NATHAN DRAKE:
PREROMANTICIST CRITIC.

By
Alison Croom Cowling

A thesis presented to the faculty of The Rice Institute in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

March, 1946.
FOREWORD

The author wishes to express her indebtedness to Professor A. D. McKillop of The Rice Institute for his suggestion of this topic and for his advice as to the significant points in Drake's literary criticism. Whatever merits are herein apparent are therefore due to Professor McKillop's never-failing help and instruction. The defects remain the responsibility of the author.

A. C. Cowling
TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Preliminary discussion of the most significant aspects of Drake as a "forerunner of the romantic movement." . . . . . 1

II. Drake as a critic of eighteenth century poetry and its background. . . . . . . 5

III. Drake as a critic of Shakespeare . . . . . . . . 71

IV. Conclusion: Analysis of Drake's position in literary criticism . . . . . . . . 82

V. Bibliography and Appendix. . . . . . . . . . . 84
NATHAN DRAKE:
PREROMANTICIST CRITIC

I.

The year 1798 saw not only the publication of the momentous *Lyrical Ballads*, but also that of Nathan Drake's *Literary Hours*. Drake had previously published a small volume of original poems: chiefly odes closely imitative of Collins and Gray, with such titles as "Ode to Superstition" and "Ode to Pity." Being by birth the son of an artist, and by profession a physician, Drake was not also granted poetic ability in the creative sense. He is of interest principally as an eighteenth century critic, who in his reflective essays on various phases of literature, presents himself as a remarkable and undeviating advocate of new trends in the theory of poetical composition which are now known as "pre-romantic."

That preromanticism does not proclaim itself loudly in Drake's works, but rather must be gleaned from the very texture of his writing, will be evident to a careful reader. In his own time Drake was openly condemned by his reviewers for his most apparent weaknesses: love of the "terrible" and the "gigantic" in poetry. In Drake's essays we find not only the leading features of preromanticism but also other currents of eighteenth century literary criticism. For example, as we shall soon see in detail, the following subjects were in crucial discussion:

---

imitation of the ancients (particularly as it "weakened" the poetry of the moderns), Miltonic and Spenserian imitation, the relative advantages of blank verse and of the rhymed couplet, adherence to the three unities or to nature (as in Shakespeare), the "natural" poet as distinguished from the "artful" poet influenced especially by the examples of Ossian, Homer, and the Scandinavian Scalds), personal expression of actual experiences (or, reminiscences), and most important, the advantages of the new poetic model gained through the growing knowledge of medieval and Germanic literature.

"Drake's acquaintance with eighteenth century English translations from the Norse appears to have been more thorough than that of any other Englishman of his time, -- and probably of any since his time . . . ."2 As Farley also points out, Drake made no pretense of learning, -- he merely presents his own impressions, those of a "lay scholar," -- and several significant pieces of verse, as far as the history of Norse influence is concerned, escaped his notice. But the fact remains, that the most important poems and editions did not escape him; indeed, they are very much in evidence in his essays.

Mallet, Pelloutier, Hickes, Percy, Brooke, Evans, Turgot, Sir William Jones, and Carlyle are among many references which Drake specifically mentions. This partial list indicates the close link, in Drake's opinion, between the Oriental, Celtic and Gothic literatures. This belief is prominent in his discussion

2Farley, op. cit., p. 144.
of the origins of the romantic drama, as "founded" by Shake-
speare, as well as in his treatments of Ossian and of medieval
romances. These points have been brought out briefly to show
the scope of Drake's criticism and to form a sort of index to
the ideas to be detailed in the succeeding pages.

In style, Drake's "honest enthusiasm," as Farley phrases
it, is counterbalanced by a tedious prolixity, occasional
grotesqueness, a rather sentimental or irrational attachment to
certain topics and theories, and above all by a doubtful un-
dependable standard of literary excellence.

This last-named, only too prominent feature of Drake's
style forms a serious threat to his value as a critic, since
such a statement as that Darwin's Botanic Garden equals Dante's
Divine Comedy in the display of "an imagination wild and terrific,"
or that Cumberland's Calvary is an epic to be ranked next only
to Milton's Paradise Lost are not easily dismissed from serious
consideration. However it may be contended, successfully it is
to be hoped, that usually Drake acts under a definable influence
in eighteenth century literary criticism, and nearly always
redeems himself by expressing considerations both pro and con
in any given discussion.

We shall here consider Drake's views of poetry alone, and
omit those references of so technical a nature as would be im-
practical to attempt to include in this thesis. In explanation,
it may be said that such technical references and studies as
Drake makes, have been more recently and thoroughly done by
more specialized writers. The chief value of Drake's essays
is the "preromantic" approach to poetry therein manifested. Lest this preromanticism we claim for Drake seem paradoxical in view of the fact that his essays in publication cover the period from 1798 to 1828 and therefore might seem more "romantic" than "preromantic," it must be emphasized that Burns, Byron, Scott, Coleridge and Southey are the only "romantic" poets given even a semblance of systematic consideration. Therefore Drake's essential characteristics remain those of preromanticism.
II.

At the very beginning of his discussions of Gothic superstition, Drake distinguishes the "vulgar" Gothic from the regular mythology of the Edda, chiefly as regards: (1) the "awful ministration" of the ghost or spectre, and (2) the "innocent gambols" of the fairy. The enchanted forest of Tasso, the spectre of Camoens, and the apparitions of Shakespeare are cited as examples of this vulgar Gothic. This mode of superstition, assimilated with the universal apprehension of superior agency, gives "considerable latitude to the imagination" and yet contains "more rationality than any other species of fabling." At the same time it depends on no particular mythology, so that "in the present metaphysical period" it still has "such a degree of credit" as to make it "an important and impressive machine beneath the guidance of genuine poesy."\(^1\)

Van Tieghem, a propos of this subject writes:

"What is genuinely preromantic is this. More than in the intimate nature of man and in picturesque nature itself, true poetry must search for its inspiration and often its models in the poetry of primitive, barbaric, or at least half-civilized peoples. The true dwelling of poetry (according to preromanticist theory) is in the primitive ages of humanity.\(^2\)

Thus the superiority of Homer resulted from the fact that he spoke of what he had actually felt himself, the two dominant

\(^1\) Literary Hours, (London, 1798), p. 88.
\(^2\) P. 89.
\(^3\) P. Van Tieghem. Le Preromantisme (Paris, 1924), p. 34.
characteristics of ancient poetry being "naiveté" and "sincérité."4

Enthusiasm and original genius took the places of good sense and wit; natural goodness as found in retired or primitive nature led to "sentimentalism"; together all these new traits pointed to the new "Gothic" ideals of the "picturesque" and the "sublime."5

Together with this interest in primitive poetry there arose an equal curiosity regarding medieval ballads and metrical romances, and popular legends and folk-tales. "Le peuple se relève du discrédit où il était tombé depuis la Renaissance auprès des beaux esprits."6 The literature of the people was to be found in the Bible as well as in legends, but its poetic embodiment was to be found above all in Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton.7

Thus Drake ranks Shakespeare supreme in the "poetical use of this machinery," with the Italians too frequently relying on the imagination alone, or "descending" to Oriental fiction, as in Tasso and Ariosto. Nevertheless Drake finds in the character of Tasso "such a tone of lofty enthusiasm, such a strength and fervor of fancy, so sublimated and exalted in its cast, as to afford . . . a convenient pretext for the accusation of lunacy." As Phelps has indicated, an excess of enthusiasm

---

5Svan Tieghem, op. cit., p. 41.
6McKillop, op. cit., p. XXV.
was regarded by the Augustan compromisers as a sign of madness and those men who did possess a taste for "fancy" repressed it as best they could.®

The enthusiasm for or love of inanimate and secluded nature was influenced to a great measure by Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloise* [which Drake never mentions]. Drake ascribes Tasso's epic to the "same daring and excursive range of imagination" as may be found in Byron's poem *The Lament of Tasso*.® The difficulties of translation are increased due to the "warmth and ardour" in Tasso's imagery and sentiment, and the "majestic yet romantic spirit."®

Arabian poetry was linked with Gothic poetry in its romantic character, Drake believed. The *Arabian Nights*, "in general merely considered as a work of extravagant fiction," nevertheless give "a picture of much genuine information on the domestic habits of the court and people of Bagdad;" while Carlyle's *Specimens of Arabian Poetry* contains three songs by Mashdud, Rakeek and Rais (the "Improvisatori" poets) which delineate excellently "Arabian manners during the flourishing period of the Caliphat."® Despite Drake's genuine interest in exotic fiction, he cannot repress a native English insistence upon true observation of social manners. This characteristic English emphasis on the exactness of representation, and its

---

®*Pp. 103-4.*
®*Pp. 203-4.*
predominant note of reason, is credited by Cheney as the prevailing influence on eighteenth century life and art, as typified in Hogarth's depictions of contemporary society.12

Arabian poetry, in its "Augustan" age, appealed to "the passions and national virtues, inspired the love of valour, of generosity, and of fame."13 In conclusion, Drake recommends Arabian poetry because it is not "loaded with bombastic expression and inflated metaphor . . ." but breathes "the purest and chastest simplicity both in style and sentiment. . . ." and touches the heart with frequent "tender tones of genuine pathos."14 The "picturesque" qualities of Arabian scenery and life are pointed out as a feature of Dyer's description of the wandering life of the Arabian herdsman in The Fleece, as he contrasts the temperate clime of England with the severity of the polar regions and with the dangers of a more fervid sky, as also depicted in Thomson's Winter and Summer.15

Objects of terror, as employed in poetry, are divisible into two classes, writes Drake: (1) those which owe their origin to the agency of superhuman beings and form a part of every system of mythology, and (2) those which depend upon natural causes and events for their production.16 To obviate horror and disgust in the second case, it is necessary "to interpose picturesque description, or sublime and pathetic sentiment, or . . .

