechanical part' of the poem being, 'not so perfect as so short a work as this requires'. Here we see Goldsmith's critical theory in practice once more. Smollett's observance of the rules of poetry, the 'numbers and language', is far from perfect, but does not condemn the whole poem in turn. Rather, Goldsmith concentrates on the 'pathetic it contains', the emotion and description of the whole, proving more effective than its mechanical parts. He draws attention to the last stanza but one in particular, which he concludes, is 'exquisitely fine:

The pious mother, doom'd to death,
 Forsaken, wanders o'er the heath,
 The bleak wind whistles round her head,
 Her helpless orphans cry for bread;
 Bereft of shelter, food and friend,
 She views the shades of night descend,

⁵² Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 547.

⁵³ Wardle, *Oliver Goldsmith*, p. 296.

And, stretch'd beneath the inclement skies,
Weeps o'er her tender babes and dies.

Smollett's description of suffering, told in simple and touching verse, is what he most relished, and is reminiscent of the 'poor houseless shiv'ring female' in the *Deserted Village*.⁵⁴

Of course, Goldsmith also appreciated Swift's wit, Parnell's 'Fairy Tale', the orientalism of Collins's *Persian Eclogues* and the satire of Dryden's *MacFlecknoe*. Yet this variety again invites comparison, and teaches that beauty is to be found in all forms of poetry and is to be understood to the most profit when illustrated in such a compilation. Goldsmith's criticisms and selections not only illustrate his own preferences, but also adhere to his aforementioned theory of literary evaluation. The anthology, like the poems it contains, is to be subjected to 'general observation', taken as a whole, not just as a compilation of unrelated pieces. The titular use of 'beauties' reveals the underlying connection governing the choice of poems, as do the comments Goldsmith attaches to them. The building is made up of bricks, just as the anthology is of poems. Some display faults, but they are arranged in a certain way to form a particular structure, with a particular purpose. Poems may have beauties and defects, but until compared with others, they cannot be fully appreciated. Goldsmith's anthology teaches his youthful readers to do just that.

⁵⁴ Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*, in *Works*, iv, p.299, l 326.

II

Reconstructing the author: *The Beauties of Goldsmith*

For a man involved in compiling anthologies throughout his lifetime, it is fitting that in turn Goldsmith became the subject of an anthology himself after his death. Goldsmith died in 1774, and it was eight years later that Kearsley published the *Beauties of Goldsmith*. Just as he had been acquainted with Johnson, Kearsley was also known to Goldsmith, who was, in turn, a member of Johnson's literary circle and his literary Club. On the opening night of *She Stoops to Conquer* Kearsley wrote to the anxious author:

If you think two or three printers men disposed of properly in the galleries may be of any service this evening send me an order for their admission. I go with a party of your Globe friends into the pitt. I need not inform you that I wish you great success.⁵⁵

Whether this acquaintance spurred Kearsley to include Goldsmith as a subject for one of his anthologies we do not know, but Kearsley had published editions of Goldsmith's *Grecian History* and his *History of England*, both in 1774, as well as joining a conger of booksellers to publish a two-volume edition of Goldsmith's *Works* in 1780.

The anthology's full title read *The Beauties of Goldsmith; or, the Moral and Sentimental Treasury of Genius* and was priced at 'half a crown sewed'. The title itself is significant, posthumously conferring upon Goldsmith the long sought after claim to genius, and placing him alongside Johnson in the hierarchy of Kearsley's *Beauties*.

⁵⁵ Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ii, p.500, (note to p. 208, n. 5).

Most importantly of all, the title states that the text is a 'Moral and Sentimental Treasury'. The collection validates itself and its subject by use of such terms, terms also invoked in the *Beauties of Sterne*, in its claim to have been selected for the 'heart of sensibility'. Morality was vital in ensuring a respectable status for the text and in assuring its readers of its suitably laudable contents. The reference to the sentimental was no doubt partly a result of the vogue for sentimentality, but also reflected the moral and emotive style with which many of Goldsmith's works were identified. These two elements highlight the portrayal of the author found within the anthology's pages, and present these qualities as providing a 'treasury'; the collection houses something of both literary and moral value.

Unusually for an anthology, the work boasted a dedication, to the Earl of Shelbourne, which, as Prior comments, 'alludes to the supposed regard of his Lordship for the Poet'.⁵⁶ A *Life of Goldsmith* and a short preface are also included, although the latter is 'merely in compliance with custom'.⁵⁷ Goldsmith's writings 'need not an eulogium at this hour', for, like Raphael's paintings, 'their estimation becomes more extensive, the longer they are in the world'. Still, the compiler takes time to extol the 'beauties' of Goldsmith which 'wear the simple brilliancy of Nature, and all the decorative charms of Fancy'. Goldsmith himself is praised 'from the Capital of Taste and Patronage, to the cottage of learned tranquillity'.⁵⁸ Undoubtedly, Goldsmith would have revelled in such recognition and found great satisfaction in the knowledge that his works were read by those for whom he intended them, everyone and anyone, from the

⁵⁶ Prior, *Life*, ii, p. 446. The *Beauties of Swift* was the only other of Kearsley's collections to include a dedication.

⁵⁷ *Beauties of Goldsmith* (London: George Kearsley, 1782), p. iii.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

learned gentleman in London, to the less educated and those living in rural locations. Such praise is, however, typical of such prefatory remarks and worded with an eye on the future consumer and not the memory of the author. The preface ends hoping the selection will merit 'the attention and patronage of the refined lovers of elegant and estimable literature'.

Significantly, it is the 'selection', not the works themselves that are the focus of the editor's remarks. The writings of Goldsmith had already proved themselves popular and profitable, a state of affairs desired in turn for the collection. As the responses to Goldsmith's own anthologies illustrate, one doesn't necessarily result in the other; however popular or excellent the pieces themselves may be, the judgement concerning the selection and the final product may not be so well received. Of course, the *Beauties of Goldsmith* differs significantly from Goldsmith's anthologies. It is not a collection from various poets or writers, instead concentrating on one individual author. Nor does it print entire pieces. Except in the case of one or two short poems, its contents are short excerpts extracted from the works as a whole, which are then arranged under appropriate headings. Goldsmith, like Johnson and the other humorists, is presented as a writer whose works contain extractable thoughts and maxims which are of value when gathered together in such a way.

The *Beauties of Goldsmith* consists of one hundred and eighty-nine extracts arranged under almost as many headings. The headings are wholly typical of those found in other *Beauties* texts: 'Books', 'Calamities', 'Good-Nature', 'Hospitality', 'Praise', 'Vice', 'Success', 'Youth', 'Greatness', and so on. The majority reflect moral attributes, emotions, or various circumstances which emphasise the didactic and moral

orientation of the tradition. The extracts themselves reflect the wide variety of genres in which Goldsmith worked, although around eighty-five of the total one hundred and eight-nine are taken from the *Public Ledger* essays which comprise *The Citizen of the World*. Twenty-four passages are anthologised from his novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, twenty-two from his *History of England*, eight from the *Life of Nash*, and seven from both the *History of the Earth and Animated Nature* and his *Life of Parnell*. Five extracts are taken from both the *Good Natured Man* and *The Deserted Village*, while two are taken from his second play, *She Stoops to Conquer*. A total of six extracts are taken from other poems and twenty-one extracts are included from twelve of his various essays. There is, therefore, very little of Goldsmith's poetry or drama included, the collection promoting an image of Goldsmith as a prose writer. Early on in the anthology we find an extract entitled 'Knowledge', which appears on the title page as well as in the body of the anthology, and which serves as an epithet for the collection and a defence for its compiler. It reads: 'The volume of nature is the book of knowledge: and he becomes most wise who makes the most judicious selection'.⁵⁹ The editor invokes Goldsmith himself as his justification for anthologising the works in such a manner and in doing so claims for himself wisdom in making his own 'judicious selection'.

The popularity of the *Citizen of the World* among the extracts selected is perhaps not surprising, given its comparative volume, and the wide array of social, political, domestic and literary issues it encompasses. The letters from Lien Chi, the 'citizen' of the title, were printed in the *Public Ledger* during 1760 and 1761 and were then rearranged and enlarged before appearing in a two-volume duodecimo edition in May

⁵⁹ Goldsmith, *Works*, ii, p. 31.

1762. The titles given to the extracts taken from the *Citizen* reflect the variety its subject matter: 'Books', 'Opinion of the English', 'Favour', 'Designing Lovers', 'Justice', 'Liberality', 'Happiness', or 'Duty of Children to their Parents'. The persona of a Chinese traveller remarking on his own situation and what he observes in England, allows Goldsmith to comment upon aspects of society he believes should be condemned or praised. The comments included within the *Beauties of Goldsmith* range from short, succinct sayings, such as that entitled 'Luxury', which reads, 'Luxury is the child of society alone', to much longer extracts running over several pages.⁶⁰ Under 'Love', for example, the story of Choang and his wife Hansi is included. It tells how the couple, regarded as a 'pattern of conjugal bliss', were less than devoted beneath the surface.⁶¹ After deriding a widow eager to remarry shortly after her husband's death, Hansi prepares to immediately marry her husband's disciple after his own apparent death. Choang is, however, not dead, and when he reappears alive, Hansi kills herself from shame. Choang now a widower himself promptly marries the widow his wife had once derided. The story, lengthy as it is, serves as an illustration of the maxim which begins the passage:

Love, when founded in the heart, will shew itself in a thousand unpremeditated sallies of fondness; But every cool deliberate exhibition of the passion only argues little understanding, or great insincerity.

The variety of length among the passages provides a varied reading experience

⁶⁰ Goldsmith, *Works*, ii. Letter 11, p. 52.

⁶¹ Goldsmith, *Works*, ii, L 18, pp. 77-80.

and creates a disjointed, undemanding undertaking from the reader. It invites short bursts of reading, unstructured and unordered, subject to chance or an individual heading drawing a reader to examine a particular passage. Reading the *Beauties of Goldsmith* could, therefore, be a different experience for every reader, they could encounter different passages at different times and in different orders. Despite this, and the differing atmosphere and subjects of the extracts, the overall tone and message of the passages is common to all. The morality of the extracts is persistent, regardless of length or style. Some may be overtly didactic and religious, such as: 'Man was born to live with innocence and simplicity, but he has deviated from nature; he was born to share the bounties of heaven, but he has monopolised them'.⁶² Others, like that written on the reported death of Voltaire, or on the character of the English, seem less obviously concerned with moral issues. However, if not explicit, the morality is certainly implicit within such passages. The observations upon the English, for example, are not just the remarks of a foreigner upon what he observes, and, of course, the reader of the anthology not familiar with the *Citizen* would not be aware of its original context. Despite being a 'people of good sense', we are told they are 'incompetent judges'. Indeed, 'few of them have been bred in that best of schools, the school of adversity; and by what I can learn, fewer still have been bred in any school at all'.⁶³ Within the anthology the passages are recontextualised, no longer spoken by the persona of the Chinese traveller, but attributed to the authorial representation of Goldsmith who comments directly on society rather than from behind the guise of a foreigner.

⁶² Goldsmith, *Works*, ii, L 15, pp. 66-67. Extract entitled 'Innocence and Simplicity'.

⁶³ Goldsmith, *Works*, ii, L 57, p. 237.

Throughout the collection the passages adopt a didactic, instructive tone and discuss the social and moral implications raised by the circumstances of daily life. It is not only within the extracts from the *Citizen* that this occurs however. Although the *Citizen of the World* is particularly disposed to adopt a didactic tone due to its form and nature, the extracts from Goldsmith's other works are anthologised in the same way. The *Vicar of Wakefield*, Goldsmith's only published novel, provides extracts headed, 'Hospitality', 'Inhumanity', 'Vice', 'Reputation', 'Conscience' and 'Integrity'. Interestingly, the majority of the passages are overtly moral and have obvious religious overtones. For example, the extract headed 'Integrity' reads: 'We should never strike our unnecessary blow at a victim over whom Providence holds the scourge of its resentment'.⁶⁴ The opening of the extract entitled 'Penitence' illustrates the divine orientation of the passage: 'The kindness of Heaven is promised to the penitent, and let ours be directed by the example'.⁶⁵

Significantly, the majority of these passages are spoken by the narrator of the novel, the Vicar of Wakefield himself, Dr. Primrose. The extracts anthologised are frequently taken from his moralising to his family on their behaviour or obligation to others, or his exhortations to his fellow prisoners or to his parishioners. Few other characters are anthologised. Of course, a reader of the anthology would not be aware of the character speaking and would read the passage as a distinct unit in itself, an act which transforms a coherent narrative structure into a collection of succinct moral thoughts or descriptions. One extract, spoken not by Dr. Primrose, yet nevertheless

⁶⁴ Goldsmith, *Vicar of Wakefield, Works*, iv, ch. 6, p. 40.

⁶⁵ Goldsmith, *Vicar of Wakefield, Works*, iv, ch 22, p.132.

confirmed by him, is that entitled 'Reputation'. Spoken by Mr. Burchell, the passage is significant as it directly relates to Goldsmith's critical opinions and the discourse of which the anthology is a part. Burchell and Primrose are discoursing on books and genius:

As the reputation of books is raised, not by their freedom from defect, but the greatness of their beauties; so should that of men be prized, not for their exemption from fault but the size of those virtues they are possessed of.⁶⁶

Here again we encounter Goldsmith's evaluation of literature, not by its defects, but by the merit of its beauties. Like Fielding in *Tom Jones*, Goldsmith is proposing to apply the criteria to mankind, who all have their faults, but should, it is argued, be prized for their virtues. Interestingly, the anthology does not include Dr. Primrose's reply, which possibly reflects Goldsmith's true position more clearly. While Primrose thinks Burchell's 'present observation is just when there are shining virtues and minute defects', he argues in a more Johnsonian vein that: 'when it appears that great vices are opposed in the same mind as to extraordinary virtues, such a character deserves contempt'. The rules of literary evaluation cannot simply be transferred to humanity, men may feign virtue, an accusation often used against the ostentatious display of sensibility. Goldsmith is again arguing for his doctrine of 'general observation'. Faults in humanity, as in writing, are only to be expected and do not condemn a character or work alone. Virtue, like beauty, is the mark of goodness or genius, but to gauge an accurate picture of any man or any piece of writing, one must always consider the whole.

⁶⁶ Goldsmith, *Vicar of Wakefield, Works*, iv, ch 18, p. 66.

Faults, when as abundant as beauties, create a tendency towards vice which beauty alone cannot excuse, and such influences can not be equally weighed and considered when blinded by one or other aspect.