---

14P. 216.
15Pp. 150-52.
16P. 245.
to stimulate curiosity by the artful texture of the fable, or by
the uncertain and suspended fate of an interesting personage."17
The Scotch ballad Edward and Walpole's Mysterious Mother are
contrary to this theory, since the horror of the theme is not
stoned for by the talents of the poet. Shakespeare, on the other
hand, "seldom, if ever, exceeded the bounds of salutary and
grateful terror," while Dante's Inferno is "perhaps the first
specimen in the records of poetry" in this vein, especially by
the Count Ugolino episode.18

We may notice that this particular episode had been a
favorite of English poets and critics since Chaucer's time,
the Paolo and Francesca episode ranking next. Van Tieghem points
out that Dante's position in preromanticism was not of so high
a level as might be thought likely; except in Italy, he says, Dante
is little appreciated.19 Exception might be made in this state-
ment in the sense that Dante did influence Chaucer and Milton,
and the popularity of these two English poets in the English
romantic movement was one of its most significant aspects,
particularly in the influence of Milton's minor poems (Il
Penseroso chiefly), as Phelps has outlined the movement.20

Toynbee devotes himself to a careful study of Drake's
essays for criticisms (adverse or favorable) of Dante, and re-
marks that Drake appears to have read the best English versions

17 p. 246.
18 p. 247.
19 Le Preromantisme, p. 43.
20 On cit. p. 43.
as well as the original Italian, and in the 1804 edition of *Literary Hours*, specifically recommends Cary's translation.\(^1\)

Toynbee, incidentally, is the only author I have found to give a biography of Drake.

In the second class of writing on "objects of terror," Collins' *Ode to Fear* displays "much admirable imagery which forcibly calls forth the emotions of fear as arising from natural causes"; while Pinkerton's *Hardyknute* possesses several incidents of "genuine pathos . . . and [this] species of terror."\(^2\)

Professor McKillop has written of the "double tradition" of early criticism of Collins: one would represent Collins as an unfortunate poet who was the feeble victim of extreme sensibility, and the other would picture him as swept away by the strength of his imagination.\(^3\) Drake's emphasis seems to be of the second type; Chatterton, as we shall see, is the poet he characterises in the first vein. Professor McKillop also cites Drake's magnification "almost beyond recognition" of Collins in comparison with Tasso, Shakespeare, Milton, and Ossian in the essay to be reviewed later.

It is doubtful, Drake declares, that the Scandinavian-Icelandic Edda revived by Gray and Sayers will ever be popular except among the lovers of genuine poetry.\(^4\) Thus he writes:

> "What can exceed the thrilling horror of Gray's celebrated odes

---


\(^{22}\) *L.H.*, p. 93.


\(^{24}\) *L.H.*, p. 93.
from the Norse, which first opened to English poetry a mine of
the most wild yet terrific mythology."25 Since the appearance of
Gray's odes, Drake observes, the Edda "have been seized upon with
more freedom and avidity" as poetic models, as is evident in the
epic, dramatic, and lyric productions of Hole and Sayers.26

Farley quotes these statements by Drake, which he says
are written with Dr. Drake's "customary prodigality of fine
phrase," at the conclusion of an interesting passage on the re¬
ception of Gray's The Fatal Sisters and The Descent of Odin
(1768):

"The importance of Gray's two odes in
popularizing the themes of Norse literature
can hardly be overestimated. By 1768 cul¬
tivated Englishmen had shown a very general
interest in the revival of mediaevalism that
lent character to the so-called Romantic
movement in England . . . . Gray's fine
lines appealed to emotions which Percy's
ragged prose could not stir; they became
widely and favorably known, and flattering
citations of them were for a long time in¬
variably tagged to English allusions to
Norse literature."27

That Gray himself probably knew very little of the
Scandinavian languages, or no more than would be the result
of a scholarly study of Hickes' Thesaurus and related works,
but derived his Norse odes from the Latin versions found in
Thomas Bartholin the Younger's Antiquitatum Danicarum . . .
(1689) -- wherein eighteen of the Poetic Edda are given in Latin --

25 Ibid. 379.
26 Ibid. 380.
has been shown by Kittredge in his study of Gray's knowledge of Norse appended to Phelps' Selections from the Poetry and Prose of Thomas Gray. Therefore Drake himself cannot be condemned too severely for his few misquotations or misunderstandings of Scandinavian poetry.

As an example of the use of Gothic legend as a poetic model, Drake presents a lengthy and detailed analysis of Hole's epic Arthur, or the Northern Enchantment (1789). Though the poem itself is no longer considered greatly, if at all, Drake's remarks are interesting as further revelations of his pre-romantic tendencies. Instead of deriving his story from Geoffrey of Monmouth, as Milton planned to do in his proposed epic on the same theme (Epitaphium Damonis), Hole makes his Arthur "merely an ideal personage; his achievements groundless and imaginary; not to be examined at the bar of historic truth, but of poetic credibility." In versification Hole imitates the old metrical romance, "with some of its harsher features softened and modified, and ... its heroes and its incidents ... constructed rather on the plan of Ariosto than of Homer." Hole explained that this was not because:

"...the desultory wildness of the one is preferred to the correct fancy of the other -- but because the old Gothic fables exhibit a peculiarity of manners and situation, which, if not for their intrinsic excellence, may, from their being less hackneyed, afford more materials for the writer's imagination, and contribute more to the reader's entertainment."
Drake extends Hole's argument in favor of the Gothic model by declaring it not only less hackneyed but "infinitely superior," for all the purposes of poetry, to Greek and Roman mythology:

"There is a wildness and gloomy grandeur in the religious faith of ancient Scandinavia, which, mixed up as it is with a firm belief in, and bold display of, the rites of magic and enchantment, appalls and harrows up the soul in a degree greatly beyond what classical superstition can effect."31

In origin, Hole's epic style is indebted to chivalry, which arose from Gothic life and gradually blended or contrasted with its "terrific features" what was tender, courteous and gallant, and at length united to all these the "fantastic wonders" of the East to form a "system of fabling better calculated perhaps than any other . . . to excite the imagination of the poet."32 This development is the same as that described in the history of the romantic drama, as we shall see in the section on Shakespeare.

In Arthur Hole exhibits a "perfect intimacy with Northern antiquities, both in his text and notes . . ." while he has "very ably and correctly discriminated and opposed to each other the Gothic and Celtic costume, manners and superstitions."33

The "business" of the poem is founded on the enmity with which the Northern Parcae are inflamed against Arthur due to his opposition to the designs of their favored hero, Hengist, king

31Ibid.
32p. 146.
33Ibid.
of the Saxons; while on the other side, Merlin, "the great prophet of the Celts," aids the British prince in defeating "the machinations of the demons of Scandinavia." Thus Hole was able to avail himself of Ossian's imagery, Pope's versification, Scandinavian mythology, and Oriental romance. To all of this Drake objects only mildly:

"... notwithstanding this incongruity, [Hole's epic is] a most valuable... production, both in substance and in form... [being] the first modern attempt to reopen that rich vein of wild narrative and fiction, which constituted the delight and wealth of Ariosto and Spenser."34

Nevertheless, Drake censures Hole for having clothed the body and spirit of "Gothic" fiction in the "classical garb," thereby giving his poem "a very anomalous aspect."35 Farley quotes this passage from Drake as indicative of the confused state of English understanding of Scandinavian literature at this time.36

Together with this patchwork of themes, wherein the Gothic predominates only to a slight extent, there is a confusion of versification:

"... in the laudable effort to give greater freedom and continuity of harmony to the structure of rhymed verse, Mr. Hole has been induced to run one line into another so often, and to such a length in succession, as materially to weaken the peculiar though limited music of the

---

34p. 147. See Van Tieghem. **Ossian en France** (Paris, 1917)
I, 202.
couplet, whilst, at the same time, it fails to impart, what he has so anxiously wished to obtain, the energy and march of blank verse." 37

The question of the "proper" type of poetic meter was very frequently up for debate in eighteenth century critical circles. Blank verse and rhymed couplets were the two favorite types proposed. The couplet, of course, was the early leader, almost to the exclusion of other types, but Thomson's *Seasons*, Cowper's *The Task* and the revived popularity of Shakespeare and Milton caused a definite trend toward the more frequent use of blank verse. Connected with the subject-matter aspect of romanticism, blank verse, octo-syllabics, and the Spenserian stanza gave the poet freer scope than the closed couplet had allowed. It was not until Keats, however, that the heroic couplet was used in romantic poetry, "... manipulated in direct defiance of the practice of Waller, Dryden, and Pope." 38

Next to the Gothic, the Celtic ranks high as a poetic model in its two veins: (1) the "terrible" as in Ossian, and (2) the "sportive" as in the songs and ballads of the Low Country. Like the Gothic, Drake writes, the Celtic blends its ideas with the common apprehensions of mankind; not like most mythological systems "that involve every species of absurdity," this system founds its imagery on metaphysical possibility, on

37 pp. 235-6.
38 Phelps, *op. cit.*, Ch. III, pp. 36-7 ff.
the appearance of supernatural or departed beings.\textsuperscript{39} The second division is exposed more fully in the essays on Burns, to be analysed later.