The compiler of the *Beauties of Goldsmith* has no such concerns, his text being comprised solely of 'beauties'. Beauty, as Dr. Primrose suggests, carries moral connotations and cannot remain dominant and praiseworthy when countered with equal quantities of vice. Goldsmith's 'beauties' are, therefore, not surprisingly moral, and the inclusion of Primrose's speeches on communing with our own hearts, on poverty and the homeless and unfortunate, also renders them equally sentimental. The sentimental 'beauties' of Goldsmith are particularly evident in the *Vicar of Wakefield* and in the selection from Goldsmith's poems, which are, as the preface states, the 'highest finished in the group'. Here we encounter the Swiss peasant from *The Traveller*, and, from the *Deserted Village*, descriptions of 'blest retirement', along with that of the country clergyman, schoolmaster, the alehouse and the 'poor houseless shiv'ring female'. Each of these illustrates Goldsmith's preoccupation with the concept of contented acceptance and with simple descriptions of rural life. The two selections from Goldsmith's *The Captivity: An Oratorio*, the song beginning, 'O Memory thou fond deceiver' and the song entitled 'Hope', both exemplify sentimental maxims. Each poem deals with the subject of an unfortunate wretch, and addresses sentimental situations in emotive language referring to the 'heart', to 'pain', oppression and woe.

Arguably however, the title's claim to gather sentimental beauties, accurate as it may be, seems slightly incongruous when applied to Goldsmith's drama. Comparatively few extracts are included from the plays, perhaps not surprising when one considers

Goldsmith's antipathy to the sentimental comedies of his day. Both the *Good Natured Man* and *She Stoops to Conquer* were written in an attempt to overthrow sentimental comedy and to offer a new alternative. There is, therefore, little that is sentimental to extract from these plays, an observation confirmed by the short passages removed from each. For example, a speech of Sir William Honeywood is printed, which addresses one of Goldsmith's favourite topics: 'there are some faults so nearly allied to excellence, that one can scarce weed out the vice without eradicating the virtue'. Only two extracts are taken from *She Stoops to Conquer*, the more successful of the plays. One is entitled 'Modesty' and reads: 'Modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues'. The second, a song intended for Miss Hardcastle, but removed as the actress who was to play her could not sing, was rescued from oblivion by Boswell who printed it in the *London Magazine*.

As with the other extracts, those from the plays are transformed into isolated thoughts and sentiments. Removed from their original context and stripped of characterisation, their inclusion betrays their original motivation against the sham of insincere sentimentalism and its monopoly of the theatres. Taken as a whole, however, the anthology does to an extent represent the variety and versatility of Goldsmith's writing. Despite this, its moral and sentimental preoccupation threatens to obscure Goldsmith's wit and humour, which are here under-represented in favour of more serious didactic passages. Most importantly of all, the very premise upon which the collection operates opposes what Goldsmith himself said of evaluating a writer's work.

Goldsmith insisted on a doctrine of general observation, of weighing beauties against faults and appreciating the whole work. Faults may not serve as an indicator of anything

but a writer's liability to err against literary rules, but they form an important part of the whole structure. As Goldsmith said, 'Poems like buildings, have their point of view' and must therefore be viewed as a whole to understand that point of view. What the *Beauties of Goldsmith* represents, unlike Goldsmith's own anthologies, is but a 'partial conception', but one which made his works available to a wider audience and secured his literary reputation alongside writers such as Johnson, Sterne, Pope, and Swift. Like the other humorists anthologised in Kearsley's series, Goldsmith is moulded into a more Johnsonian writer of moral and sentimental maxims. The editor of the *Beauties* appropriates the presentation of Goldsmith, shaping the reader's experience in the same way that Goldsmith himself did as compiler of *Poems for Young Ladies* and *The Beauties of English Poesy*.

Within the *Beauties of Goldsmith* Goldsmith's reputation as an anthologist is in turn anthologised, so that Goldsmith is presented not as a compiler, novelist, poet, dramatist or essayist, but more generally as a writer of moral and sentimental maxims. Although a more 'moral' author than Sterne, Fielding, and Swift, Goldsmith is nevertheless subject to the same process of authorial refashioning within the context of the *Beauties* anthology. The personas of Lien Chi, Dr. Primrose, or Sir William Honeywood, are each stripped away and replaced with the 'Goldsmith' of the anthology's title. Like Sterne, Fielding, and Swift, Goldsmith's prose writings are favoured and collected under a range of headings which present his work as housing a variety of maxims and truisms on all manner of subjects. Freed from all contextual material, adopted masks and personae, and references to specific times or places, each of Kearsley's *Beauties* presents their subjects as universal authorial exemplars cast in

Johnsonian mould. Indeed, the refashioning of these authors within Kearsley's 'complete library' transforms these eighteenth-century 'humorists' into eighteenth-century 'moralists'.

Although each of Kearsley's anthologies substitutes the authorial masks of these authors for less complex, titular representations, his *Beauties* ultimately participate in the same discourse of authorial identity and disguise. The compiler contributes to the authorial games played by each of these writers, adding a new appropriated identity to those previously adopted. In doing so, the collection compensates for, and in turn provides, a mask to disguise the shadowy figure of its compiler. Price's 'middleman', mediating between author and audience, is concealed behind the authorial persona created by the editorial techniques adopted within the collection. Frequently invoking each writer's own words as a justification for the processes of anthologising, the anthology and the compiler gain their authority and legitimacy from the titular author whose 'beauties' the collection contains. The preoccupation with appropriating the authorial identities of Fielding, Goldsmith, Johnson, Sterne, and Swift is, therefore, significant to the genre's attempts to legitimise its position in eighteenth-century literary culture. Not only do the collections claim to respond to and influence social expectations by their anthologising of popular authors in a way which rendered them more moral and accessible to a wider readership. They simultaneously aim to gain respectability for the genre as a whole by aligning themselves with such images of authorship. The omitting of unsuitable material, careful internal editing, and the addition of headings contribute to a specific appropriation of each writer, and this appropriation provides an otherwise anonymous anthology with an 'author'.

PART III**'THE DAYS OF "BEAUTIES", "GEMS", "ANTHOLOGIES"'**

CHAPTER 8

'THE REMNANTS OF A CYCLOPS FEAST': KEARSLEY'S LEGACY TO THE
BEAUTIES TRADITION

I

Reviews and Readers

While Kearsley had announced in 1782 that the forthcoming edition of the *Beauties of Pope* would be the last in his series of anthologies, he appeared to quickly change his mind. The following months saw not only Kearsley's own *Beauties of Shakespeare* but also a collection of the *Beauties of Milton, Thomson and Young*.¹ The popularity and success of the previous collections, and those of Johnson and Sterne in particular, encouraged Kearsley to continue publishing anthologies of *Beauties*. The preface to the edition of Milton, Thompson and Young (also written by 'W.H.') notes that 'the number of books upon the plan of this volume is now pretty extensive', and credits its anthologising of longer passages to the 'extensive sale of the *Beauties of Sterne*', which provides a 'striking testimony' to the popularity of such extracts.² These further collections illustrate Kearsley's expansion of the tradition to include more poetry, a trend initiated with the *Beauties of Swift and Pope*. The collection of Shakespeare, as has been noted, also included poetry, a facet which Dodd had by and large neglected in his collection.

¹ Both published in 1782, although the title-page of the *Beauties of Pope* states it was published in 1783.

Of all the *Beauties*, it was those of Johnson and Sterne which sold most rapidly; that of Johnson having reached its ninth edition by 1799, and that of Sterne its thirteenth. A second edition of both the *Beauties* of Fielding and Swift was published in 1782, while the *Beauties* of Goldsmith and Watts had reached a third edition in the same year. A 'new edition' of the *Beauties of Pope* was published in 1783. The *Beauties of Johnson* also saw its 'beauties' extracted and reprinted in newspapers such as the *Morning Herald*. As early as December 1781, the publisher of this paper announced that during parliamentary recess he would print extracts from the *Beauties of Johnson*, and by January 1782, the *Morning Chronicle* was also reprinting extracts from Kearsley's collection.³ In December 1784, the *Westminster Magazine* was to do the same.⁴ The anthology was itself anthologised and Johnson's 'maxims and observations' were disseminated to an even wider audience, equated with the wisdom, status, and authority of government in their substitution for parliamentary debates. Such republication illustrates the perceived value the collections were seen to hold, and their potential application, not only to schools and the country's youth, but also to educated adult readers.

Various reviews focused on the usefulness of such collections, citing their ability to extract moral maxims and truisms on a variety of topics from longer, complex, or unsuitable works, as their main benefit to their readers. The *London Magazine* remarks, that Swift 'perhaps, more than any other [author], is the reputed father of trash'.⁵ As a result, a 'genuine selection of what may be called his legitimate offspring is therefore doing

² *The Beauties of Milton, Thomson and Young* (London: Kearsley, 1782), p. iii.

³ McGuffie, *Samuel Johnson in the British Press*, p. 270.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 344.

⁵ *London Magazine*, 51 (1782), p. 622.

a real service to the publick, [sic] at the same time that it may be considered as a just tribute to a great literary reputation'. Although Kearsley's *Beauties of Swift* may be 'on too circumscribed a plan to answer this valuable purpose', it nevertheless 'presents the reader with many of Swift's most excellent pieces, while those for which he has been so much censured, are carefully avoided'.⁶ Despite failing to offer a bibliographical listing of Swift's legitimate works, the collection is valued for excluding his bawdy and 'offensive flowers' and for retaining his 'beauties'. The *Beauties of Pope* similarly offers a 'small' but nevertheless 'elegant bouquet' of the 'flowers of Pope's poetry', 'happily flung together'.⁷ Regardless of its size and scope, the reviewer attributes its value to the fact that 'those readers not possessed of all our bard's performances, by the purchase of this little volume may certainly, at a small expense, possess themselves of his best and most furnished pieces'.⁸ A small collection of 'beauties', at a correspondingly small cost to the consumer, allows those who cannot afford to buy all Pope's works to purchase his best pieces and hence to purchase a piece of literary culture.

This attitude was echoed by the reviewer of the *Beauties of Johnson*, who had remarked that Johnson's excellence lay in 'deep observations and acute remarks on men and manners'.⁹ The collection of these observations and remarks is heartily wished success, especially 'among the young', for whose benefit the collection seems predominantly intended.¹⁰ Of course, as Benedict notes, *Beauties* collections were 'primarily but by no

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *London Magazine*, 51 (1782), p. 623.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ See chap 3, p. 160, n. 144above.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

means exclusively intended for young people'.¹¹ As Kearsley himself stated in an advertisement, although

principally intended for the Use of Youth of both sexes, they will be found interesting and instructive to all readers without distinction; they will inform the understanding, and entertain the imagination.¹²

Their purpose is not solely to be instructive but also to be entertaining. Significantly, Kearsley targets his collections at 'all readers without distinction'. Collections of *Beauties* aim to construct a literary culture which levels all boundaries. They seek to create a readership free from distinctions in class, age, gender and wealth, just as the recontextualised extracts within the anthologies are reprinted with all such textual boundaries removed. By selecting and editing their extracts in such a way as to eliminate indications of the sex or status of the speaker (Shakespeare and Fielding), difficult or obscure language (Johnson), sensitive or unsuitable material (Sterne, Fielding, Swift), Kearsley's *Beauties* can, in turn, eliminate such barriers to their readership, presenting them as not only suitable for all readers, but accessible and affordable to all.

The arrangement of extracts under alphabetical heads, which Kearsley follows in the majority of his collections, is viewed as a particularly effective way of rendering the thoughts and sentiments of writers easily accessible to readers. As the *Monthly Review* noted in its comparison of Kearsley's *Beauties of Shakespeare* with that of Dodd's, the arrangement followed by Kearsley (and Gildon before him) is preferable, it is 'more useful

¹¹ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 198.

¹² From an advertisement reprinted at the end of the *Beauties of Fielding*.

to see how Shakespeare hath expressed himself on various subjects'.¹³ This alphabetical arrangement, which Kearsley adopted in all his collections (excepting those of Sterne and Swift), encouraged precisely the type of index-reading which Swift deplored, yet was viewed by Johnson and the *Monthly* reviewer as useful. Headings may supply that 'chance word' which Hale White suggests might lead the reader to examine the works of a given author more closely. They stressed a varied reading experience, offering a wide range of topics and themes in quick succession. A reader could move from extracts upon the subject of 'Morning' to 'Mortality' within the turn of a page, even in an alphabetical arrangement. Although Hale White felt that the classification introduced by the labelling of extracts would prove limiting in his modern selections from the *Rambler*, such headings could also be seen as creating new meanings, rather than limiting them.¹⁴ The similar headings found throughout various anthologies in the *Beauties* tradition succeed in creating a sense of unity and interconnection between the collections, and between the authors they anthologise.

Not only were authors as varied as Johnson, Sterne, Fielding, Swift, Pope, Watts and Goldsmith united under the titular banner of 'Beauties', the headings included within each collection established interconnections and similarities between each writer. Although many headings are particular to a particular author and specific to their own writing (the 'Le Fevre' story in the Sterne collection for example), many headings are shared and are common to all the collections. Those such as 'Death', 'Charity', 'Hope' and 'Love', for example, recur frequently, utilising those common topoi and common place headings which emphasised universal emotions and circumstances. It is unsurprising

¹³ See chapter 2, p. 106 above.

¹⁴ W. Hale White, *Selections*, p. iii.

that these authors write upon such subjects or, more accurately, that their works could be anthologised or appropriated to fit beneath such headings, but nevertheless, these common headings suggest a common ground between these writers. If, as was intended by Kearsley, his *Beauties* collections were treated as a 'library', a reader could not only, by virtue of the index, discover what Shakespeare had to say on the topic of 'Love' but also what Johnson, Sterne or Swift had written on the topic in turn. As Barbara Korte suggests, the contents of anthologies are 'successively re-contextualized and re-perspectivized, provided with a new semantic environment and they new possibilities of reading'.¹⁵ This process of creating new meanings and new associations is extended across all Kearsley's *Beauties* through the introduction of headings, encouraging his readers to compare and contrast each of the writers with one another.

There is little or no evidence to illustrate the precise reading patterns and readerships which such collections encouraged. Benedict suggests that the skipping and dipping approach which these alphabetical and topographically arranged anthologies encouraged contributed to the cultural climate of the late-eighteenth century, and in turn has influenced modern reading habits. For Benedict, 'The physical appearance of the anthology [...] indicates the way in which compilers expected it to be read' and indeed, the indexes, headings, and title pages did encourage a certain way of reading these authors.¹⁶ Furthermore, Benedict argues these paratextual elements also contribute to creating a type of readership: 'editors of anthologies construct ideal, homogenized readers who bridge divisions in class'.¹⁷ While such anthologies may have called for a similar approach to

¹⁵ See chapter 2, p. 73 above.

¹⁶ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 13.

¹⁷ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, p. 198.

reading, that of index reading, or skipping and dipping, the resulting reading experience for these readers would be anything but homogenous. Sterne, in the persona of Tristram Shandy, claimed that the digressive and episode structure of his 'Life and Opinions' was intended 'to rebuke [the] vicious taste' of 'reading straight forwards'.¹⁸ Likewise, the *Beauties of Sterne* and Kearsley's other *Beauties*, prevent similar 'straight forwards' reading. Even if a reader read the book cover to cover, any chronological or linear progression is denied, the reader taken from one genre to another, one location to another or one period in time to another, with each successive extract. The headings stand as markers not indicating any narrative progression other than alphabetical, instead signifying difference and variety. The headings in collections of *Beauties* introduced a break indicating a change of topic, or perhaps required a change of pace, mood or manner of reading. A reader consulting the index or flicking through the pages may stop at a word or topic which interests them and suits their mood, a methodology which results in anything but a homogenised reading experience. Every anthology has the potential to be read in numerous ways, and every reader, therefore, could potentially read the passages in a very different order from any other reader. Moreover, as they revisit the collection, the reading experience of a single anthology could differ each time a reader reads the same collection.

The universality endowed on the passages by their recontextualisation, editing and amendment is itself extended to the anthology, which becomes a perennially universal text. The story is not complete once a reader turns the last page and there is no resolution or conclusion to be reached. The contents of the anthology are as potentially renewable as the reader's imagination. Timeless contents provide a timeless appeal to be dipped into again

¹⁸ *TS*, I: XX, i, p. 65.

and again. While there is little to evidence from individual eighteenth-century readers to confirm that they approached Kearsley's *Beauties* in this manner, there are a few indications that such a habits of reading were prevalent in the eighteenth century and that it was generally disapproved of by the critics and reviewers of the main periodicals.

The *Critical Review* in a piece ostensibly reviewing Kearsley's collections of Johnson and Sterne, invoked Callimachus's maxim, 'a great book is a great evil,' as one which:

Perfectly coincides with the taste and disposition of a modern reader, who seldom admits a folio, or a quarto into his collection, unless for ornament, to give his book-case a more pompous appearance, and the owner the reputation of superior learning.¹⁹

This attitude, the reviewer traces back to the French, who have their collections of 'all the *Pensées Ingenieuses*, and the *Bon Mots* of [their] learned countrymen; [their] *Bagatelles Morales* [...], *Bouquet Historique* [...], *Amusemens Philisophiques*'.²⁰ Within such collections, the French reader may 'rove from topic to topic, as the bee does from the blue-bottle to the daisy, and collect a tincture of knowledge under every letter of the alphabet'. The English too, the reviewer laments, 'seem to be degenerating into this literary frivolism', characterised by a fickle and flighty approach to reading and the gaining of knowledge. The 'generality of readers', he remarks, 'both male and female, can scarcely bear the fatigue attending the perusal of any thing, but Shandean volumes, plays, novels, and other books of entertainment'. Literary collections are portrayed as encouraging

¹⁹ *Critical Review* 53 (1782), p. 158.

²⁰ *ibid.*

laziness in readers, resulting in the popularity of forms such as the novel and drama. That anthologies fall into the category of 'Shandean volumes' is both significant and paradoxical, since Kearsley's *Beauties of Sterne* in its removal of Sterne's digressions and knitting together of narrative, attempted to produce a less Shandean representation of Sterne.

This scheme of publication the reviewer sarcastically views as 'ingenious', portraying booksellers such as Kearsley as 'the only patrons of literature', who:

In order to encourage the rising generation in the pursuits of learning and wisdom, have published a variety of compilations, containing all the wit and spirit of our eminent authors in epitome: The Beauties of Homer, Shakespeare, Addison, and Johnson, the Moral Sentiments of Richardson and Blair, and the Quintessence of Sensibility, extracted from the writings of Sterne.

Collections such as Kearsley's *Beauties*, in their apparent aim to encourage learning, do so by denying traditional means of gaining knowledge. Publishing collections of 'the wit and spirit of our eminent authors' is ridiculed as a scheme which 'wonderfully facilitates the acquisition of the sciences'.²¹ After all, extraction and condensation 'refutes the assertion of those cynical writers, who tell us, that the avenues to the temple of wisdom are tedious and steep, and intricate'. Collections of *Beauties* encourage a method of reading which offers an alternative to traditional and rigorous means of gaining knowledge. Offering the best passages from the best authors, Kearsley sifts out unnecessary material, minimises the amount of material to be read, and simplifies the means of accessing such material. Such

²¹ *Critical Review*, 53 (1782), p. 159.

anthologies, the reviewer concludes, are 'agreeable to the doctrine of our modern philosophers, who assert that "all the solid matter in the solar system may be contained in a nutshell"'.²² These collections claim to offer what they cannot deliver the reviewer suggests; compilation and condensation and the frivolous reading methods they encourage can never replace a more systematic and inclusive approach to reading.

The *Monthly Review* echoed the *Critical's* complaints, acknowledging 'very freely that we have not a high opinion of this mode of compilation', despite its earlier review of the potential usefulness of the *Beauties of Johnson* for use in schools.²³ The *Beauties of Goldsmith* is characterised as consisting of 'detached sentences, generally short ones, selected from the writings of this amiable and unaffected author [...] thrown together in a careless disorder'. Although the reviewer believes that 'an unequal writer, an obscure, or an indecent one, deserves to be sent into the world in this mutilated state, and the Editors ought to blot what the Author himself should have omitted', in the case of Goldsmith, the reviewer finds the editor's judgement to be, 'at least, problematical'.²⁴ 'Decent and gentle Goldsmith', the reviewer laments, 'deserves a better fate' than to have

Some venal and ignorant Procrustes, who called himself of the house of Literature, stood over thee,
to extend or contract thy elegance, till it just filled the destined space!

Instead, the reviewer wishes to view Goldsmith 'entire', rather than see 'the *fatal sheers* [sic] divide thy beauties in order to transform them into this motley patch-work'. The

²² *ibid.*

²³ *Monthly Review*, 67 (1782), p. 152.

²⁴ *ibid.*

multiplication of such similar collections has, the *Monthly* complains, 'become hacknied [sic] and disgusting', a criticism voiced once again in its review of the *Beauties of Hume and Bolingbroke*.²⁵ Here, the reviewer can only bring himself to state 'that Mr. Kearsley hath published the Beauties of *Sterne, Watts, and Fielding*', that 'The Beauties of *Harvey* are also published by Etherington' and, rather regretfully, that 'More *Beauties* are to make their appearance soon'.²⁶

The following year, the *Critical* was still expressing its 'indignation at that frivolity, which can be pleased with such mutilated detached views'.²⁷ Reviewing Kearsley's *Beauties* of Fielding, Watts, Hume and Bolingbroke, Goldsmith, and Swift, the critic comments that even those who rejoiced 'at the burning of the Alexandrian Library' would 'have the greatest reason to lament a disaster of this kind'. Fielding and Watts are viewed as having 'suffered severely' in the process of being anthologised, due to the 'great share of their merit' owing to 'a continued chain of adventures'. Hume and Bolingbroke 'should never have been brought within the reach of the world in general', while the reviewer weeps over the 'mangled limbs' of Goldsmith, that 'tender and affecting bard'. The collection of his 'beauties' is portrayed as 'the remnant of a Cyclops feast, or the ornaments of a giant's cave'; significantly, not the feast itself, but the disgraced remnants and mangled leftovers. The process of anthologising is here viewed as something which digests the works of great writers, preserving only small scraps of the greater whole. Swift too 'deserved better treatment', and although containing some passages 'which Friendship would, perhaps, have blotted with her tears; [...] the bulk of the volume is, at last, assisted

²⁵ *Monthly Review*, 67 (1782), p. 477.

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ *Critical Review*, 55 (1783), p. 157.

by some very exceptionable parts'. This review is also significant as it offers the only indication as to the compiler of Kearsley's collections. Further berating the collection of Swift, the reviewer laments, 'Poor Hawkesworth! How vain thy labour, if the Beauties of so many volumes will not full a humble duodecimo!'²⁸ Alan B. Howes has not been able to locate the Hawkesworth in question, who may be the 'W.H' who compiled the *Beauties of Swift* and Kearsley's other collections, excepting that of Johnson.²⁹ The Hawkesworth in question may well be John Hawkesworth, friend of Johnson and biographer and editor of Swift, whose edition of Swift's *Works* first appeared in 1755. It is possible that the reference to his 'labour' may in fact be to his compilation of the 'many volumes' of Swift's *Works* and not the *Beauties of Swift*. The editor of Kearsley's compilations therefore remains anonymous, the initials reminiscent of the mysterious 'W.H' of Shakespeare's sonnets. This anonymity denies an authorial identity to which the contents of the collection can be attributed, the invisible anthologist placing authority solely on the appropriated authorial image represented by the collection's title. The identity of the anthologist, like the edited extracts, is removed from a specific context and rendered universal, freed from associations of time and place, and perhaps most importantly, from specific criticism in the press.

On the whole, there seems to be a difference of critical opinion surrounding Kearsley's *Beauties*. The methodology of extracting and editing the literary beauties of authors, and compiling them within the structure of an anthology, was viewed by some as a useful aid to educate the young. It offered a format which made previously unsuitable

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ Alan B. Howes, *Yorick and the Critics*, p. 62, n. 4

authors accessible to readers, and a means of reference and entertainment for all readers who could choose passages from various authors on a wide variety of topics to suit their needs or moods. Others disagreed with editorial choices, and saw the extraction of passages as a process of mutilation and destruction which encouraged a frivolous and flighty approach to reading and learning. Such criticism apparently did not deter Kearsley, or the readers, and demand was such that further editions of the collections of Johnson and Kearsley continued to the end of the century. Moreover, the popularity of the *Beauties of Johnson* possibly influenced one of two other *Beauties* collections published by Kearsley in 1787: the *Beauties of the Rambler, Adventurer, Connoisseur, World and Idler* compiled predominantly from Johnson's periodicals. His other anthology published that year also exploited the popularity of the periodical press, and was yet another *Beauties of the Spectators, Tatlers and Guardians*.³⁰

Further editions of Kearsley's *Beauties* were also published across the Irish Sea. A Dublin edition of the *Beauties* of Johnson was published in 1782, and those of Fielding, Goldsmith, Hume and Bolingbroke, Milton Thomson and Young, Pope, Sterne, and Swift followed in 1783. Although often 'regarded as piracy in England, this practice was not illegal as long as the Dublin editions were not exported to England' and so Kearsley's *Beauties* found themselves reprinted for a new audience with new booksellers' names on the title pages.³¹ These reprints were popular in Ireland and were frequently borrowed from

³⁰ Kearsley's wife and son published the third edition of the *Beauties of the Spectators, Tatlers and Guardians* in 1792 and his son was responsible for a further 'new' edition of the *Beauties of the Rambler, Adventurer, Connoisseur, World and Idler* in 1796.

³¹ Richard C. Cole, 'Samuel Johnson and the Eighteenth-Century Irish Book Trade', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 75:3 (1981), p. 235. John Feather explains, 'because Ireland was not subject to English copyright law until 1801, an English book reprinted without permission in Ireland was not *ipso facto* a piracy.' See 'The English Book Trade and the Law 1695-1799', *Publishing History* 12 (1982), p. 64.

circulating libraries, often owned by the booksellers responsible for the reprints. The *Beauties of Johnson* was reprinted by a conger of twelve Dublin booksellers and was 'frequently quoted from in Irish periodicals and lent by the circulating libraries'.³² One of these, Thomas Walker, also reprinted the *Beauties of Goldsmith* with a number of other booksellers and was involved in the republication of the *Beauties of Swift*. Another, Patrick Byrne, was also involved in the Goldsmith republication, and a third, William Spotswood worked with Samuel Colbert to reprint the *Beauties of Sterne*.³³ These latter two booksellers both had circulating libraries. Spotswood's circulating library 'had more than ten thousand volumes in 1784, mostly novels', but he added to these his reprint of the Sterne collection.³⁴ Interestingly, it was the *Beauties* of Johnson and Goldsmith which were the most popular in Ireland. Richard Cole notes, that 'an examination of the 203 Irish private libraries shows that Goldsmith was second only to Samuel Johnson in popularity among the landed and professional classes', no doubt contributing to the Irish reprinting of Kearsley's collection of Goldsmith.

Byrne and Spotswood, along with John Parker, another of the booksellers involved in the reprinting of the *Beauties of Johnson*, joined the Philadelphia book trade and Spotswood was responsible for reprinting some of Kearsley's *Beauties* in America. He issued his own Philadelphia reprint of the *Beauties of Johnson* in 1787 and of the *Beauties of Sterne* in 1789. Another *Beauties of Sterne* was published in Philadelphia in 1790 and one in Boston, issued by John Folsom in 1793. The Philadelphia edition of the *Beauties of*

³² Richard Cargill Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers, 1740-1800* (London: Mansell Publishing, 1986), p. 105.

³³ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, pp. 32-33.

³⁴ *ibid.*

Johnson also contains 'The life of Dr. Johnson' along with 'some papers written by him, in behalf of a late unfortunate character' linking Johnson once again to Dodd, and to William Cooke, who wrote the 'Life' for Kearsley and possibly also compiled the collection.

Matthew Carey, also a former Dublin bookseller, issued a Philadelphia reprint of the *Beauties of Fielding* in 1792, and Francis Bailey published a *Beauties of Goldsmith* in 1797.

The reprinting of Kearsley's *Beauties* in Ireland, in turn led to their republication in America, broadening their potential readership and disseminating their representations of each of the authors to another continent entirely.

Kearsley's *Beauties* were therefore undoubtedly available to many readers, although who exactly these readers were is hard to determine. The Trinity College, Dublin, copy of the *Beauties of Sterne* belonged to, and is signed by, three generations of the Madden family, whom Cole notes, had 'several seats in County Monaghan and County Fermanagh'.³⁵ The sale catalogue of the library of William Dodd suggests that Dodd owned a copy of the *Beauties of the Magazines*, the *Poetical Dictionary* and, perhaps most significantly, Bysshe's *Art of English Poetry*.³⁶ Sterne may have owned a copy of Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* and of the *Beauties of the Spectators, Tatlers and Guardians*.³⁷ Byron possibly owned a copy of the *Beauties of English Poetry*, William Godwin a *Beauties of Antient Poetry* and Daniel O'Connell a *Beauties of Burke*.³⁸ Such evidence suggests that these collections were owned and read by the wealthy and the educated, and not only the younger, female and less educated audiences at whom they were primarily

³⁵ OLS B-2-932 no. 1. Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, p. 82.

³⁶ See *Poets and Men of Letters*, ed. by Stephen Parks (London: Mansel, 1972), v, in *Sale Catalogues of Libraries of Eminent Persons*, General Editor A.N.L. Munby, 9 vols (London: Mansell, 1971-1974).

³⁷ As the contents of Sterne's library were sold with the contents of other libraries, it is of course by no means certain that Sterne actually owned these books.

marketed. That they were, however, also read by these latter groups is testified to by signatures in various copies. A copy of the 1783 'new edition' of Kearsley's *Beauties of Pope* is signed by 'Master Joseph Stanford', 'Second Honorary/Premium' at 'Mr Wright's School, Gorleston' and dated 'Midsummer 1787', suggesting that if the collection was not used as an actual schoolbook it was owned and read by school boys.³⁹ A copy of Goldsmith's *Poems for Young Ladies* was owned by Elizabeth Bofrovells illustrating that Goldsmith's anthology reached the female audience its contents were selected for.⁴⁰ Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* also proved acceptable to the clergy as Dodd had hoped: a third edition of this anthology was owned by a fellow clergyman, the Rev. Jos. Hughes, of Battersea, Surrey, and dated 1822.