Ossian is characterised by: (1) abrupt and rapid fervor of imagination, (2) vivid touches of enthusiasm, (3) stupendous vigor of wild and momentary creation, and (4) deep and uniform melancholy, -- his assets --; and (1) rigid stiffness, and (2) tedious monotony -- his defects.\textsuperscript{40} His chief virtues are his "appeals to the heart and imagination." Drake concludes that his compositions would be more striking if the versification were that [blank verse] of Cowper and Milton.\textsuperscript{41} Later he cites Blair's preference for "Virgilian numbers" in Ossian, as expressed in his \textit{Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian}.\textsuperscript{42} Van Tieghem in \textit{Ossian en France} and Tombo in \textit{Ossian in Germany} deny that any other style would have proved so generally attractive to readers as Macpherson's "poetic prose."\textsuperscript{43}

In Ossian, Drake finds the instances of scenic description and pathetic sentiment which soften and appeal to the heart "by exciting its most simple and natural emotions" to be "truly in the spirit of the highest poetry . . .," the death-scenes of the sons of Usnoth and Dar-Thula in particular.\textsuperscript{44} The night

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Literary Hours}, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{41} P. 92.
\textsuperscript{42} P. 372.
\textsuperscript{44} \textit{L.H.}, pp. 365-6.
scene in the hall of Fingal proves "of what vast importance to poetry are the superstitions, the offspring of popular fancy or fear . . .," as in the Death of Cuthullin.\(^{45}\)

Occasional interwoven descriptions of evening and night scenery in Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Camoens and Milton are "not sufficiently mingled or contrasted with pathetic emotion . . . [and] are for the most part, pictures in Natural History or still life . . . [which therefore] involve little that may call forth the tear of pity."\(^{46}\) Among smaller poems, Drake adds, Gray's Elegy is "the most exquisite and finished example in the world of the effect resulting from the intermixture of evening scenery and pathetic reflection."\(^{47}\)

But for "numerous and varied instances of combination of this kind," Ossian's works are "inexhaustible," and though "novelty of style or translator's dress at first revolts" yet the cadences "become familiar" and the imagery, though crowded, "no longer distract the mind." Then Ossian's characters, descriptive powers, sublimity and pathos are "accurately felt," and "enthusiasm takes the place of inattraction and fatigue."\(^{48}\)

The epic, Drake asserts, is "the most elevated and difficult province of the poetic art . . ."\(^{49}\) and in this

\(^{45}\)P. 369.
\(^{46}\)P. 374.
\(^{47}\)P. 375.
\(^{48}\)Ibid.
\(^{49}\)P. 457.
form Macpherson has presented a work "pregnant with beauties of the highest rank; uniformly mild and generous in manners and sentiment, uniformly simple, pathetic, and sublime, vivid and picturesque in imagery, in diction rapid, nervous, and concise . . . alike calculated to meet and meliorate the heart, to elevate and fire the imagination." The Caledonian poet, Drake writes, is superior to Milton in the "pathetic" but inferior in the "sublime." We may note that this emphasis on sentiment verges closely on sensibility.

The most valid objection to the authenticity of Ossian's poems, Drake believes, is the uniform representation of Fingal and Ossian as "too humane and polished" for that era in which they are supposed to have lived. Yet he declares that the Irish legendary poems of the 8th - 12th centuries have "the same high-toned and exalted delineations of Fingal and his son . . ." (as illustrated in Miss Brooke's Reliques of Irish Poetry). Drake was remarkably close to the truth that the Ossianic legend was Irish in origin, but he failed to take the further step necessary to form the connection, advancing only so far as the comparison.

50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
In Homer, Ossian, and Milton, Drake perceives the same pattern of character: social prominence as a patriotic poet in youth, followed by blindness, — the second thing rendering them as "pathetic and endearing" as the first does "majestic and sublime." Homer as one of Aoidoi or Rhapsodists of Greece, may be traced in the sketch of Demodocus in the Odyssey: in Cowper's translation this passage (p. 201, v. 1, 2nd ed.) makes "ample atonement for the many prosaic parts with which that version unfortunately too much abounds." Ossian, one of the ancient Celtic bards (Pelletier's Histoire des Celtes, 1771 cited as to their existence), resembled Homer in many points: (1) Poetry addressed to a very similar state of society, (2) Poet himself held in nearly similar estimation and honor, (3) Method of singing portions of their works, or whole poems, at festivals, (4) Commitment of their poetry wholly to memory and oral tradition, and (5) Collection of their poems made only after their time. Recurring to the authenticity controversy, Drake declares that Macpherson was not entirely a fabricator of Ossianic poetry, as is evident from the fact that he "in numerous instances grossly misunderstood its import," as shown by Sinclair and Graham. When we recall that even so scholarly

---

53 Evenings in Autumn (London, 1822), II, 3-4.
54 P. 21.
55 P. 175.
56 P. 177.
a person as Gray (and later Byron) received Ossian with great interest and appreciation, we may scarcely condemn Drake's thorough-going interest. 57

Milton's blindness in the very vigor of life more particularly renders him admirable, continues Drake, since it was sacrificed to his sense of national duty: "... nothing could exceed his attachment to and enthusiasm for the cause of liberty" as seen in his various prose and poetical works. 58 To Milton's blindness is due "a large portion of that hallowed and exalted imagery, which has stamped upon his later poetry a character of such peculiar and transcendent excellence." 59 The opening of Book 3 of Paradise Lost ("Hail, holy light . . .") is compared with Ossian's hymn to the sun (Vol. I, pp. 95-6), and with Homer's Hymn to Apollo, thus forming another link between these three poets, although "the suffering of Homer and Ossian disappear when contrasted with those of our immortal countryman." 60

Van Tieghem sums up the above-expressed opinions of Drake -- actually, of similar ones by those like him --:

"These new or renewed characteristics of originality, sincerity, passion, and enthusiasm, which make of poetical genius something extraordinary and privileged, contributed . . . to confer on poetry, what was sought for and desired, not only a nobleness, but a utility theretofore unknown. Even the person of the poet was regarded in a completely new manner, which would have astonished the classicists of the preceding generation." 61

58 ib. in A., pp. 253-and 260.
59 Le Preromantisme, p. 265.
60 ib. 283.
61 Le Preromantisme, p. 65.
He continues by stating that this was due primarily to the influence of Homer, the Bible, Ossian, and the Scandinavian Scalds. It was evident, for example, in Voss's distinction of the new "Landdichter" in opposition to the old "Hofdichter."\textsuperscript{62} It was summed up in Herder's wish that the poet be the voice of his nation and of his age.\textsuperscript{63}

That Macpherson \ldots meant his poems to be not merely romantic, but patriotic, like the \textit{Iliad} and the \textit{Aeneid}\textsuperscript{64} was as obvious to Drake as to modern critics, for Drake expressly condemns the Scottish partisanship involved in the controversy in \textit{The Gleaner}. The real interest of Drake, and of other Ossianic admirers, was in the so-called \ldots romantic love and romantic scenes of a large, vague, and misty kind, together with patriotic feeling and a respect for the standard epic ideal.\textsuperscript{65}

We shall now consider Drake's views of other phases of poetry, centered around many of the most characteristic eighteenth century poetic theories and themes.

In an essay on a contemporary's translation of Lucretius, Drake remarks that the eminence and exactingness of blank verse, which requires "attention, ear, and harmony," have been attained to any high degree only by Milton, Shakespeare, Dyer, Cowper,

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{62}p. 68.
\textsuperscript{63}p. 69.
\textsuperscript{64}\textit{Sampson, George. The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature} (New York, 1942), p. 536.
\textsuperscript{65}\textit{Tbid.}
\end{footnotes}
Akenside and Mason.66 The pure and self-denying morality of Lucretius, his descriptive landscapes parallel to those of Thomson and Gray in "tenderness and humanity," the inspiration of the muses, and of his philosophical and political predecessors, the contrast of exact philosophy with "enthusiasm" of description, his "sublime sentiment and luminous description" plus his teaching of the principles of nature and morality through the medium of versification -- these are Lucretius' chief merits for Drake, merits which serve as a model to later poets.67

Following this line of poetic theorizing, Drake asserts that in poetry imagination should be tempered by the "strict ratiocination" of science and the sober realities of existence, and not be left to develop itself in excessive "enthusiasm, romantic expectation, native wildness of combination, and visionary terror of the supernatural."68 He cites Tasso, Collins, and Chatterton as poets who were all mentally deranged through over-imaginative and delusory views of the world subsequently blasted. "Poetry, to attain its highest point of perfection, demands an invention fertile in the extreme, . . . which, seizing hold of the superstitions and fears of mankind, pours forth fictions of the most wild and horrible grandeur."69 This must be done with taste, however, so that in this respect Tasso, Collins, and Chatterton are inferior to: (1) Shakespeare, whose

66L.H., P. 27.
67Essay 1.
68P. 29.
69P. 32.
"powers of superhuman creation" are balance by acuteness, humor, variety of genius and intuitive penetration into the follies and vices of man, and (2) Milton, whose "peculiar predilection for traditionary tales and legendary lore" and romantic narratives, is balanced by deep and varied erudition. As a further example Drake lists Ossian's "immaterial agents" which are employed for the purpose of soothing and supporting the mind, not of shaking and harrowing it as the Gothic does with "malignant and mysterious potency." This does not cancel Drake's admiration of the Gothic style as a poetic model, however.

As portrayed in Gray's *The Progress of Poesy and The Bard*, divine inspiration (or genius), together with imagination, sentiment and enthusiasm were the leading characteristics of true poetry according to the preromanticists; and it is upon these features that Drake appears to have modeled his views of poetry in the majority of cases. The young poet should, Drake concludes, "be properly initiated into life, and led to mingle the severer studies with the vivid colorings of the muse, and neither disappointment nor melancholy, will then . . . intrude upon his useful and rational enjoyments." In this same sense, Gray is a "better-balanced" poet than Collins, due to his scholarly spirit and extraordinarily keen judgment or critical taste.

---

70p. 37.
71 Le Preromantisme, Ch. IV.
72 p. 589.
73 Ch. P. P., p. 590.
As for melancholy and sorrow, there are three powers most soothing: music, as depicted in Beattie's *The Minstrel*; nature, as in the romantic and sequestered scenery of Petrarch; and painting, Claude's "grateful gloom" being "peculiarly captivating to the mind of taste and sensibility." Characteristic of eighteenth century culture, Claude's main contributions to art were the discovery of the "out-of-doors" as subject matter and an advance in atmospheric lighting. In condemnation of excess in poetry, Drake cites the "constant bias of mind" in Milton, Young, and Gray, in whom melancholy is "repressed by the chastening hand of reason and education . . . ." Thus the pseudo-classic heritage of Drake is brought forward in this admiration of compromise between reason and imagination.

In inscriptive writing, Drake states, the purposes are to commemorate a deceased or absent friend, to express the sensations and moral effect arising from contemplation of beautiful scenery, to perpetuate the remembrance of some remarkable event, or to inscribe a temple or statue with an appropriate address. For instance, the Greek epigram is not distinguished for its point or sparkling wit, but for its felicitous choice of words, suavity of style, and pathetic flow of sentiment, as imitated by the moderns at Leasowes and at Hagley Park.