Many readers gained access to such collections through the circulating libraries, increasingly popular towards the end of the eighteenth century. Kearsley's *Beauties* were found in many English circulating libraries just as they were in Ireland. Indeed, the holdings of various libraries testify to the general interest in collections of extracts, such as those compiled by Bysshe and Dodd, among others. The catalogue of R. Fisher's circulating library in Newcastle in 1791 contained the *Beauties of the English Stage*, Goldsmith's *Poems for Young Ladies*, as well as Dodsley's famous *Collection of Poems*, Bysshe's *Art of English Poetry* and a copy of Rochefoucauld's *Maxims and Reflections*.⁴¹ Hargrove's circulating library in Harrogate contained the *Beauties* of Fielding, Johnson, Shakespeare, Sterne and Watts.⁴² In 1802, the Library of the Athenæum in Liverpool held

³⁸ *Poets and Men of Letters* ed. by A.N.L. Munby (London: Mansell, 1971) i-ii.

³⁹ British Library copy CUP 408m.33.

⁴⁰ British Library copy 11631.a2. The spelling of the surname is uncertain.

⁴¹ *A Catalogue of R. Fisher's Circulating Library* (Newcastle upon Tyne: M. Angus, 1791).

⁴² *A Catalogue of Hargrove's Circulating Library, at Harrogate* (York: W. Blanchard, 1801).

copies of the *Beauties of the Magazines* and Goldsmith's *Beauties of English Poesy*.⁴³ In London, Earle's 'New Catalogue of English Books' for his circulating library located in Piccadilly, listed Goldsmith's *Beauties of English Poesy*, Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear*, Bysshe's *Art of English Poesy*, the *Beauties of the Spectators, Tatlers and Guardians*, the *Beauties of English Drama* as well as Kearsley's *Beauties of Fielding, Goldsmith, Johnson, Pope, Shakespeare, Sterne, and Watts*.⁴⁴ Although there is no indication of how often such collections were borrowed, their presence in such libraries indicates their ongoing popularity and potential to reach readers throughout the country. Their inclusion in circulating library catalogues twenty years after their initial publication also suggests that Kearsley's collections were not the trivial and ephemeral publications that some reviewers claimed, remaining current in the early years of the nineteenth century, with the reading experience they offered still very much in fashion.

⁴³ *Catalogue of the Library of the Athenæum, in Liverpool* (Liverpool: printed by J. McCreery, 1802).

II

Expansion and Imitation

That the *Monthly Review* was terming *Beauties* collections as ‘hacknied and disgustful’ as early as 1782 is a testimony to just how rapidly Kearsley’s anthologies were themselves published and in turn imitated and replicated. As appendix 2 illustrates, it was during this year that the vast majority of such collections were published in the eighteenth century. Many of these are accounted for by Kearsley’s collections, but 1782 also saw anthologies such as the *Beauties of Churchill*, *Beauties of Hervey*, and the *Sentimental beauties and Moral delineations from the writings of the celebrated Dr Blair, and other much admired authors*.⁴⁵ These collections followed Kearsley’s lead in anthologising the works of a celebrated author or eminent individual, and soon *Beauties* were published of Fox, North and Burke (1784), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1788), Rev. John Tillotson (1794), Robert South (1795), Joseph Hall (1796), Edmund Burke (1797), and Christoph Christian Sturm (1798). Women also began to be the subject of such collections and *Beauties* were published of Stephanie Felicite, Countess of Genlis (1787) and Mary Robinson (1791). Women also became anthologists: the *Beauties of Rousseau* we are told, were ‘selected by a lady’. Such collections mark a move away from the anthologising of literary authors to include politicians like Fox, North and Burke, clerics and churchmen like Blair, Tillotson, Hall, Hervey and South, foreign writers such as Genlis, Rousseau, and Sturm, and even

⁴⁴ Earle’s *New Catalogue of English Books* (London: by J. Nichols [?]).

⁴⁵ *Beauties of Churchill* (London: G. Lister, 1782); *Beauties of Hervey* (London: C. Etherington & A. Milne, 1782); *Sentimental beauties and Moral delineations from the writings of the celebrated Dr Blair, and other*

more dissipated characters such as Churchill and the actress, poet, and one-time mistress of the Prince of Wales, Mary Robinson.

The tradition of the collection of *Beauties* also expanded to encompass many other topics. The genres of poetry, the periodical press, and drama, continued to be a popular subject for such anthologies. *Beauties* were published of 'Prose and Verse' (1783), 'the Magazines' (1788), 'the Stage' (1792), 'Biography' (1792), of 'Literature' (1791), 'Antient Poetry' (1794), 'Eminent Writers' (1794-1795), 'the Fables' (1795), and 'the Press' (1800). Following Kearsley's lead, many of these selections marketed themselves for young readers and advertised their contents as being particularly useful in schools. The preface to *The Man of Reading, or The Beauties of Religion and Morality in Prose and Verse* (1782), declares it was compiled in response to the 'vogue to publish the *Beauties* of the most approved authors', and the editor to be 'zealously concerned for the real benefit and desirous of profitably entertaining the rising generation in particular'.⁴⁶ The two-volume *Beauties of Eminent Writers*, was 'selected and Arranged for the Instruction of Youth', and claimed its contents were suitable 'for the Use of Schools and Private Classes'. This collection was even compiled by a teacher, one William Scott, 'teacher of the English Language and Geography in Edinburgh' in 1797.⁴⁷ Another teacher and cleric was the Reverend John Ireland, 'curate of Tynemouth and master of a grammar school, North Shields'. He compiled a collection of *Beauties in Prose and Verse*, a work, which it is hoped 'might be serviceable in schools'.⁴⁸ The poetical

much admired authors (London: John Wallis, 1782).

⁴⁶ *The Man of Reading, or The Beauties of Religion and Morality in Prose and Verse* (London: for J. Walker, 1782), p. vii.

⁴⁷ *Beauties of Eminent Writers* (Edinburgh: Peter Hall, 1797)

⁴⁸ Rev. J. Ireland, *Beauties in Prose and Verse* (Newcastle: by T. Angus, 1783), p. v.

collection, the *Beauties of the Poets, or, a collection of Moral and Sacred Poetry from the Most Eminent Authors* was compiled by yet another clergyman, the 'late Rev Thomas Janes of Bristol', illustrating the continuing moral preoccupation of such collections of 'beauties'.⁴⁹

These collections not only adopted Kearsley's titular use of 'Beauties' and the basic structure, methods of compilation, and preoccupation with contents suitable for the education of youth, they also appropriated many of the extracts which Kearsley's compilers had selected from the various authors. In his *Beauties in Prose and Verse*, the Rev. Ireland reprinted the Story of Le Fevre, the episode of Uncle Toby and the Fly, and that of the captive starling, all of which appeared in the *Beauties of Sterne*. Scott's *Beauties of Eminent Writers*, extracted passages from Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* and various episodes from Johnson, including a passage entitled 'Necessity and Advantage of Exercise' which encompassed the infamous 'Death' passage. Significantly, Scott had learnt a lesson from the *Beauties of Johnson* and anthologised the extended passage and not that found in Kearsley's collection. His collection also contained several extracts from Shakespeare included in Dodd's and Kearsley's collections; Jacques 'All the World's a Stage' speech, the description of Cleopatra sailing down the Cydnus from *Antony and Cleopatra*, Orsino's 'If music be the food of love' speech from *Twelfth Night* and Portia's 'Quality of Mercy' speech, among others.

Another selection of *Beauties in Prose and Verse* also published in 1783 and again design to facilitate the studies of youth and recommended to 'all Masters both of public and private schools', anthologised a number of extracts from Sterne found in Kearsley's

⁴⁹ Rev. Thomas Janes, *Beauties of the Poets, or, a collection of Moral and Sacred Poetry from the Most*

collection.⁵⁰ Along with the stories of Maria, Uncle Toby and the Fly, and Yorick's death, the story of Le Fevre is reprinted, from which, the preface states the 'unfeeling heart [...] may learn an excellent lesson'.⁵¹ Here, the Le Fevre episode is reprinted in its entirety and does not retain any of the omissions found in Kearsley's *Beauties of Sterne*. Details of time and place are restored, as are the details of Toby's filling and smoking of his pipe, omitted in the *Beauties* as extraneous narrative details which detracted from the sentimentalism of the episode. The frequent reprinting of such episodes perpetuated those selections contained in Kearsley's anthologies, establishing them as familiar anthology pieces, which, in larger generic collections, no longer required the systematic editing evident in Kearsley's authorial collections. The popularity of Kearsley's *Beauties* anthologies and their selections from writers such as Goldsmith, Johnson, and Sterne, in particular, influenced the ongoing anthologising of these authors in various other eighteenth-century compilations. Moreover, they contributed to the status of stories such as Sterne's Le Fevre, or Goldsmith's country clergyman, as popular anthology-pieces which defined the literary and moral 'beauties' of a particular author.

Not all *Beauties* collections admired Kearsley's compilations or sought to imitate his format and structure. In 1787, Henry Headley compiled his *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry* which comprised older, neglected pieces by writers such as Carew, Drayton, Fletcher, Lovelace and Wotton. Headley's use of the titular *Beauties* is not to align itself in the tradition of such collections, but rather to stand as an alternative to 'the compilations

Eminent Authors (London: T. Evans, Fielding & Walker et al., 1777).

⁵⁰ *Beauties in Prose and Verse* (Stockton: R. Christopher, 1783), p. v.

⁵¹ *Beauties in Prose and Verse*, p. vii.

[Headley had] hitherto met with'.⁵² These, he claims, have appeared to him 'imperfect', 'mere common-place books of mutilated quotations, adapted to the illustration only of an alphabetical list of given subjects, without (as it should seem) the most distant reference to the beauties of composition'.⁵³ The preoccupation with selecting moral beauties has, Headley complains, caused the neglect of compositional beauties, those in which the beauties/defects discourse of the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries was originally rooted. Moreover, 'selections expressly of beauties from modern books of credit' states Headley:

Unless immediately intended for the use of schools, are in a great degree idle and impertinent, and do but multiply books to no good end; by anticipating him, they deprive the reader of that pleasure which every one feels, and of that right which every one is entitled to, of judging for himself.⁵⁴

The marketing of such books as textbooks for use in schools seems to be the only vindication for such collections. Echoing Johnson, Headley feels that such a method of anthologising precludes the judgement; the editor is simply 'playing the anatomist'.⁵⁵ For readers who are content to simply spend their time perusing an 'accidental line, or a happy expression' Headley expresses pity and disdain: 'for such readers, many authors must be mangled in order to be read.' Like the reviews in the *Critical* and *Monthly Review*, Headley bemoans the attitude to gaining knowledge by index-reading, arguing that 'the cost of

⁵² Henry Headley, *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry* (London: T. Cadell, 1787), p. viii.

⁵³ *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Headley, *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry*, p. ix.

⁵⁵ Headley, *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry*, p. xi.

working some mines is more than the gold extracted will sometimes repay.’⁵⁶ Yet, despite critiquing such collections and the reading habits they encourage, in order to establish the superiority of his own collection, Headley’s choice of title nevertheless affiliates his collection of ‘beauties’ with those published by Kearsley and the tradition at large. Moreover, it continues to perpetuate the preclusion of judgement, Headley subjectively mediating his own personal selection of ‘ancient English poetry’ for his readers.

Other anthologists and booksellers who may not have imitated Kearsley’s methodology of extracting extracts, nevertheless revealed a debt to him in their publication of a series of *Beauties*. In 1794, John Roach began a six-volume series entitled *Roach’s Beauties of the Modern Poets* (see plate 12). Each volume was divided into four parts and contained a selection of poems reprinted in full. Although not a collection of extracts, Roach used the idea of a series of *Beauties* to market ‘the works of the most admired authors’. These included Collins, Dryden, Goldsmith, Gray, Johnson, Milton, Pope and Thomson, illustrating that the ongoing anthologising of Goldsmith, Johnson and Pope also encompassed their poetical writing and placed them in the company of other eminent poets, rather than prose writers as Kearsley had done. Another series of *Beauties* was also published in the early nineteenth century by Thomas Tegg. As part of Alfred Howard’s series of the *Beauties of Literature*, Tegg published a group of *Beauties* collections which echoed those of Kearsley; a *Beauties of Sterne* in 1809, of Johnson (1830), of Swift (1834?), Milton, Thomson and Young (1834?), Goldsmith (1835), Fielding (1835), Chesterfield (1835?), and Shakespeare (1860/1861). Although anthologising many of the same authors

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

as Kearsley, these collections boast their own selections of each author. Tegg's *Beauties of Johnson* does not edit Johnson's works into short maxims, but selects some longer prose passages and includes a greater selection of poetry (see plate 13). Both Roach's and Tegg's series of *Beauties* testify to the ongoing popularity of the tradition in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, and to the influence of Kearsley's original series and the authors he chose to anthologise. Although not sharing the same educational and moral preoccupations, these series continue to anthologise and appropriate these authors for each successive generation, positioning them firmly in the canon of influential and important eighteenth-century authors.

The influence of Kearsley's collections upon the *Beauties* anthology is, therefore, not confined to the eighteenth century, and, indeed, it is in the nineteenth century that Kearsley's preoccupation with publishing collections devoted to one individual author is most influential upon the tradition as a whole. In fact, the early-nineteenth century witnessed an explosion of such collections which anthologised the works of numerous writers including; the *Beauties* of Addison (1860), Bacon (1812), Byron (1827), Burns (1826), Cowper (1801), Dryden (1833), Herbert (1850), Hume (1826), Locke (1820), Mackenzie (1813), Milton (1833), Anna Seward (1813), Shelley (1830), Richardson (1813), Thomson (1824), Wesley (1802), and Young (1834). An equally wide variety of subjects were encompassed under the heading of 'beauties' in the first half of the nineteenth century; American History (1835), Arithmetic (1816), Chess (1846), Derbyshire (1865), Don Juan (1828), English History (1846), Faith (1867), Flora (1848), Ireland (1825), the Bible (1815), Opera and Ballet (1845). Like many eighteenth-century collections, not all of these generic *Beauties* are strictly speaking anthologies of extracts.

Many are travel books or critical narratives, which highlight and discuss 'beauties' rather than extract and anthologise them. What these texts most effectively illustrate, is the inculcation of the term 'beauties' within the cultural arena, and its application, in the end, to just about anything and anyone.

These books also suggest that the critical discourse of beauties and faults, excellencies and defects, was still current and a matter of debate in the nineteenth century. In the *Biographia Literaria* of 1817, Samuel Taylor Coleridge echoes the preference for beauties over faults discernible in Addison and Pope nearly a century earlier:

He who tells me that there are *defects* in a new work, tells me nothing which I should not have taken for granted without his information. But he, who points out and elucidates the *beauties* of an original work, does indeed give me interesting information, such as experience would not have authorised me in anticipating.⁵⁷

Coleridge also testifies to the popularity of compilations and collections which have sprung from the pointing out, and extraction of, such beauties:

For when the name of an individual has occurred too frequently, in so many works, for so great a length of time, the readers of these works (which with a shelf or two of BEAUTIES, ELEGANT EXTRACTS and ANAS, form nine-tenths of the reading of the reading public) cannot but be familiar with the name, without distinctly remembering whether it was introduced for an eulogy or for censure.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Biographia Literaria or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, ed. by James Engall and W. Jackson Bate, 2 vols (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), i, p. 62

⁵⁸ Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* i, p. 48.

Books of 'Beauties' and similar compilations, states Coleridge, account for 'nine-tenths of the reading of the reading public'. The index-reading and skipping and dipping which had become fashionable in the eighteenth century was now so prevalent that it dominated reading methods and reading matter in the nineteenth century. Alongside the already numerous anthologies which used the title of 'Beauties', other similar collections began to emerge, like those of 'Elegant Extracts' which emulated Knox's collection of the same name, and collections of 'Gems' and 'Specimens'. As Charles Lamb wrote to Thomas Manning on 26 February 1808, referring to his own forthcoming collection of *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*:

Specimens are becoming fashionable. We have *Specimens of Ancient English Poets*, *Specimens of Modern English Poets*, *Specimens of Ancient English Prose Writers* without end. They used to be called *Beauties*. You have seen *Beauties of Shakespeare*; so have many people that never saw any beauties in Shakespeare.⁵⁹

Collections of *Specimens* replaced those of *Beauties*; collections of *Gems* appeared in turn, and the trend showed no sign of abating in 1860, when the reviewer in the *Athenaeum* remarked that 'It might have been fancied that the days of "Beauties", "Gems", "Anthologies" were over'.⁶⁰ The literary and moral value of the eighteenth-century 'beauty' is converted in the nineteenth century to the status of a literary treasure, a 'gem', something precious and to be coveted. Yet these collections of 'Gems' were subject to the same criticisms as those of 'Beauties': the editorial interference of the

⁵⁹ Charles Lamb, *The Letters of Charles Lamb*, ed. by Alfred Ainger, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1888), i, p. 244.

compiler as literary arbiter and mediator denies individual aesthetic or literary judgement. Such concerns were given added weight and importance in the nineteenth century, when the selecting and editing of extracts for the benefit of the reader was taken to a new level with the activities of the infamous Bowdler family.

It is ironic, and perhaps fitting, that the authorial subject on the receiving end of Dr. Bowdler's editorial activities was Shakespeare, the first author to be edited and extracted in an author-orientated collection of 'Beauties'. It was Harriet Bowdler who first edited Shakespeare for her *Family Shakespeare* in 1807. Noel Perrin notes that Harriet weeded the plays, 'keeping what she regarded as the flowers, and pulling the nettles with unsparing hand and with the very highest motives'.⁶¹ The first edition was published anonymously, but the name of Harriet's brother Thomas appeared on the title page of the second edition, to protect Harriet's identity. In time, Thomas Bowdler took over Harriet's expurgation of Shakespeare and became the new editor of the *Family Shakespeare* in 1817.⁶² Thomas did not always agree with his sister's editorial decisions, and so he restored some passages that she had cut while omitting many hundreds which Harriet had not, discovering 'many new improprieties in passages she had dealt with'.⁶³ Perrin describes Bowdler's editorial methodology as follows:

He cut out of Shakespeare's plays everything "which may not with propriety be read aloud in a family," meaning most overt sexual and religious allusions. True to his medical training, he then neatly stitched the loose ends across each cut, so as to avoid scars. He substituted very few of his own

⁶⁰ See chapter 1, p. 2, above.

⁶¹ See chapter 2, p. 109, n. 121 above.

⁶² Perrin, *Dr. Bowdler's Legacy*, pp. 77-80.

⁶³ Perrin, *Dr. Bowdler's Legacy*, p. 82.

words for Shakespeare's, and he neither abridged nor (with rare exceptions) added commentary.⁶⁴

Bowdler was an expurgator rather than an anthologist, but as this description highlights, he shared some similar preoccupations with the anthologists and compilers who edited Shakespeare in the eighteenth century. Both Shakespeare's eighteenth-century editors and Bowdler were concerned with producing a domesticated, more readerly 'Shakespeare', and in doing so, omitted any bawdy or offensive allusions. Although Bowdler's intention was to produce an edition of Shakespeare which would seem complete, with any omissions virtually imperceptible, while eighteenth-century anthologies of *Beauties* provided a selection of extracts which were severed from one another and marked as distinct by virtue of the headings attached to them, Bowdler's methodology derives partly from that employed by eighteenth-century anthologists. Bowdler's stitching together of the text is reminiscent of the internal editing of extracts in the *Beauties* of Sterne or Fielding, where often disjointed passages are joined together to disguise the omission of unsuitable material. While not actively expurgators or censors, the editorial activities of eighteenth-century anthologists can be seen to pave the way for more radical editorial activity and authorial appropriation in the climate of 'new literary morality' which appeared in the early-nineteenth century.⁶⁵ 'Beauties' are no longer extracted from their original context and transferred into a new one, instead they form the body of the remaining text and it is the moral defects which are culled.

Bowdler's *Family Shakespeare* applies the editorial practices of the eighteenth-century anthologising of authors such as Shakespeare, Sterne, or Swift, but does

⁶⁴ Perrin, *Dr. Bowdler's Legacy*, p. xii.

so in a format which avoided the criticism levelled at such texts regarding the encouragement of index-reading and pre-selected extracts which hinder the reader's judgement. What Bowdler offers is undoubtedly a mediated Shakespeare coloured by his opinion of what is unsuitable for family reading. Yet Bowdler also offers a sustained reading experience where the plot can be followed, characters and locations are indicated, and each play has a sense of 'completeness' which a selection of extracts does not. The *Edinburgh Review* praised Bowdler's text, expressing the view, that 'it is better in every way, that what cannot be spoken and ought not to have been written, should cease to be printed.'⁶⁶ The eighteenth-century desire to anthologise and edit authors to render them more suitable for young, female, or sensitive readers, thus reached a kind of fruition in the nineteenth century when Thomas Bowdler completed his domestication of Shakespeare in the *Family Shakespeare*. The authorial appropriation of Shakespeare which began with Dodd, and which was continued by Kearsley in his anthology, is reappropriated once again to meet the demands and expectations of a changing and developing readership and literary culture. By the nineteenth century, the critical preference for beauties over faults is confirmed, with faults readily expurgated from texts and beauties retained. The belief that a text should be viewed as a whole as expressed by Johnson, Sterne, Fielding, Swift, and Goldsmith, is now completely overturned with the writings of Sterne, Fielding, and Swift not being simply recontextualised in anthologies, but published as expurgated volumes in turn.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Perrin, *Dr. Bowdler's Legacy*, p. 5.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Perrin, *Dr. Bowdler's Legacy*, p. 84.

⁶⁷ Perrin notes that Fielding, Sterne and Swift were each 'duly expurgated before the century ended'; *Dr*

III

Conclusion

The influence of Kearsley and of the *Beauties* tradition in general did not end with the nineteenth century. Just as the *Beauties of Shakespeare* continued to be reprinted until the twentieth century, the effects of the tradition are still to be observed. The *Oxford English Dictionary*, for example, under the second definition of the plural of 'Beauty' reads: 'In the titles of collections of the beautiful or choice passages of a writer or speaker, or examples of art'. Beneath is cited the usage of the term in a number of such collections including the *Beauties of the English Stage* in 1737, the *Beauties of Shakespear* in 1752, and the *Beauties of English Poesy* in 1767. That the titles of such collections provides a modern reader with an illustration of a usage for the word 'beauties' confirms the historical influence of the tradition in tracing the usage of the word. For while there have been few collections of literary *Beauties* published since the nineteenth century (a *Beauties of Dryden* is the one notable exception⁶⁸), and few collections of 'Gems' or 'Specimens', many similar anthologies of extracts are published each year. Collections compiling the 'wit and wisdom' or 'sayings' of various authors are still popular. A modern collection of *The Sayings of Doctor Johnson*, for example, arranges its contents under headings such as 'Books and Authors', 'Women and Marriage', 'Politics' or 'Death', just as the *Beauties of Johnson* did.⁶⁹ Although smaller in scope and content, this collection, published in 1990, perpetuates the image of Johnson as a writer of bon mots, pithy comments, maxims and

Bowdler's Legacy, p. 6.

⁶⁸ *The Beauties of Dryden*, ed. by David Hopkins and Tom Mason (Bristol: Bristol Classical, 1982).

⁶⁹ *The Sayings of Doctor Johnson* ed. by Brenda O'Casey (London: Duckworth, 1990).

truisms in much the same way as Kearsley's anthology represented Johnson over two hundred years earlier. Some maxims anthologised by Kearsley are even replicated in the modern collection. Johnson's observation in his 'Life of Pope' that 'the death of great men is not always proportioned to the lustre of their lives' is included in both selections. So too is the remark from *Rambler* number seventy-five that:

To neglect at any time preparation for death is to sleep on our post at a siege; but to omit it in old age is to sleep at an attack.

Not only are both quotations included in both collections but both are placed beneath the heading of 'Death' in turn. Similarly, under the heading of 'Marriage' both include the observation 'that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy' from *Rambler* number forty-five, and also, 'Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures', from *Rasselas*. That such extracts are replicated in this way illustrates the enduring image of Johnson as a writer of wisdom literature, and dispenser of maxims; an image in part created and perpetuated by anthologies such as Kearsley's *Beauties of Johnson*. The authorial appropriation of Johnson within the anthology has remained an influential strategy which is as prevalent today as it was in 1781.

Undoubtedly the authorial representation of the other authors anthologised in Kearsley's series have not remained so relevant. Changing attitudes to discourses of the sentimental for example, have altered modern perceptions of Sterne's authorial identity. Readers are no longer likely to be unable to sustain the close proximity of his sentimental episodes and his *Sermons* are much less popular today than in the eighteenth century.

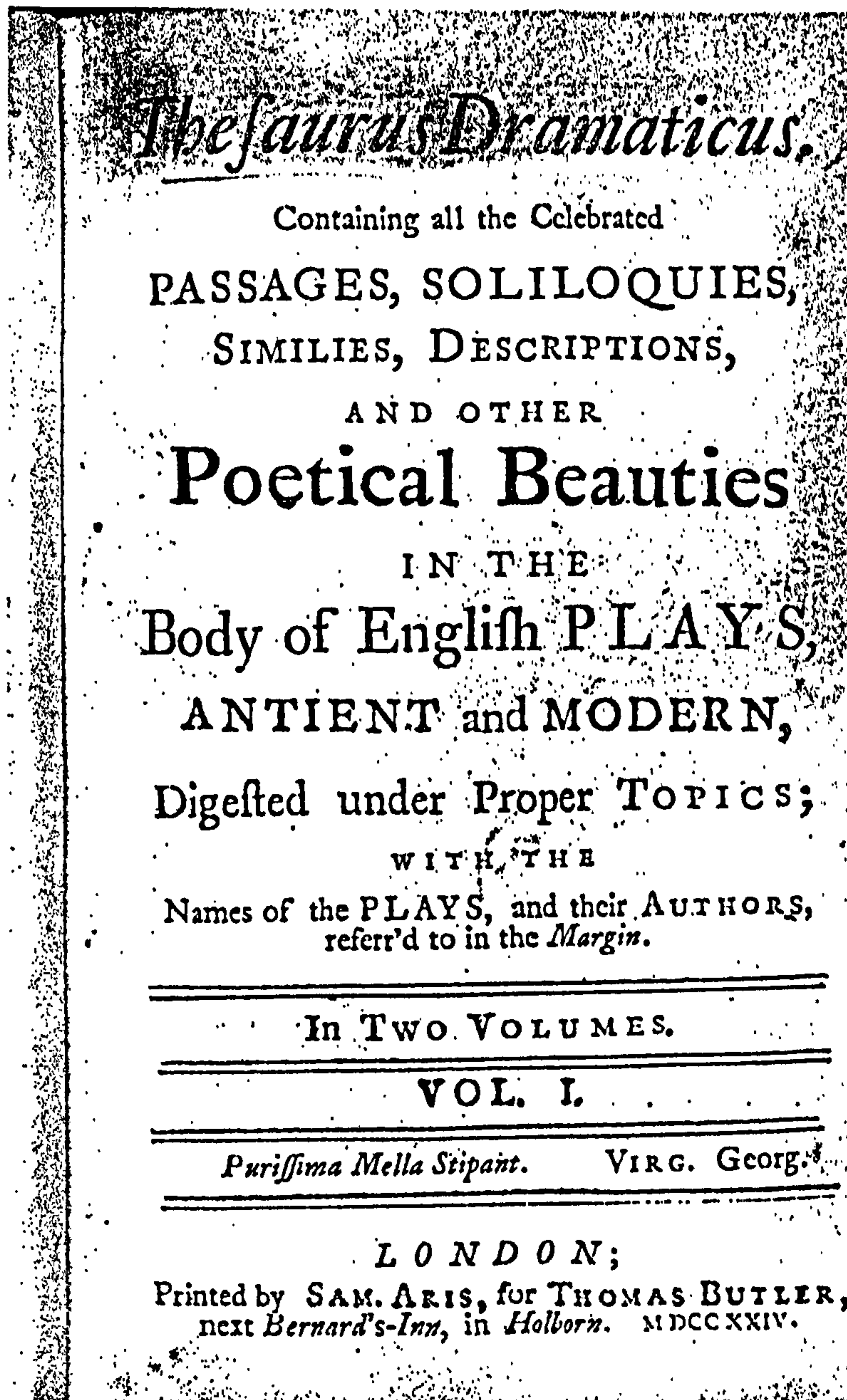
Indeed, Sterne, Fielding, and Swift, while each recognised as moralists in their own particular ways, are more often viewed as humorists, their authorial personae now the opposite from those which Kearsley aimed to create in his selections. Kearsley's anthologising of 'beauties' has, however, influenced ongoing processes of anthologising, and emphasises the means by which such publications can alter or respond to the cultural and social climate in which they are produced. Anthologies not only try to influence their readers but respond to their readers' demands. Kearsley's collections sought to educate young readers and make these authors who were often inaccessible due to the nature of their work, accessible to a wider audience, while stressing the morality of the various authors and the lessons and maxims they had to impart. In doing so, they edited, arranged, and appropriated their contents in order to refashion and reinvent the authorial identities of their subjects, creating images of moral writers of moral maxims. However, these collections also responded to the eighteenth-century desire for literature to promote morality and instigate a reformation of manners, and represented each author in light of current expectations of authorship, which was a predominantly Johnsonian one. As the various editions of the *Beauties of Sterne* illustrated, Kearsley's *Beauties* could also reinvent themselves by changing their contents to reflect more accurately the changing attitudes to an author or subject matter. Although the format and arrangement of such collections encouraged what Benedict suggests is a 'homogenized reader', perhaps what results is not so much an homogenized reader, as methodology of reading. While each reader was encouraged to skip and dip through the anthology's contents, this approach created the potential for each reader to read the extracts in different orders and in different ways. The collections could be approached chronologically or in a random and haphazard

fashion; in contrast the pervading authorial appropriation remained constant. Although the structure and arrangement of these anthologies seems to call for such an approach to reading, it is difficult to provide substantial evidence for such reading patterns. What can be ascertained more concretely is the kind of authorial representation the reader was offered, regardless of the manner in which the collection was read. Through their editing, extracting, arranging and abridging, these collections attempt to create homogenized authors, authors whose differences are eliminated along with their various adopted identities, structural particularities, obscurities and obscurities. Moreover, the thematic headings, common structure, arrangement, and titular affiliation with the *Beauties* tradition, create a sense of unity and intertextuality between the various authors. The reduction of their works to a series of commonplaces encourages a sense of commonality and universality.