75 L.H., pp. 47-9.
76 Cheney, *op. cit.* p. 730.
77 L.H., p. 51.
78 E.C.E.P., xix.
79 L.H., pp. 73-4.
Humphreys in William Shenstone describes the Leasowes as:

"... a kind of definition of what its generation, at its most cultured, was. It confirms an impression of mental order which did not mean a lack of deep feeling, a decorous exterior not due solely to complacency, a search for variety and personal expression which still would not break too violently with the past."

Drake defines the whole aim of inscriptive writing to be that of giving "moral charm to the features of cultivated nature" in a tone of simplicity and melancholy. It is also imperative that there be present the ruins of a Gothic castle or abbey, or of a Greek temple, and also a rocky cave or hermitage in the woods, sculpture of the mythological figures of Greece and Rome, and personifications of the virtues and passions; above all else, it is necessary that care and judgment be exercised in the choice of the scene, and attention be paid to classical minutiae. The cultivation of this species of poetry, Drake concludes, may produce "the most pleasing and even the most salutary and beneficial effects." In contrast to Ossianic and Gothic ideals of nature, this was "a cheerful and sensible love of nature, neither mystical nor mysterious, and very normal. . . ." In The Gleaner Drake gives in its entirety an essay (No. 32 of The Philanthrope) on inscriptive writing which quotes Shenstone's

81 Pp. 75.
82 Pp. 82-5.
83 Humphreys, op. cit., p. 103.
inscription on a Gothic alcove ("O ye that bathe in courtly bliss . . .") and Akenside's "spirited yet solemn" inscription for a pillar at Runnymede ("O stranger, stay thee . . .") as outstanding examples of this type of poetic composition.84 Nevertheless, Drake sums up Shenstone's poetry as "... though simple and pensive, both in sentiment and expression, yet, to a reader of very accurate taste . . . somewhat redundant."85 Drake's own composition An Inscription for the Tomb of Guthrun the Dane in St. Mary's Church, Hadleigh, begins "O stay thee, stranger . . . ."86

The use of unpoetical subjects in poetry was due to the "elaborate restrictions on diction and style" of the age, which caused wider experimentation: "... anything which involved an argument, an explanation, or the enforcement of a moral, could be put into verse — an account of the progress of this, or the art of that, any popular survey or outline of knowledge."87 Thus Dyer's The Fleece belies Johnson's criticism (Lives of the Poets, IV, 321), that the humble subject and its associations with trade and manufacturing weigh down the poet as also does the cumbersomeness of blank verse.88

Johnson himself "... to occasional felicity of diction, great purity of moral, and energy of thought, limited a very considerable portion of critical acumen . . ." yet he was 

85 P. 458.
86 W. N., p. 75.
87 C. P., p. xxi.
88 L. H., p. 137.
deficient in that sensibility to the enthusiasm for the charms of nature, in that relish for the simple and pathetic, so absolutely necessary to just criticism in poetry." He had also an "unreasonable antipathy to blank verse, a constant ruggedness of temper, and a bigotted, though well-meaned adhesion to some very extravagant political and religious tenets." In addition, Drake cites his "bitter and illiberal invectives, his churlish and parsimonious praise, his great and various misrepresentations [in the cases of Milton, Collins, Dyer, Gray, and Akenside]." In the 1809 Essays, Drake praises Johnson's poetry chiefly for its "energy and compression."

Dr. Warton's classification of The Fleece among the "excellent pieces of the didactic kind" by the moderns in his Essay on Pope in Drake's opinion properly emphasizes the central feature of the poem and the aim of the didactic poet, which is "to convey instruction in the garb of pleasure..." The more rugged and intractable the theme, the greater skill and genius are required in smoothing its asperities, and in decorating it with flowers of choicest hue and odour." The "more solemn, dignified and plastic strains" of blank verse, are better suited, believes Drake, to epic and didactic poetry than the rhymed couplet of Pope and Goldsmith. Judged a standard of excellence by Akenside, Dyer's poetry has less "elaboration:

89 P. 138.
90 P. 139.
92 L.H., pp. 140-1.
and stiffness than Akenside's."

Dyer's having been a painter in his youth in South Wales and Italy accounts for the "accuracy, fertility, and warmth of description" in Grongar Hill, Ruins of Rome, and The Fleece. Joseph Warton also recommends Dyer for his pictorial abilities in poetry, remarking that in Grongar Hill Dyer "... disposes every object so as it may give occasion for some observation on human life."\(^93\)

In The Fleece, Dyer is notable for his "proper disposition and elucidation" of the facts of the subject, and his "exquisite imagery and appropriate ornament," or the proper method and arrangement of the progress of the theme, since the four books of The Fleece are the "four exact stages of the progress of an useful and natural occupation" in a "just and natural order."\(^94\)

It is interesting to note that Drake calls attention to the passage in Book III wherein Dyer "bestows unqualified praise" on the work-houses for the poor recently installed in several mercantile places, "with delight at the prospect of the happiness they are likely to diffuse" as he "exhorts the pauper ... in energetic strains ... to avail himself of the offered blessing."\(^95\)

With this sentiment we might compare that of Crabbe in The Village in that section which speaks so realistically of the actual decay into which the poor-house subsequently fell.\(^96\)

\(^94\) *L.H.*, pp. 147-8.
\(^95\) p. 162.
\(^96\) *E.C.P.P.*, p. 973, ll. 228 ff.
Among the many passages from Dyer that Drake quotes, those on mountain scenery are significant in their effect on Drake, who characterizes their chief features as "mingled terror and sublimity." 97

As a whole, The Fleece possesses "interesting sentiment" and "illustrative imagery," with the poet's art of "pictures and animation" thrown over the precept. Again Drake echoes Warton in saying that this poem is truly classical in style, with several "happy" imitations of the ancients [Warton specifically names Virgil]. 98

The greatest servility in imitation is characteristic of the eclogue or pastoral, Drake contends. Instead of "insipid imitation" of Theocritus' descriptions of Sicily, the poet should give a "tasteful" delineation of his native countryside, and "accurate imitations of nature herself, sketched with a free and liberal pencil, and glowing with appropriate charms." This "simplicity in diction and sentiment, a happy choice of rural imagery, such incidents and circumstances as may even now occur in the country, with interlocutors equally removed from vulgarity or considerable refinement, are all that are essential to success." 99

Remembering that Drake's Literary Hours was published in the same year (1798) as Wordsworth and Coleridge's Lyrical Ballads, we may justly point out the remarkable similarity of the poetic standards embodied in each, the significant difference

97 L.H., pp. 169-70.
98 P. 172; op. cit., p. 36.
99 P. 225.
being that Drake, having composed his essays at scattered moments and over a long period of time, presents a much more diffuse or obscure literary theory, often vacillating between admiration of the ancients and belief in the moderns -- in fact, it is extremely difficult to thread through the inconsistencies to find the consistencies. It is interesting also to note that Drake never mentions Wordsworth in any of his essays, and Coleridge only as a critic of Shakespeare and author of The Ancient Mariner.

Theocritus, Virgil, Spenser, Pope, Gay, Philips, and others are the only pastoral poets recognized by critics; Drake complains, whereas Gessner's Idyllia, Moschus' Epitaph on Bion (in Beattie's translation), Harpalus (in Percy's Reliques), Drayton's Nymphidia ("one of the best"), Fletcher's Faithful Shepherdess, Jonson's Sad Shepherd, Browne's Britannia's Pastorals and Warner's Albion's England all contain "much pastoral description of the most genuine kind." The poems from Percy and Gessner are particularly indicative of the preromantic ideas of poetry.

The piscatory eclogues of Fletcher and Brown and Isaac Walton's Complete Angler are also noteworthy, Drake declares; though Walton is not a poet, he has "some inimitably drawn scenes." In pastoral song and ballad, the Scotch are best "in artless expression of passion, in truth of colouring and naivete" of diction, according to Beattie's On Poetry and Music. Collins'

---

100 Pp. 225-9. [Spenser is omitted from "bucolic" poetry due to a lack of "elegant simplicity." P. 228.]
101 P. 231.
Hassan, or the Camel-Driver represents "one of the most tenderly sublime, most sweetly descriptive poems in the cabinet of the Muses... [which] in pathetic beauty, in richness and wildness of description, in simplicity of sentiment and manners can justly be esteemed superior."\(^{102}\)

Also meritorious, Drake writes, are: Sir William Jones' Solyman, Scott of Amwell's Oriental Eclogues (especially "Serim" and "Li-Po" have "many picturesque touches and much pleasing moral"), Southey's Botany-Bay Eclogues (especially "Elinor" by this poet "of fine imagination and great pathetic powers"), and Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd.\(^{103}\)

Burns Martin in his Allan Ramsay declares "vulgarity and prolixity" to be inherent in Ramsay's work, while "none of his work is of the highest order, and... much is below the line that separates poetry and verse." He quotes Drake's opinion of Ramsay as superior to Virgil, Spenser, and Pope, and concludes: "Comment would be otiose."\(^{104}\) It seems that he did not fully examine Drake's meaning, which may more properly be construed as a more or less deliberate deposition of the "ancients" in favor of the "moderns." Drake continues the "otiose" passage by explaining that of the authors he has listed only Warner, Drayton, Collins and Gessner rescue modern pastoral poetry from a charge of insipidity, since Pope displays "only musical versification,"

---

\(^{102}\) p. 234.
\(^{103}\) pp. 235-6.
\(^{104}\) op. cit. (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 60 and 72, respectively.
Gay "parody and burlesque" and Philips "no originality."

Presuming the hypothesis that Drake was, though he himself may not have realized it in just this way, a proromanticist in poetic theories and standards, the reader may more easily understand his views and appreciate his values.