By adopting and expanding upon the early forms of literary collection and imitating their formats and manner of repackaging their contents, the compilers of *Beauties* anthologies developed the genre to reflect eighteenth-century concerns and ideas of authorship. Aligning their contents with the prominent critical discourse of beauties and faults, collections of *Beauties* illustrated their contemporary relevance and topicality, offering their readers a way in which to buy into, and participate in, literary culture. The *Beauties* tradition was, therefore, a significant and influential strand of eighteenth-century anthologising: its editorial techniques and concerns providing an insight into the ways in which literature was repackaged and disseminated to an expanding reading public. The development of the tradition from Dodd's critically orientated *Beauties of Shakespear*, to the more morally orientated *Beauties* published by Kearsley, also illustrates the

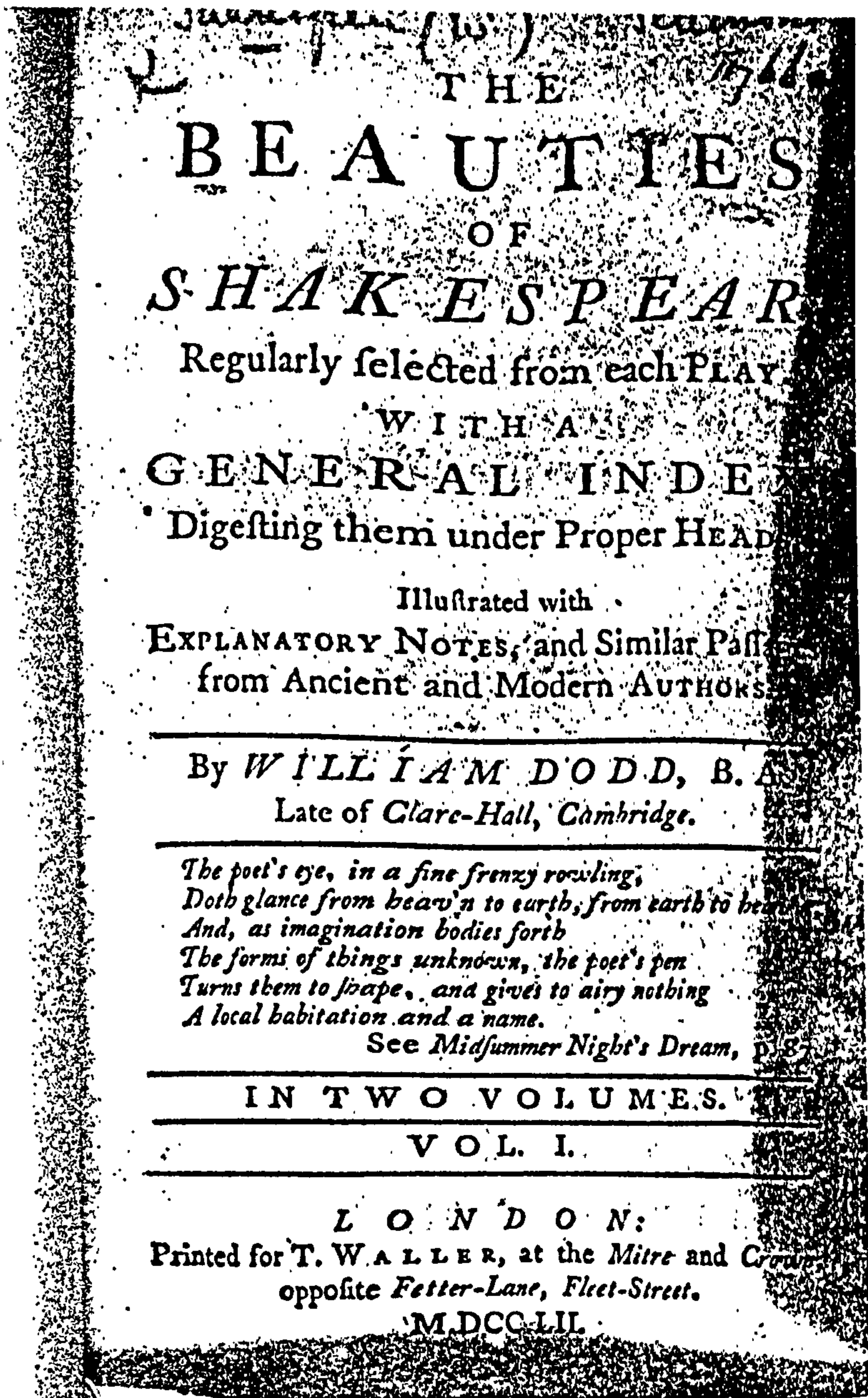
eighteenth-century's changing approaches to ideas of authorship, the ways in which the various writers are anthologised highlighting a discernible and consistent editorial methodology. In what Johnson termed 'an age of authors', the anthologising of authorship within the *Beauties* tradition saw Shakespeare, Johnson, Sterne, Fielding, Swift, and Goldsmith, repackaged as exemplary authors.⁷⁰ Navigating and negotiating through a maze of authorial ambiguity they present their moral and aesthetic 'beauties' as central to the attainment of literary culture for all eighteenth-century readers without distinction.

⁷⁰ Johnson, *Adventurer*, No. 115, *Works*, vii, p. 457.



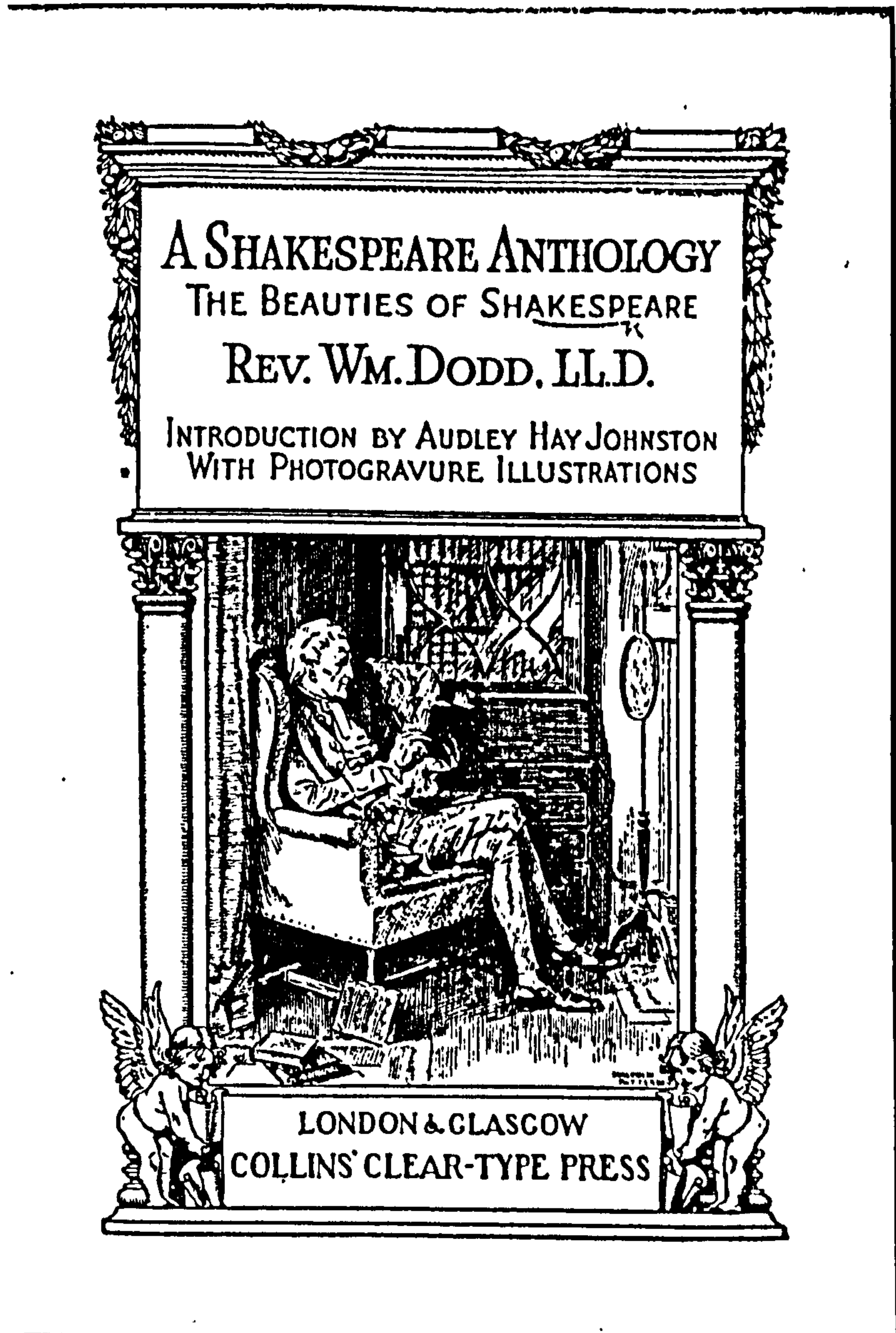
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Facsimile of the title page of the *Thesaurus Dramaticus* (1724)



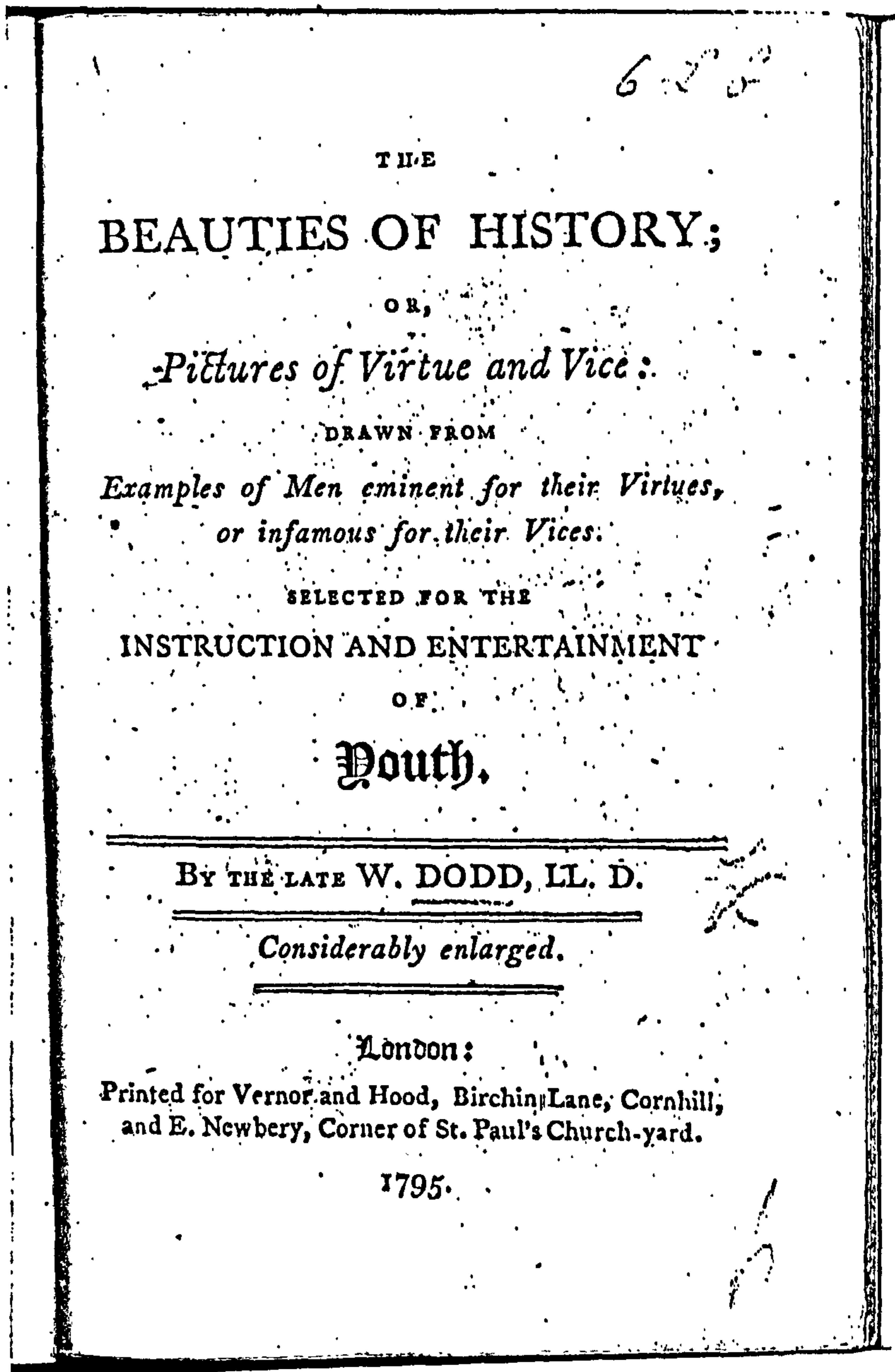
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Facsimile of the title page of the first edition of William Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespear* (1752)