Religious poetry, Drake remarks, demands an imagination plastic in the extreme, vast and gigantic on one hand, tender and beautiful on the other; in painting heaven and hell the gifts of Guido Rheni and of Michelangelo are needed in combination. "Unguarded levity" and "want of adaptation in phraseology or in fiction" ruin Quarles, Crashaw, and most writers of sacred poetry till Milton, "the very first who with true dignity supported the weight of his stupendous theme ... [in] a poem ... without exaggeration, the noblest monument of human genius." Young's Night Thoughts reveals powers "inferior to Milton, turgid, obscure, and epigrammatic, yet with occasional sallies of imagination and bursts of sublimity." Its extraordinary popularity in England and on the Continent is due to the fact that "... with the bulk of mankind, there is little discrimination between the creative energy of Milton, and the tumid declamation of Young, or between the varied pauses of highly-finished blank verse, and a succession of monotonous lines." Modern opinion declares that Young's "resourcefulness" and "energy" compensate for his bombast and that in the eighteenth century he was an "exponent

105 P. 236.
106 P. 261.
107 P. 262.
108 P. 263.
of sentimental melancholy and even of Gothic terror." Van Tieghem attributes the cause for Young's phenomenal success to the interest in the person of the poet and his private misfortunes: Young was a resume of the sentimental and poetical movement of the literature of "reverie and meditation." Klopstock of Germany, Drake concludes, "though possessing not the stern and gigantic sublimity of Milton, still elevates the mind by the vigour and novelty of his fiction in The Messiah and is certainly more tender and pathetic than the English bard."

One of the most significant passages in all of Drake's essays is the following one, which reveals his literary criticism at its best.

"It has been objected to Milton, that in his Paradise Regained he has taken too confined a view of the subject, and by restricting the theatre of action to the Temptation in the wilderness, attributed solely to that event the redemption of mankind. To this Milton was probably induced by the charm of contrast, by the desire of showing the world that in the receptive and moral as well as in the grand and sublime epic, he was equally pre-eminent; and it must be confessed that he has happily succeeded, for the mild yet majestic beauties of the Paradise Regained, its weight of precept and exquisite morality, its richness of sentiment and simplicity of diction, call as loudly for approbation and applause as the more splendid and terrible graces, the whirlwind and commotion of the prior poem."
Fletcher describes *Paradise Regained* as principally remarkable for its "compression and economy of utterance" and for its metrics.\textsuperscript{113}

The characters of Cumberland's *Calvary*, though "not in possession of originality" are nevertheless copied from excellent models, Drake writes; "... and to have woven these into a new whole, to have imitated these sublime writings [the Bible and Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*] without losing a portion of their first spirit and raciness, is to have achieved a work of difficulty and danger."\textsuperscript{114}

These views on Drake's part reveal how much of Augustan ideals of poetry still clung to his mind despite the new influences which principally molded his criticism. In the early part of the eighteenth century a good imitation of the best poets was considered an "original" work, and conformity to established and respected standards of life and literature was the mark of successful composition.\textsuperscript{115}

In discussing the versification and diction of *Calvary*, Drake centers attention on blank verse. Of the various kinds of meter used by British poets "none is of such difficult execution, ... none more requiring a practised ear, or a more extensive knowledge of language and style." The two "masters in this mode of composition" are Shakespeare and Milton.


\textsuperscript{114}L. H., p. 269.

"In Milton, a style elaborate and abounding in transposition, mingled with foreign idiom, and scientific terms, and frequently clogged with parenthesis, admits not of that facility and flow so conspicuous in the dramatic bard, whose works present us with the most musical and felicitous specimens of blank verse we can boast of . . . Paradise Lost [possesses] every variety of pause and rhythm, . . . but neither his [Milton's] subject, nor his genius led to that sweetness and simplicity of diction so wonderfully captivating . . . [in Shakespeare]. Energy, majesty, a deeper and severer strain of harmony, . . . [characterise Milton's genius, while Shakespeare's is] . . . the softer breathings of the lute or harp, for though surrounded by magic and incantation, and all the horrors of supernatural agency, Shakespeare still preserves a style free from intricacy, and melting with the sweetest cadence."116

In a note on Essay No. CLXXIV in The Gleaner Drake cites Comus as ". . . indeed, the most delightful poem of its author."117 This statement is indicative of the great popularity of Milton's minor poems which played a more important role in preromanticism than did his major poems. Modern opinion echoes Drake, we may say, in stating that Milton lacks the "Shakespearean suppleness" and variety, and that "grace" is "too delicate a thing to be attributed to his work, at least after Comus." However ". . . in sublimity of thought and majesty of expression, both sustained at almost superhuman pitch, he has no superior and no rival in English."118

Cumberland, in uniting the epic style of Milton and the

116 L.H., pp. 279-80.
118 Cam.Hist., p. 370.
dramatic style of Shakespeare, is chiefly noteworthy, Drake concludes, for his perspicuity, energy, and dignity. 119 Cumberland's biographer, S. T. Williams, declares that Cumberland's "... efforts for immortality through play, novel, and epic poem were in vain...," and are now as nearly forgotten "as inspirationless books may be." 120 He also quotes Drake's praise of The Observer ("but a plunder chest for scholars" Williams styles it) as the "highest" given. 121 Nevertheless, Drake devotes a good section of Literary Hours to an analysis of Calvary; and it furnishes at least, if not a revelation of high standards of originality, several characteristic and significant opinions of poetic style.

Drake quotes Warton's Essay on Pope to the effect that the ode is the species of poetry practised with smallest success by modern poets, and with indisputable inferiority to the ancients due to the harshness and intractability of the language. 122 To this Drake replies that English in sweetness and smoothness may be inferior to Greek and even sometimes to Latin, yet in the later English poets are to be discovered "many specimens of versification, and of selection of language, peculiarly musical and harmonious" since all the language's "asperities" may be rendered sufficiently "torse and polished." 123 Also "more smoothness of diction" does not constitute the sole or principal

119 L.H., pp. 281-2.
121 P. 220. 1809 Essays, II, 393-4.
122 L.H., p. 377.
123 P. 378.
merit of lyric poetry, — and here Drake's preromanticism really comes to the front — but rather "combinations of phrase, . . . felicities of diction, . . . expressions of a lyric hue, . . . the creations of the poet, . . . [which] through the medium of genius may be drawn from the bosom of any language." 124

Lyric poetry, Drake writes, may be divided into four classes: (1) Sublime, (2) Pathetic, (3) Descriptive, and (4) Amatory. The characteristics of the first type are: "... vivid enthusiasm, richness of imagery and metaphor, abruptness . . . of transition, and a peculiar warmth and impetuosity of diction." To excel demands a felicity and strength of genius seldom attained: all the higher beauties of poetry, vastness of conception, brilliancy of coloring, grandeur of sentiment, the terrible and appalling must combine, and with mysterious energy alarm and elevate the imagination. 125 The highest example is Gray's The Bard, distinguished by "a tinge so wildly aweful, so gloomily terrific," which is approached "in tremendous painting, . . . mysterious solemnity . . . [and] a peculiar character, a kind of savage and gigantic subliminity..." by the choruses of Aeschylus and the "war songs" of the Northern Scalds. 126

Warton in his Essay on Pope cites Gray's The Bard and Milton's Lycidas as poems which have made use of the "druidical times, and the traditions of the old bards, which afford subjects fruitful of the most genuine poetry, with respect both to imagery

124 Ibid.
125 P. 379.
126 P. 380.
and sentiment." He also quotes two stanzas of a "Runic" ode from Hickes (the death of "Ludbrog," or Ragnar Lodbrok).

In the Gothic style, the superstitions of Europe [actually Scotland here], "the agency of ghosts and fairies and beings of another world" are best portrayed in Collins' *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland*. Also outstanding are Gray's *On the Progress of Poetry* [Progress of Poesy], Collins' *To the Passions*, Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, and Akenside's *To Lord Huntingdon* and *On Lyric Poetry* (though Akenside's style in general is "by no means of the genuine lyric hue"). Modern Italy and France have no competitors in this class, Petrarch and Rousseau being their highest candidates; but in Germany "some powerful candidates have lately started, "Klopstock especially being renowned for "the spirit and sublimity" of his poetry.129

In the pathetic class Collins is first among the English poets, with his "sweet pathos . . . [and] tender imagery . . . accompanied by a wild romantic warmth of fancy that exalts the feelings he is solicitous to convey." His *Dirge on Fidale* and *Ode on the Death of Colonel Ross* "seize powerfully upon the heart, and speak in the very tones of nature . . ." but it has been only in the last few years, Drake writes, that "due attention has been paid to his merits and the high station he occupies among our lyric bards acknowledged."130

127 Or. cit., I, 373-5.
128 P. 383.
129 Ibid.
130 P. 387.
As Bronson has pointed out, this statement is quite true; though Collins was admired by a few who realized his extraordinary ability, he was not recognized as an important transitionist from the old to the new theories of poetry. It was the triumph of romanticism at the beginning of the nineteenth century which brought Collins into new prominence, and established his fame on a broader basis. Gray's estimate of Collins as possessing "...a fine fancy, modelled upon the antique, a bad ear, great variety of words and images, with no choice at all. ..." is "no mean praise" in view of Gray's "fastidious coldness of temperament." Collins' Odes are characterised by Bronson as mainly "...not intellectual and didactic, but imaginative, pictorial, and lyrical." The Ode to Fear and Ode to Evening are the most "romantic."

Professor McKillop characterises Collins' poetry as principally "intelligent" and "abstract," but also as "ardent" and "sincere." The romantic spirit or intent is present even where the style and theme are pseudo-classical.

Drake lists Gray next to Collins. Gray's Ode to Spring and Ode to Eton College are distinguished for their "sweetness of versification" and "delicious strain of plaintive tenderness" as well as for "a terseness, ... a classical elegance in ... composition," first in the history of the English ode. Several

131 Walter C. Bronson, ed. The Poems of William Collins (Boston, 1898), p. xxx.
132 P. xxxi.
133 P. xxxiii.
134 P. xlv.
135 Pp. xlix and l.
137 L.H., p. 388.
of Cowper's poems and one of Chatterton's ("O! Synge untoe mie roundelaie") are also notable.138

In the third or descriptive section, "which luxuriantly indulges in the delineation of rural imagery," the ancients are represented by Sappho's Ode to Evening and Horace's Carmina, while the moderns supersede them with Milton's L'Allegro ed II Penseroso, which are "the most exquisite and accurately descriptive poems in his own, or any other language, and will probably forever remain unrivalled."139 Dyer's Grongar Hill is equally spirited and pleasing, and celebrated for the fidelity of its delineation;" the beginning however is obscure, and even ungrammatical, and his landscape not sufficiently distinct."140

Collins' Ode to Evening presents "the very first fortunate specimen of the blank ode" with "fine enthusiasm . . . in the very spirit of Poussin and Claude . . . mingled . . . with a wilder yet more visionary train of idea, yet subdued and chastened by the softest tones of melancholy."141 Elsewhere, Drake calls Collins "an exquisite poet, who, in his genius, and in his personal fate, bears a strong resemblance to the celebrated Tasso."142 The "emotionally-suffused landscape" of this ode is noted by present-day editors.143 Thus Collins "... believes that poetry should be freely imagined and passionately felt, that it should be blessed with 'some divine excess,' but he is

138P. 389.
139P. 390.
140P. 391.
141P. 392.
142The Cleaner, IV, 485.
143F.C.P., 574.
hampered by abstraction and formalism..." Bronson identifies three conflicting trends in Collins' poetry: (1) natural romantic, (2) natural classical, and (3) literary conventions of his age. In classic influence he was most like the scholarly Gray; in his love of romance, like Milton.  

In the fourth or amatory class are Sappho, Anacreon, Catullus and Horace for the ancients, and Thomson, Percy, Goldsmith, Fletcher, and Jonson for the moderns, who are "distinctly inferior" to the ancients in this field. Despite this remark, Catullus' "sweetness and perspicuity of style, tenderness and simplicity of thought, . . . naivete of manner, . . . and often a vividity and minuteness of description . . ." are said to be rivalled by Goldsmith in The Traveller. Van Tieghem likewise gives a significant place to The Traveller (1765) as having opened to poetry a new genre — the personal note in lyricism:

"It is the first poem which is nothing but the poetic and sentimental recital of a voyage, framing the reflections . . . of the author. It thus announced Michaud's Printemps d'Un Proscrit, Wordsworth's The Excursion, and above all, Byron's Childe Harold."

This personal note was therefore linked with "local color"; in The Gleaner, Drake expresses himself in the following manner on this subject:

"The propriety or impropriety of local allusion in poetry depends altogether upon the taste exhibited in the selection of circumstances; when this has been correct and pure, a strength and vivacity, a verisimilitude unattainable by any other mean, will be the result."
In criticising Headley's *Ancient Beauties of English Poetry*, Drake endeavors to show that poetical genius has risen, not degenerated, as so many of his contemporary critics asserted, the one exception being, of course, Shakespeare.

The eighteenth century, maintains Drake, "is greatly superior to any former era . . . in purity of diction and felicitous structure of sentence . . ."; "... no truly correct poet existed before Gray . . .," as even Pope displays "illegitimate rhymes and gross grammatical mistakes." Among the poets listed by Headley occur the names of Spenser, Milton, Shakespeare and Donne, on whom Drake makes very interesting comments.

Though Spenser possesses "splendid imagery and much accurate descriptive painting, abounding in strong personification, and displaying great tenderness of heart," yet is *The Faerie Queene* "from its allegorical form, its want of unity and compression, nearly devoid of interest . . ." while its style is "affectedly obsolete." Milton, "never surpassed in sublimity," is yet inferior in "the pathetic and beautiful," the chief deficiencies in *Paradise Lost* being in the third and twelfth books, while "the fable involves no close or national interest." This opinion follows the preromantic emphasis upon the necessity of national and popular expression by the poet, rather than international or erudite composition: this was due, as has previously been noted, to the influence of Ossian, the Bible,

---

150, 151, 152: *Footnotes.*
Homer, and Shakespeare. The last-named poet was especially English, and Drake goes to some length in *Shakespeare and His Times* to defend the poet's English bias. So in the dramatic group of Headley's list, Shakespeare's *Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Tempest* are approved as far exceeding rival claims.

But in the satiric division, Donne is dismissed from the first ranks by Drake due to the "dissonance and discord" of his couplets. This reflects not so much preromantic tendencies as Augustan or neo-classical theories; as Phelps remarks, Donne and the other "metaphysical" poets were censured severely at that time because their poetry was too "enthusiastic" in tone, their imagery too "conceited," and the whole too far afield of conformity to ancient models or to "common sense." Only in the romantic period did Donne, Herbert, Vaughan and Traherne regain poetic respectability, though Warton placed Donne in the third class of poets, where are the "men of wit, of elegant taste, and lively fancy . . ." Drake himself made an almost complete reversal in his attitude toward Donne in later works, as we shall soon illustrate. Modern analysis of Donne upholds Drake's verdict of harshness of verse, but emphasizes the "subtle qualities of vision, rare intensities of feeling, surprising felicities of expression . . ." in Donne's poetry, particularly the "passionate and insolent, rapturous and

---

153 p. 449.
154 p. 452.
155 *R.M.*, p. 9.
156 *Essay on Pope*, I, xii.
angry "moods of the Songs and Sonets. In his protest and revolt against Petrarchian formalism and against Elizabethan excesses of florid fluency, Donne remodelled English poetry along more condensed lines of thought and speech, with greater resort to intellect "almost irresistible to super-civilized minds . . . "

In Drake's table of English poets, Ossian and Hole are his principal epic poets, plus Southey with his Joan of Arc, which "though incorrect, and written with inexcusable rapidity" reveals "sentiments . . . noble and generous . . . [that] burn with an enthusiastic ardour for liberty; the characters . . . [are] well supported, and . . . the visionary scenes . . . rich with bold and energetic imagery . . . ; however, the fable is "unfortunate, as directly militating against national pride and opinion." Southey's versification is "in many parts very beautiful, and would have been altogether so, had the author condescended to bestow more time on its elaboration."

In descriptive poetry, the rare but essential combination of naturalist and poet has been found only in Lucretius, Virgil, and Thomson, while Cowper's The Task excels in "simplicity and energy of style, . . . charms of Nature, of Virtue, and of Religion . . . ." Van Tieghem points out that Cowper was the first English poet to emphasize simplicity and personal reflections in poetry; also Cowper, Gray, Goldsmith and Rousseau

---

158 Ibid.
159 L.H., p. 461.
160 Ibid. 462.
161 Ibid. 465.
were among the first to indulge deliberately in "contemplative revery."\textsuperscript{162} Gisborne's \textit{Walks in a Forest}, Sotheby's \textit{Tour through Wales}, and Bidlake's \textit{The Sea} are further descriptive poems cited by Drake.\textsuperscript{163}

In the didactic vein Mason's \textit{English Garden}, with "regular and perfect form ... written on the plan of the Georgics ..."; Hayley's \textit{Epistles on Painting, History, and Epic Poetry} (especially the passage on the death of Chatterton); Downman's \textit{Infancy}; Polwhele's \textit{English Orator}; and Darwin's \textit{Botanic Garden} ("with an imagination wild and terrific as that of Dante or Shakespeare") are cited as notable.\textsuperscript{164}

In miscellaneous poetry Thomson's \textit{The Castle of Indolence}, Beattie's \textit{The Minstrel}, and Goldsmith with his "sweet and harmonious" versification, and "equally beautiful and pathetic" sentiments and imagery take top positions.\textsuperscript{165} The poems of Burns are also accorded a high rank, although they are not specifically named or analyzed. Drake also recommends the sonnets of Charlotte Smith, a fact recently recognized by Florence Hilbish in her University of Pennsylvania doctoral dissertation, \textit{Charlotte Smith}, when she remarks that it was the poet's sonnets which first brought her literary recognition.\textsuperscript{166} These sonnets, Miss Hilbish says, are characterized by "a lyricism ... not confined by any fixed rules," but their appeal for Drake lay

\textsuperscript{162} Le Preromantisme, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{163} P. 466.
\textsuperscript{164} P. 466-8.
\textsuperscript{165} P. 469.
\textsuperscript{166} P. 469.
\textsuperscript{167} P. 238.
mostly in their unaffected elegance of style and pleasing melancholy.

Among the translators, Warton's *Georgics*, Colman's *Terence*, Boscawen's *Horace*, Potter's *Aeschylus*, and Cowper's *Homer* rank highest in Drake's criticism. Though Cowper is "too literal . . . and too inattentive to the melody of his versification," yet he has infused much more of the "simple majesty and manner of the divine bard" than Pope, whose "splendid and highly ornamented paraphrase" is more adapted to the genius of Ovid than of Homer. 167 The satiety of Pope's couplets is not felt in Cowper's blank verse, "which possesses a manifest superiority in its variety of pause and rhythm." Cowper's plainness of diction" is the result of "mature judgment," as seen by the "exquisite polish" of his version of Milton's Latin and Italian poetry. 168

One of the prevalent theories of poetic inspiration in the eighteenth century was that which stressed the early development of poetic skill. Drake applies this theory to several minor poets of the period.

In Leyden's *Scenes of Infancy* the three outstanding features are enthusiastic attachment to the scenes of his youth, unaffected piety, and love of the wild and marvellous. 169 These characteristics were due partly to his nature and partly to the

167 *L.H.*, p. 473.
168 *L.*, 474.
169 *N.*, I, 79.
books he read in childhood: The Arabian Nights, Paradise Lost, and Chapman's Homer, besides tales of Wallace and Bruce, and legends of popular superstitions of Scotland. As a result he may be compared with Collins "whom he much resembled in his genius and cast of thought" as he always delighted in flights of imagination and popular traditions. Drake also compares Collins and Leyden in the "purity and fervour" of religious feelings; though he claims Leyden to have been "not only superior to Collins, but, with the exception of Sir William Jones, perhaps to every other individual upon record." Bronson interestingly notes that Cowper's main interest in Collins was due to his religious nature. What arouses Drake's interest most, however, is that Leyden died at the comparatively early age of 35, before his poetical career was fully under way, and in the far-away land of Java.