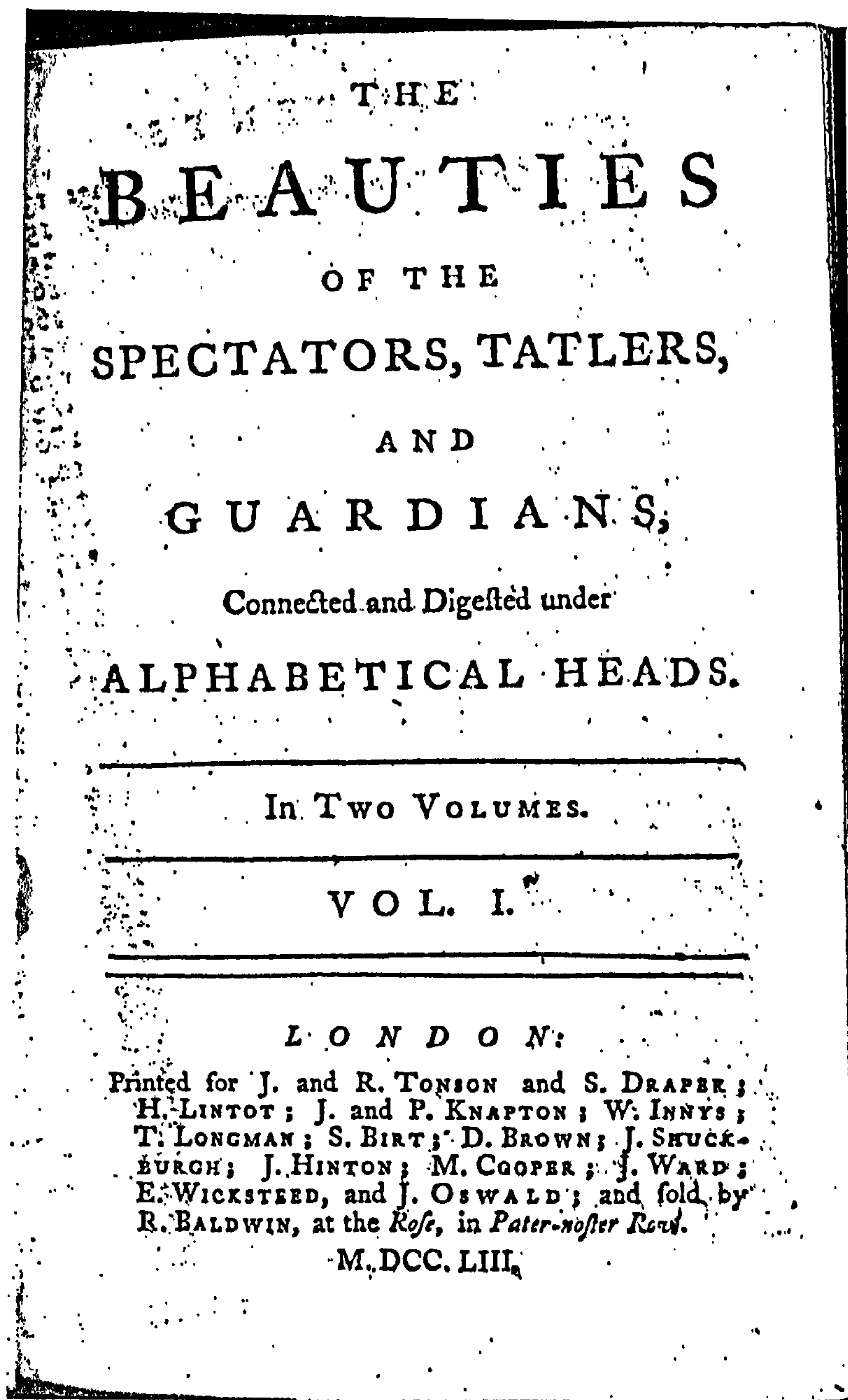
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Facsimile of the title page of the Collins Clear Type edition of Dodd's *Beauties of Shakespeare* (1936)



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Facsimile of the title page of Dodd's *Beauties of History* (1795)



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Facsimile of the title page of *The Beauties of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians* (1753)

T H E
BEAUTIES OF JOHNSON:
 CONSISTING OF
MAXIMS AND OBSERVATIONS,
 MORAL, CRITICAL, AND MISCELLANEOUS,
 BY
DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

{Accurately extracted from his works, and arranged in
 Alphabetical Order, after the manner of the Duke de
 la ROCHE-FORCAULT's Maxims.}

" We frequently fall into error and folly, not because the true principles
 " of action are not known, but because for a time they are not re-
 " membered: he may therefore be justly numbered among the bene-
 " factors of mankind, who CONTRACTS THE GREAT RULES OF
 " LIFE INTO SHORT SENTENCES, that may be easily impressed
 " on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habi-
 " tually to the mind."

RAMBLER.

L O N D O N:

Printed for G. KEARSLEY, at No. 46, in Fleet-street.
 M.DCC.LXXXI.

[actual size]

Facsimile of the title page of the first edition of the *Beauties of Johnson* (1781)

Fac-simile of Doctor Johnson's hand writing.)

Mr Johnson sends compliments to Mr Kearsley
and begs the favour of seeing him as soon as he can.
Mr Kearsley is desired to bring with ^{him} the best edition of
what he has honoured with the name of Beauché's

May 20. 1782

[actual size]

Facsimile of the letter written by Samuel Johnson to George Kearsley, 20 May 1782

T H E
 BEAUTIES OF STERNE:

INCLUDING ALL HIS

P A T H E T I C T A L E S,

AND MOST DISTINGUISHED

O B S E R V A T I O N S O N L I F E.

SELECTED FOR THE

HEART OF SENSIBILITY.

Dear, SENSIBILITY! source inexhausted of all that's precious
 in our joys, or costly in our sorrows! thou chainest thy martyr
 down upon his bed of straw!—and 'tis thou who lifts him up
 to HEAVEN!—Eternal fountain of our feelings! 'tis here
 I trace thee. SEN. JOURNEY, P. 226.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. DAVIES, RUSSEL-STREET, COVENT-
 GARDEN; J. RIDLEY, ST. JAMES'S-STREET; W.
 FLEXNEY, HOLBORN; J. SEWELL, CORN-
 HILL; AND G. KEARSLEY, FLEET-
 STREET.——1782.

[actual size]

Facsimile of the title page of the first edition of the *Beauties of Sterne* (1782)

THE TENTH EDITION,
ENLARGED AND ORNAMENTED WITH PLATES,
FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS.

THE
BEAUTIES OF STERNE;

INCLUDING SEVERAL OF HIS

LETTERS,

ALL HIS

PATHETIC TALES,
HUMOROUS DESCRIPTIONS,

AND MOST DISTINGUISHED

OBSERVATIONS ON LIFE.

SELECTED FOR THE HEART OF

SENSIBILITY.

Dear Sensibility! source inexhausted of all that's precious
in our joys, or costly in our sorrows! thou chainest thy
martyr down upon his bed of straw—and 'tis thou who
lifts him up to HEAVEN! ——— Eternal fountain of
our feelings! 'tis here I trace thee.

S. Journey, p. 226.

L O N D O N:

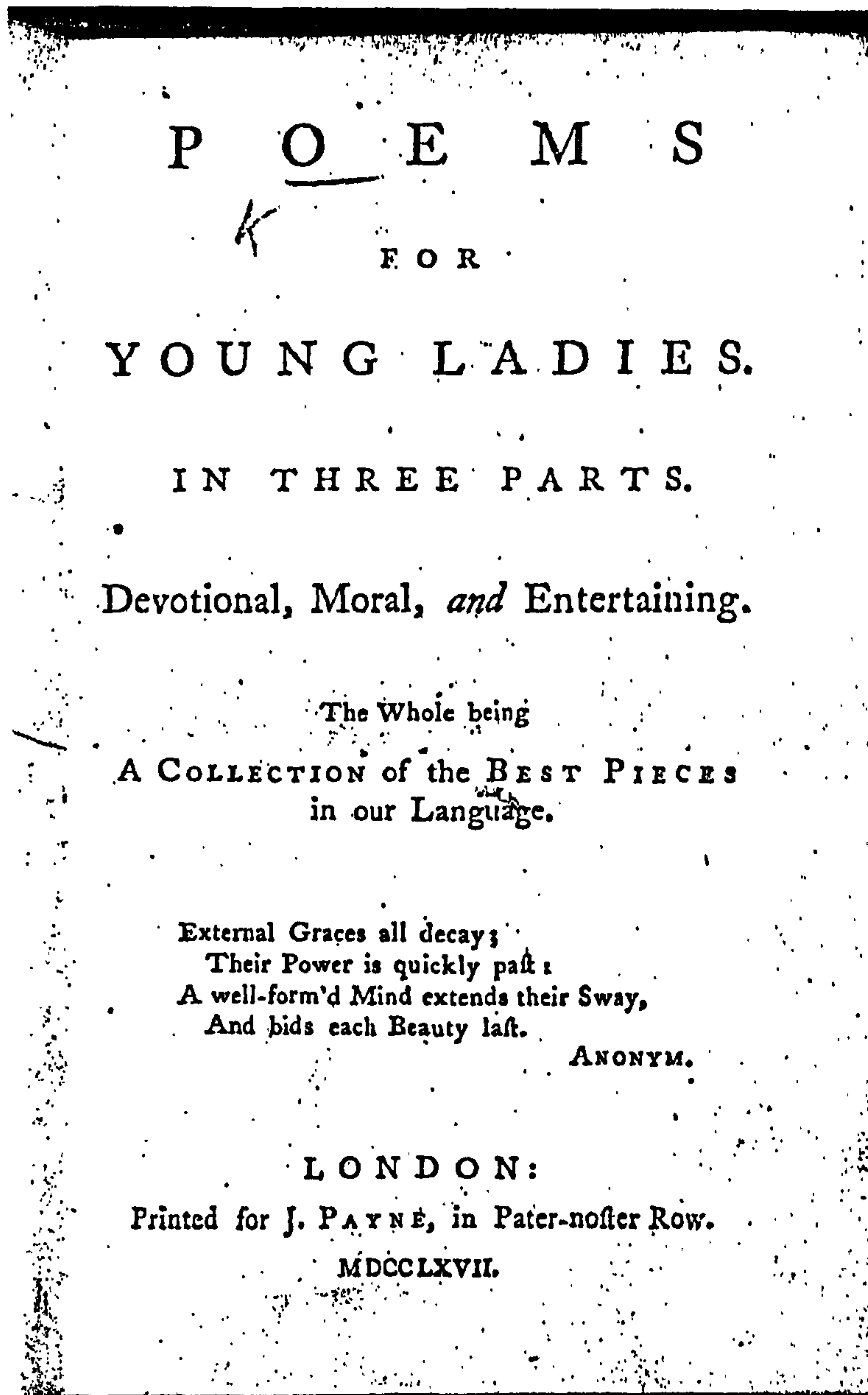
PRINTED FOR G. KEARSLEY, AT JOHNSON'S-HEAD,
IN FLEET-STREET.

M, DCC, LXXXVII.

Price THREE SHILLINGS and SIX-PENCE few'd.

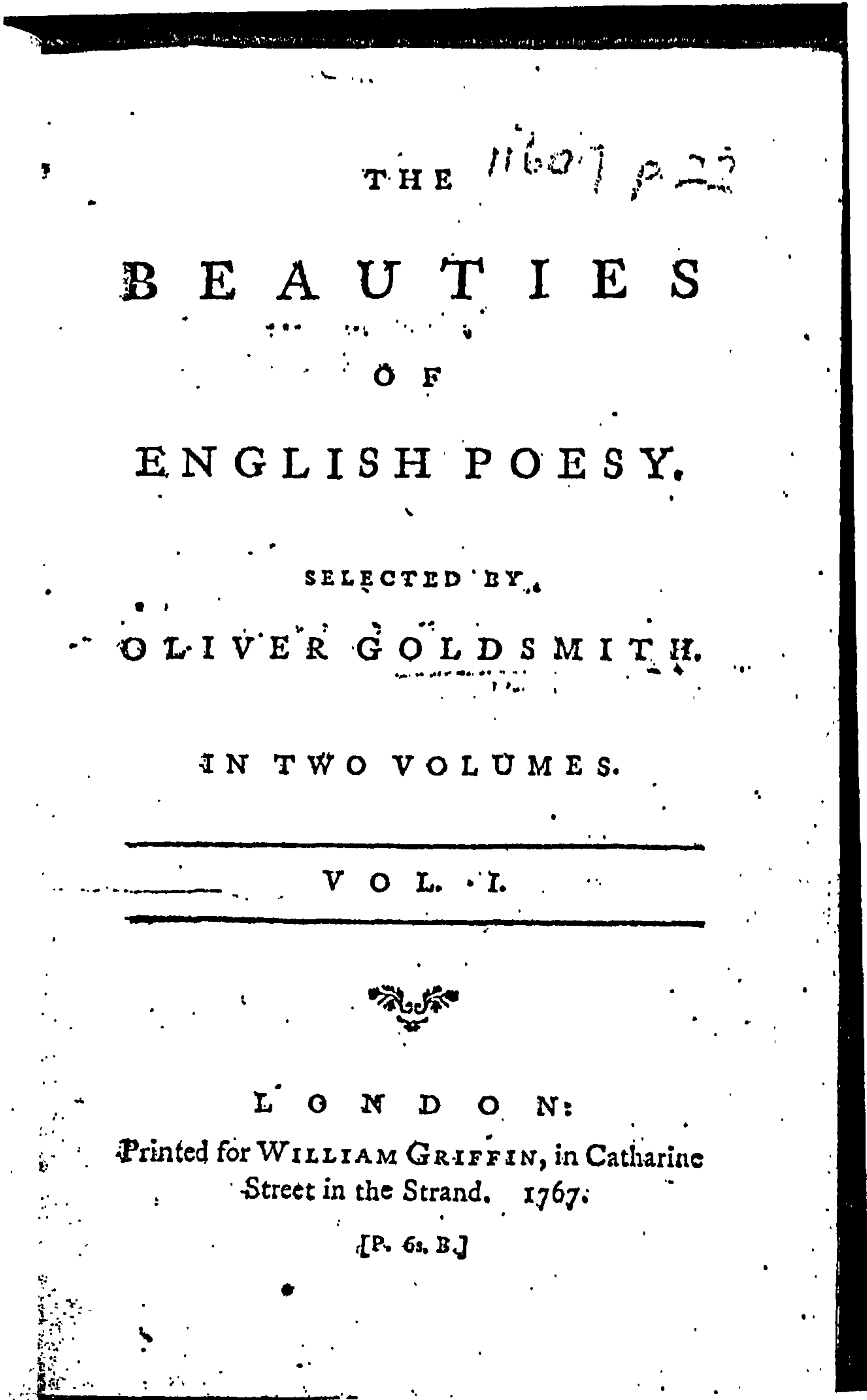
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Facsimile of the title page of the tenth edition of the *Beauties of Sterne* (1787)