Leyden's use of romantic legend is visible in his descriptions of the ruins of Melrose Abbey where a supposed meeting of Thomas Rymour of Eskeldon and the Fairy Queen occurred, of the enchanted knights awaiting King Arthur's return from Fairyland, and also in a simile taken from the romance of Caliph Vathek. The second part of Leyden's poem closes with a tribute to Sir Walter Scott who, in Drake's opinion, "exhibited more skill and versatility in the conception and development of character, than

170 p. 82.
171 ibid.
172 ibid.
173 Ibid., p. xxxvii.
174 Ibid., p. 92.
any writer since . . . Shakspeare [so]."^{175}

Leyden's description of ghostly navigators is excellent, "yet has he been exceeded on this subject by a living poet, whose *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is perhaps one of the most tremendous tales of supernatural horror in existence."^{176}

This is Drake's only mention of Coleridge as a poet; in *Memorials of Shakspeare* he is quoted as a Shakespearean critic only. That the above opinion of the *Ancient Mariner* is preromantic in spirit is self-evident.

"It was on the banks of the Jed that Thomson spent the earliest parts of his life, and many of the landscapes of his *Seasons* are said to have been sketched from views in this neighborhood; more particularly the opening of his *Winter*, where he describes the storm collecting on the mountain cliffs, tradition affirms to have been suggested by the appearance of the snowclouds forming on the summit of Ruberslaw."^{177}

The above quotation indicates Drake's interest in accurate descriptions of scenery drawn from personal experience. In *The Seasons* Thomson furnished "... a treasury of poetic diction which lesser versifiers used mechanically."^{178} Drake often indicates this fact, but never elaborates on it.

In Leyden's descriptions of the changes wrought by time in Teviot Vale, can be seen "much of the plaintive harmony and tender imagery" of Goldsmith.^{179} In conclusion Drake writes that

---

175pp. 115-6.
176p. 120.
177p. 132.
that Leyden "... happily united the plaintive sweetness of Goldsmith with the wild and romantic splendour of Collins," though his poetry is "somewhat desultory in its construction, and occasionally devious in its design."\(^{180}\) The important conclusion is that Leyden gave sincere descriptions of his native countryside.

A second poet of the same type was Henry Neele, author of *Odes and Other Poems*. In Neele the fervor of imagination "which gives birth to poetical imagery and association" developed early, "even connected with a large share both of taste and judgment ...," as was true to a greater extent in Pope and Milton.\(^{181}\)

Neele's poems, according to given dates, were written between 14 and 17 years of age, most of his poems being odes. Drake ranks the greater or Pindaric ([as opposed to the lesser, or Horatian]) ode as perhaps the highest form of poetry, since it demands "the most lofty enthusiasm and creative fancy, ... the utmost purity and choice of expression, ... every graceful variety and felicitous adaptation of melody and rhythm ...."\(^{182}\)

Again Neele is said to most nearly approach Collins, in "the cast of his composition, and the general color of his sentiment." Going farther, Drake compares Neele with Shakespeare as far as the possession of the "same love of allegory, the same plaintive wildness of fancy, and not seldom the same simple and touching

---

\(^{180}\) P. 146.
\(^{181}\) P. N., II, 70.
\(^{182}\) P. 73.
Leydens twelve odes are, like those of Collins, chiefly on abstract subjects, and therefore may more slowly prove popular.

The melancholy characteristic of Collins and Kirke White is also a prevalent feature in Neele: his Odes to Time, to Hope, and To Memory embody "that same plan of recording the pains rather than the pleasures of the subject . . ."; while his Odes to Horror, Despair, and the Moon are "finely contrasted in their subject, their imagery, and their style, "wherein he, like Collins, sacrifices at the shrines of pity and terror. Neele's Odes to Pity, Enthusiasm, the Harp, on the Power of Poetry, and to Allegory, wherein he displays a general tone of a "more lofty" character, and his elegiac-type sonnets and miscellaneous poetry, reveal the "same beauty of expression and tenderness of feeling . . . ."

A similar phenomenon, Drake writes, is the poetry of Chatterton, who died at seventeen. His poetry exhibits " . . . much splendour of fancy, and power of expression . . . ." and was produced under adverse conditions of penury and distress.

Scarcely less extraordinary in this respect appeared the genius of Kirke White, who lived only to the age of twenty-one. In imagery and sentiment his poems are "exquisitely beautiful" and "touchingly sweet," especially when he "alludes to his
In discussing Cornelius Neale's *Domestic Hours*, Drake traces the progress of the epigram, sonnet, inscription, madrigal, and vers de société, as employed by Neale and others. He cites the Greek epigram as a superior example of minor poetry "whose object is to commemorate the events and feelings of private life"; and he describes the madrigals and vers de société as "gay, voluptuous, humorous, and convivial." Akenside's inscriptions, although "deeply imbued with the spirit of Grecian literature," fail to reach the level of the modern sonnet, which has brought out "numerous small pieces, which in unity, simplicity, and purity of thought and expression, are built upon the model of the Grecian Epigrammatists."

The sonnet, we may note, was "despised among the Augustans," but became "exceedingly popular" after 1760. The disappearance and revival of the sonnet were "outward indications of the reaction against the couplet, and the general growth of the Romantic Movement." Drake had quite a strong interest in the sonnet, having written several of his own, and analysed those of Shakespeare, Charlotte Smith, Bowles, and others.

Neale's volume (1819) contains two lyrical dramas, several odes, and other poems, including some translations from Horace's *Carmina*, -- the entire volume forming "a picture of the heart of the individual."
That such personal notes and reminiscences in poetry were soon to become not only popular but almost requisite, may be inferred from the mounting frequency with which they occur. Goldsmith, Thomson, Gray, and Burns were among the earliest practitioners, while Byron and Lamartine gave the utmost impetus to the progress of this poetic mode. In prose, Chateaubriand's René and Atala, for example, lay a most important stress on the beauties of retired nature and personal meditations.

In the person of Michael Bruce, the young Scottish poet who died at 21, is to be found a poet of nature and solitude, who, coming from "a humble cot" and being of "low parentage" yet gave evidence of great poetic powers.195 Drake believes Bruce's The Cuckoo and Loch Leven outstanding, not only for their diction and versification, but more particularly for "the vein of pathetic sentiment" especially remarkable in Loch Leven.196

Bruce's Poems on Several Occasions (1770) contains two "Danish" odes over which much controversy has arisen. Farley cites Drake's attribution of them to Bruce, but also names John Campbell as possibly their true author.197 Professor McKillop has traced the odes to The Polite Correspondence (1741) edited by John Campbell, William Oldys and perhaps others, wherein the odes are described as "... two Translations, one of an ODE, preserv'd in the Collection made by Olaus Wormius, of Fragments of ancient Danish Hymns; the other from Saxo Grammaticus." 198

---

195 L.H., p. 352.
196 P. 356.
197 On cit., pp. 41-2.
Bruce's odes are therefore "merely revised and expanded versions of these same pieces."

In writing critical observations on *The Vale of Slaughden* by James Bird, of Suffolk, Drake has as his purpose to recommend a "retired bard" to a strenuously competitive literary world where "almost unparalleled popularity and applause" surround a "few favored individuals." In couplets like those of Pope, Dryden, and Goldsmith, Bird's minor epic has the couplet's "happy range ... between the stately march of blank verse, and the lively trip of the octosyllabic line." This "brisk measure" of the eight-foot verse is suitable to the "highly romantic, chivalric, and picturesque" themes of Scott; but the pentameter couplet is "possessed of such a wide field of flexibility, as, excluding the drama, to form a happy vehicle for almost every subject which can occur between the awful and sublime imagery of Milton, and the light and ludicrous familiarity of Butler." Drake cites the contrast between the "fictions" of Crabbe and of Byron as "modern" illustrations; the *Borough* and *Tales of the Hall* of the former, and the *Corsair* and *Lara* of the latter form a contrast to the "sweet and highly-polished" classical couplets of Bland's *Edway* and *Elgiva* and *The Four Slaves of Cythera* and Hodgson's *Lady Jane Gray* and *Sir Edgar.*

---

199 W. N., II, 184-5.
200 P. 189.
201 P. 190.
That the couplet has been adapted also to the "detail of pure sentiment and description," as well as to "every variety of incident," Roger's *Pleasures of Memory*, Leyden's *Scenes of Infancy*, Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope* and Heber's *Palestine* are evidence of.202

From "the spirited and varied harmony of Dryden, to the still more energetic metre of Lord Byron . . ." Bird thoroughly studied the English couplet, so that his versification "in point of versatility and vigour of structure, as of beauty and melody of cadence, will bear comparison with some of the most finished models of the day."203

This minor epic is set in Slaughden, a district (then a forest) on the East Anglican coast in the ninth century, when Alfred was fighting the Danes. The descriptions of scenery include a storm at sea and a shipwreck with a "closing exclamation of the poet . . . such as would reflect honour even on the pages of Byron."204 Coupled with this distinctly preromantic appreciation of the wild and solitary features of nature, and of the poet's personal reflections, is a use of Norse Mythology which displays "Bird's intimacy with the Edda"; all together these characteristics point to the awakening interest in Old English literature, an interest still marked by a confusion of meanings and facts, but significantly imprinted also with a genuine appreciation for the rugged, masculine themes of Anglo-Saxon poetry.

Professor McKillop has shown in a quotation from Celadon, a character in *The Polite Correspondence*, evidence of a denial

203 *P.* 191.
204 *P.* 195.
of the "dogma of progress in poetry" coupled with an emphasis on the attempt to recover the ancient inspiration of Greece and Britain in the ode by Collins, Akenside, and the Wartons. This quotation also points to Collins' Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland and to the Celtic and Norse revivals in general. "Anglo-Saxon poetry aroused far less interest in the eighteenth century than the supposedly more picturesque traditions of bard and scald . . . ." A quotation from Leander (another character) attributes this lack of appreciation of Anglo-Saxon poetry to its difficult diction and unsettled metre. These opinions were mainly drawn from Hickes' Thesaurus.

Poetry, Drake writes, is an effective agent in furthering the great interests of morality and religion, yet it is "often . . . in the present age . . . prostituted . . . to the worst and most debasing purposes of scepticism and impiety." Thus Drake's English moral nature is brought out in a quotation from Southey, author of Madoe and Roderick, "two poems which will carry down his name to posterity, embalmed in the tears of successive generations . . ." who inveighes against "this pernicious prevalency of licentious and sceptical poetry," while he advocates regarding "... the morals more than the manner of a composition; the spirit, rather than the form!" [in A Vision of Judgment].