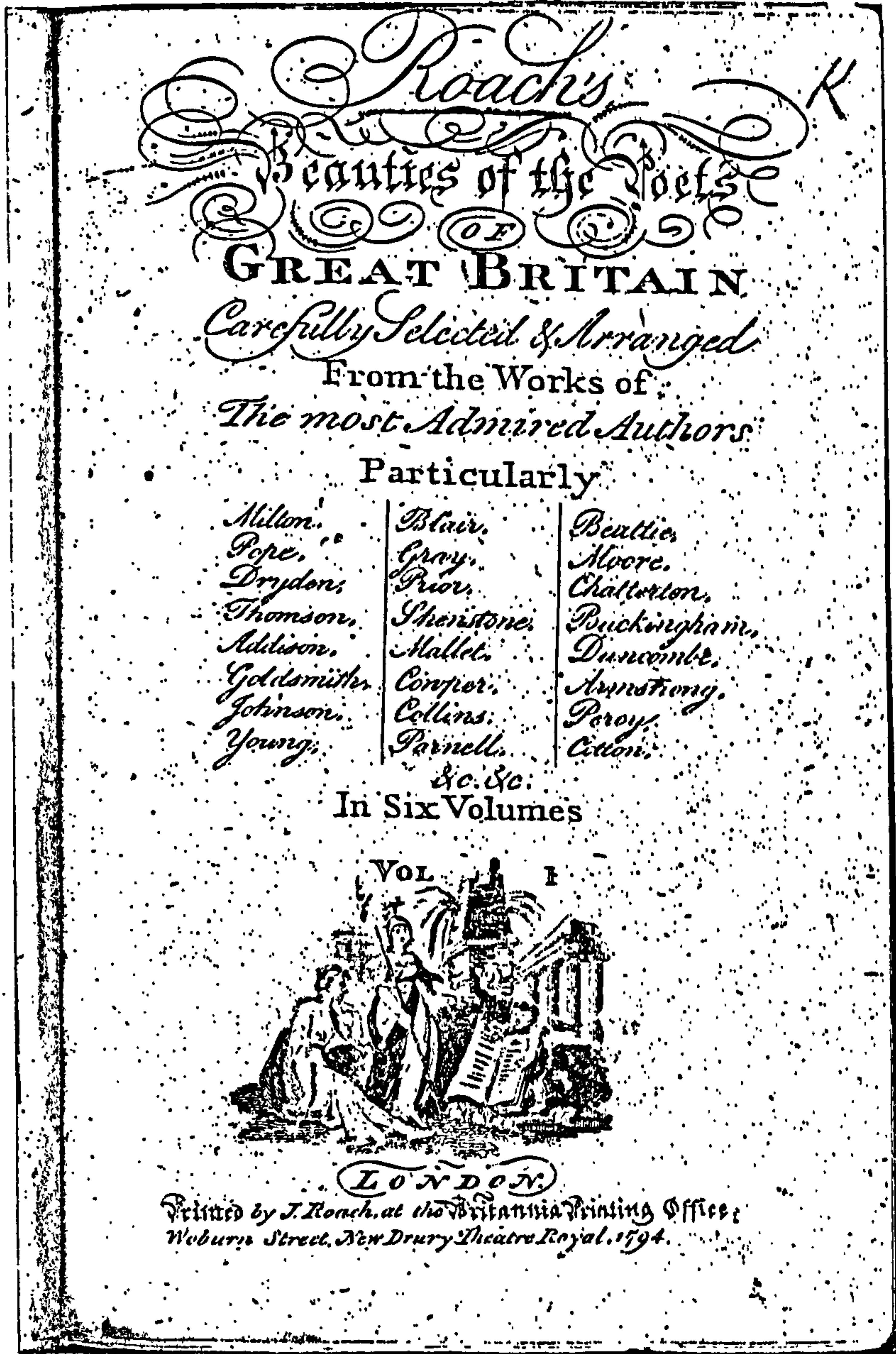


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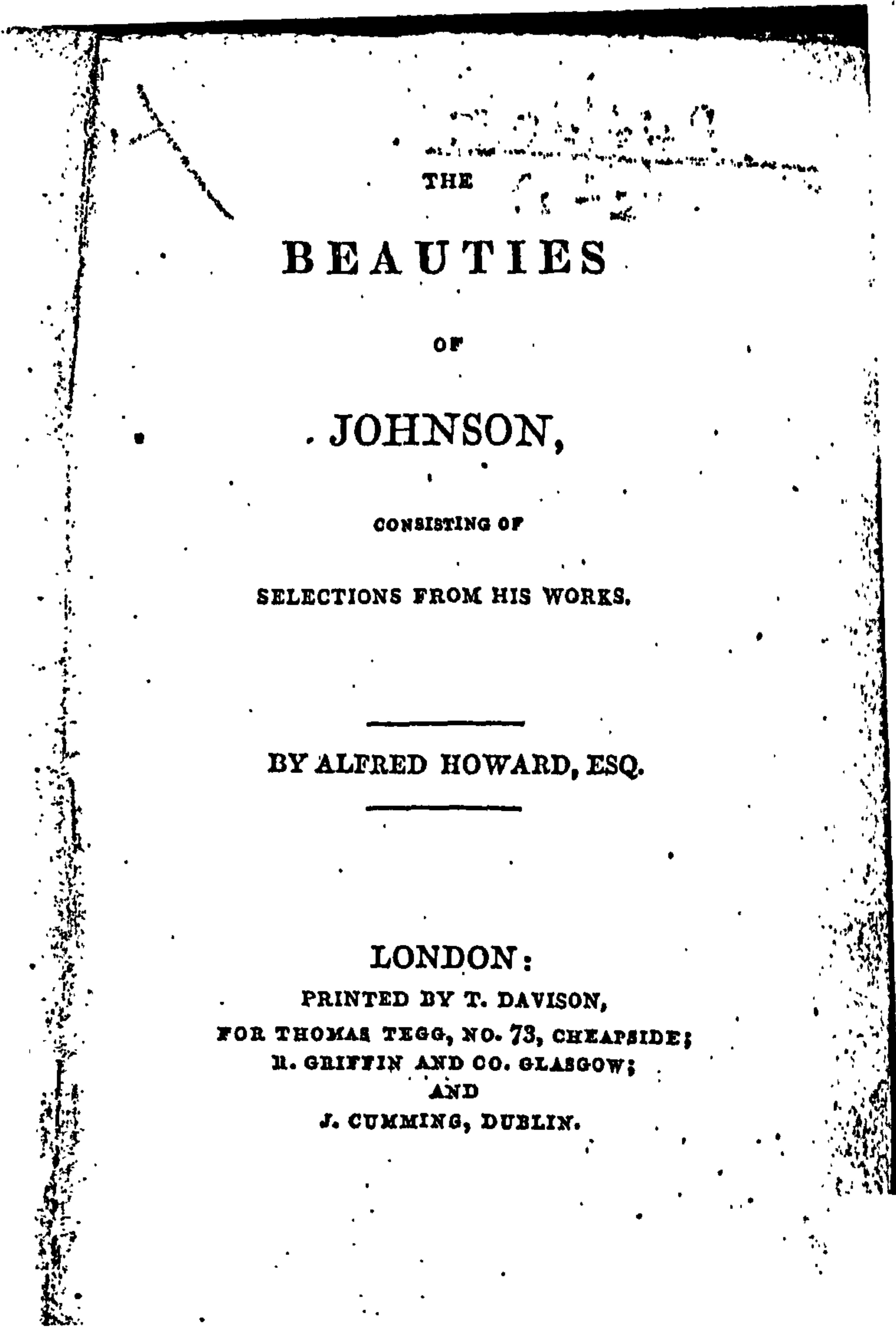
Facsimile of the title page of Oliver Goldsmith's *Poems for Young Ladies* (1766)



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Facsimile of the title page of Goldsmith's *Beauties of English Poesy* (1767)

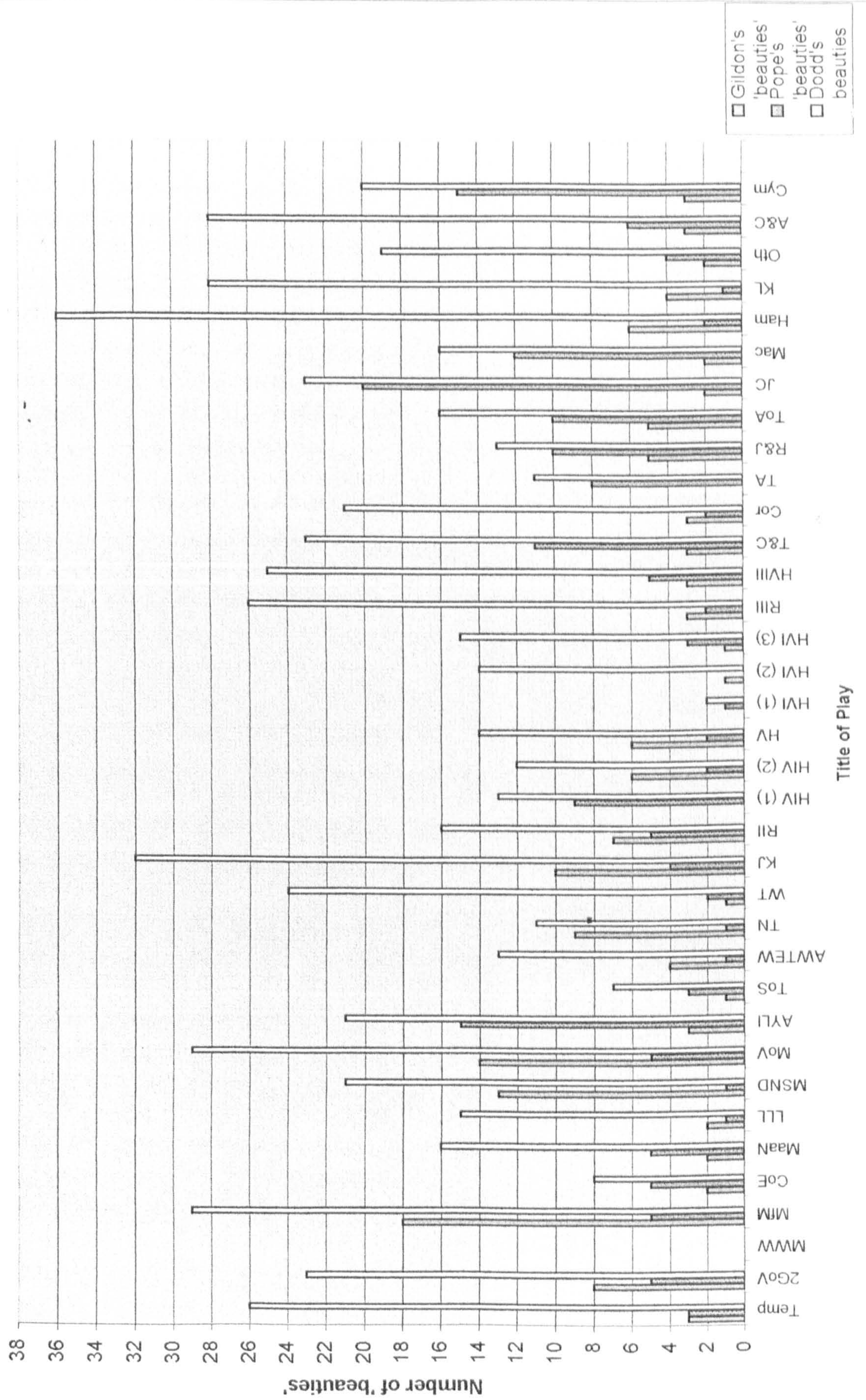


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 Facsimile of the title page of Roach's *Beauties of the Poets of Great Britain* (1794)

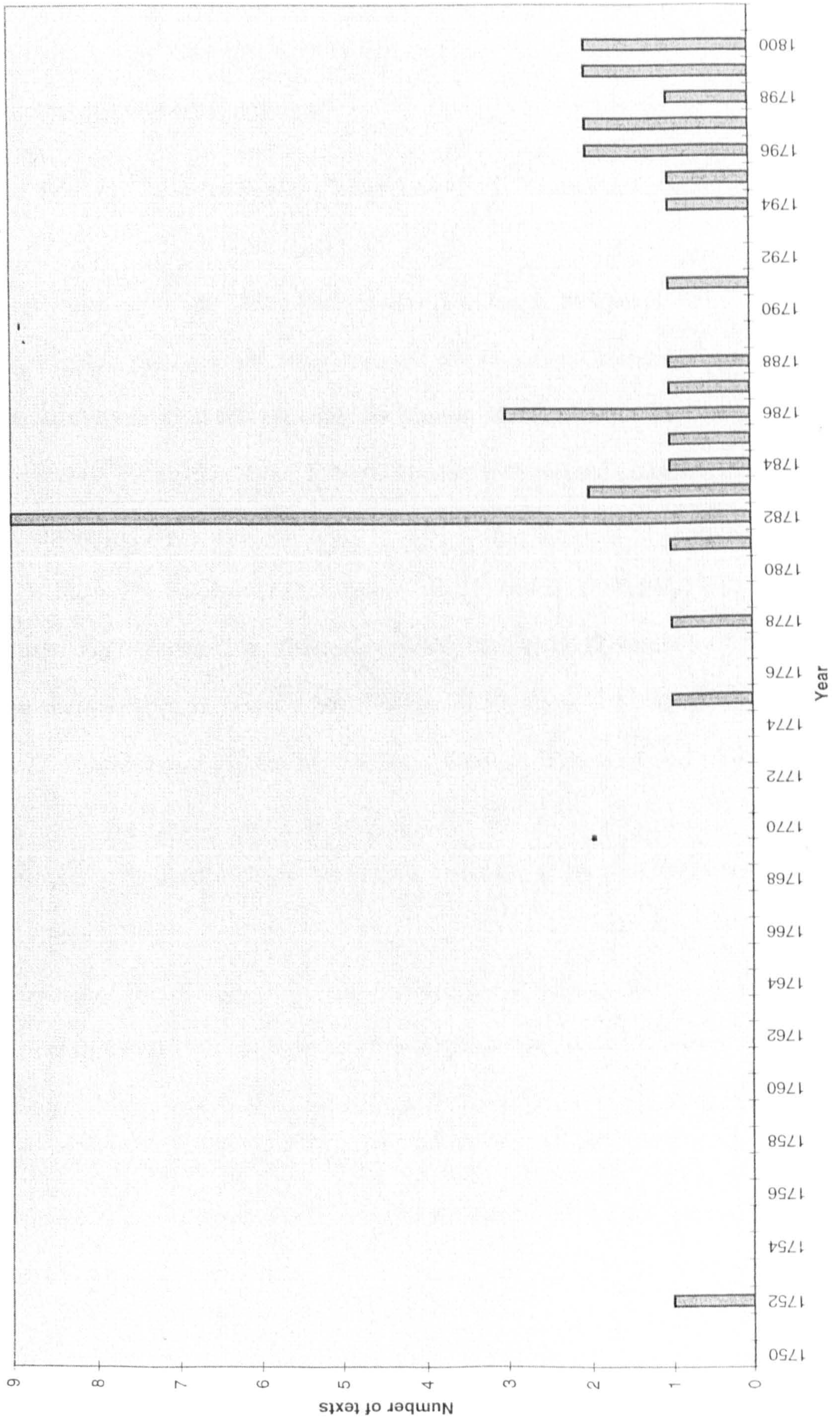


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Facsimile of the title page of Tegg's *Beauties of Johnson* (1830)

Graph to illustrate the number of Shakespeare's 'beauties' highlighted/selected by Pope, Gildon and Dodd



Initial publication of individual-orientated 'Beauties of...' texts



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