---

206p. 511.
207p. 512.
208civ. in Aut., I, 60.
209p. 62.
The poems of Barnard Barton are "delightful" in this respect that, together with a talent "of no common order," they exhibit throughout their whole texture "sentiments the most correct, and a morality the most pure."210 Wiffen, author of Aonian Hours and of Julia Alpinula, and Barton are the only two Quaker poets of recent times, remarks Drake, due to the Quaker view of poetry as incompatible with or derogatory to religion.211 This emphasizes Drake's belief that fame in poetry should be "exclusively" built on the basis of morality, though it "has been forced into the cause of sophistry and sensuality."212

In Barton's approximately eighty poems, he has, like Goldsmith "... seldom touched on a theme which he has not rendered more striking, either by vigour or beauty of expression ..."; his versification, also, is "in general, correct and sweet" though often "too light and effervescent for the weight and solemnity of the subject ...".213 Barton's poems "claim their character almost exclusively from their power of impression on the moral feelings ...", wherein "sentiment" is a prominent note, "in the best and noblest acceptation of the term, as including many of the most awful and interesting touches which belong to our present and our future state of existence, and expressed with a simplicity which endears all that it wishes to enforce."214

210 P. 63.
211 P. 65.
212 P. 68.
213 P. 76.
In Yamoyden by Mr. Eastburn of New York, written from November 1817 to the summer of 1818 and edited in 1820 by a friend after the author's early death, Drake sees a token of the prospects for the diffusion and durability of English literature in America, as Morgann saw it in his notable Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff. The subject of Eastburn's poem is a romance based on some adventures of King Philip, "the well-known Sachem of Pokanoket," and imbued therefore with a genuine American spirit, important in preromantic poetic theory, though involving some "incongruities of fable and inequalities of composition."

The abandonment, on the part of many late eighteenth century writers, of French classicism, which had had a powerful influence on Augustan poetry, in favor of English preromanticism, as noted by Phelps and Van Tieghem, is exemplified for Drake in Delille's Les Jardins. Blenheim, Stow, and Twickenham are preferred to Versailles, while Delille "with a singular freedom from national prejudice" adopted as his "best and purest" models the first poets of Britain -- chiefly Milton, Pope, Thomson, Gray, and Goldsmith -- and at the same time provided "the most striking and successful instance of an almost complete emancipation from the pompous frigidity and declamatory affectation, which have so generally debased the poetry of his countrymen . . . ." Delille in his preface cites as his models

216 p. 245.
217 p. 248.
219 Noontide Leisure (London, 1824), I, 106.
Virgil's Georgics, Lucretius' De Rerum Natura, Thomson's Seasons, Boileau's L'Art Poétique and Pope's Essay on Man; Drake adds Delille's most obvious English counterpart: Mason's English Garden, which "has been deservedly praised for the justness of its precepts, and the beauty of its execution, for the purity of its taste, and the general simplicity of its style." 220

Among the minor poets whose works Drake analyses in detail are William Alabaster and Joseph Beaumont of Hadleigh, Suffolk. The reader will notice that in his choice of minor poets Drake is peculiarly attached to those of his native district, which may be a further indication of his adoption of the pre-romantic concept that a poet must speak for his native people.

Alabaster was "highly eminent in his day for the depth of his erudition, and the beauty of his Latin verse," 221 and was honored by Herrick (Hesperides, 1648) and by Spenser (Colin Clout's Come Home Again, 1595). 222 Malone is quoted as saying that in Alabaster's poetry "... the piety is more obvious than the poetry; yet Donne, and those in that age who admired Donne, doubtless thought them excellent ..." an opinion with which Drake agrees thoroughly. 223 This is puzzling when we remember his former opposition to Donne and his kind of poetry, yet over twenty years had passed since Literary Hours was first published in 1796, so that Drake had had ample time to revise his views under the more

---

220 [Footnote: P. 123.]
221 [Footnote: P. 243.]
immediate influence of the romantic poets.

Pope's view of Psyche, Beaumont's chief work, was that "... there are in it a great many flowers well worth gathering, and a man who has the art of stealing wisely, will find his account in reading it." Drake condemns Beaumont principally for his "strange want of taste, and ludicrous familiarity of language, "which prove what sifting and selection are necessary in quoting from the Psyche ... ." That Gray was Drake's favorite eighteenth century poet is illustrative of his emphasis upon good taste and noble diction in poetry, for lack of which requisites he condemns Beaumont.

The theme of morality introduced in the opening essay of Mornings in Spring (with an "apprehensive" view of Byron's hopes of a better world) is continued in Drake's analysis of Sidney's age or any following period, is there "a loftier and more thoroughly sustained tone of practical morality; nor ... sentiments more chastely delicate and pure." Drake attributes this purity of thought chiefly to Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, who revised her brother's poem before publication. Commenting on the Sidney and other metrical versions of the Psalms, Drake centers attention on Byron's Hebrew Melodies:

"... whilst he has preserved the general tone and spirit of this exquisite passage, [he] has not only added to, but inverted the series of its imagery ... ."

224 P. 276 (Pope's Minor Poems, p. xxiii.)
226 T, 8-9.
227 P. 161.
however, notwithstanding this licence
[ in the Augustan view of poetry], [this
work is] . . . worthy of the Hebrew lyrist
and of his lordship's talents . . . "228

Byron himself had many classical traits, and was a sincere
admirer of Dryden and Pope; his reliance on broad effects rather
than on subtle impressions, his keenness of wit, pungency of
criticism, and precision and unity of conception all reveal
the union of two dominant characteristics in Byron's poetry:
revolutionary spirit and classical art.229 These same two
features conflict in Drake, making him appear now as a neo-
classicist and later as a pre-romanticist; the best conclusion
is to recognize the diverse elements in his literary criticism
as affording a rich fund of insight into eighteenth century
culture in a majority of its phases.

Quoting from Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* on the
"melancholy fate of Rosabelle St. Clair" in Roslin Castle,
Drake launches on a comparison between Drummond of Hawthornden,
"the Petrarch of Scotland," and the original Petrarch. They
each lamented the reserve and the loss of the "objects of
their first affection"; and their sonnets may be divided into
those written before and after the deaths of their respective
ladies.230 With "that interesting air of melancholy which so
much attaches us to the writings of Petrarch," Drummond's poems
"prove with what exquisite taste and feeling, with what delicacy
of thought and felicity of expression, this neglected poet of

228p. 205.
229Paul E. More, ed. *The Complete Poetical Works of Lord
230in S., I, 259.
the seventeenth century could utter the sorrows of his heart."231 His The Cypress Grove, Flowers of Sion, Forth Feasting, and Hoeliades comprise his best poetry; the latter two, both written several years before the earliest productions of Waller and before Denham's Cooper's Hill, possess "a harmony of numbers" that is an honor to him.232 That he was read "with delight" by Milton, and with "industry, taste, and discrimination" by Pope is to Drake another sign of the appeal of this retired poet.233

Not all Drummond's poetry exhibits an equal degree of simplicity, pathos, and purity of expression, Drake admits; for many of the madrigals, epigrams, and miscellanies are "not only in themselves of a trifling nature, but discover an unfortunate partiality for the prettinesses and concetti of the Italian school . . . ."234

Drake believes it possible that Milton directed, or at least concurred with his nephew's opinions as expressed in Philip's 1656 edition of Drummond's poetry: "... that he [Milton] had a high relish for the many curious felicities of diction and metre with which the better part of his [Drummond's] poetry abounds, there can be . . . little doubt."235 Drake quotes Pinkerton's Ancient Scottish Poems (vol. 1, p. cxxiii) in corroboration, and we may add Kastner's views in the Scottish Text Society's edition — Lycidas, Comus, Il Penseroso ed L'Allegro being particularly indebted to Drummond and his in-

231p. 260.
232p. 279.
233p. 271 and 280, respectively.
234p. 299.
235p. 306.
roduction of "the fine Italian vein."\textsuperscript{236}

Another poet of the Valley of the Esk was Sir Walter Scott, whose poetical romances combine "the interest of the novel with the charm of a very varied rhythmical harmony... with a boldness, strength, and freedom of style "peculiarly accordant with the wild and chivalric tone of the characters and incidents which they describe."\textsuperscript{237} Occasionally Scott reveals "a coarseness, roughness, and apparent slovenliness in the diction and versification," but "... never did verse exhibit, in a more perfect degree, its power of bringing material objects before the mind's eye."\textsuperscript{238} Of all Scott's romances, Drake prefers \textit{Marmion}: "from the loftier cast of its imagery, and the thrilling awfullness \textsuperscript{[so]} of its conceptions" as well as its "moral pathos."\textsuperscript{239} Thus we again find these leading characteristics of Drake's standards of poetry, which are the very embodiment of preromantic and romantic ideals.

Having compared Homer, Ossian and Milton, and Drummond and Petrarch, Drake forms his most lengthy parallelism on the poetical characters of Chaucer, Dunbar and Burns. Previously it had been supposed, "from a too partial acquaintance" that humor and delineation of character were "the departments in which he could alone establish a claim to excellence," but it is just as true that Chaucer possesses "more peculiarly

\textsuperscript{237}ib. in S., I, 315.
\textsuperscript{238}p. 316.
\textsuperscript{239}p. 316.
poetical ones which originate in a display not only of inventive and descriptive powers, but occasionally of those which unfold the emotions of pity and terror. While the vast majority of *The Canterbury Tales* exhibits "the richest vein of humorous characterization, an equal opulence is discoverable both in these and other parts of his works, in the serious and more elevated flights of fancy." Drake also cites the "faithful delineations" of the beauties of nature in *Romaunt of the Rose*; the "splendid . . . terrific and sublime . . . . imagery and incidents" in *Palamon and Arcite* and in *Cambuscan* [the *Knight's Tale* and *Squire's Tale*, respectively]; and the "deep and commiserating sympathy" invoked by the "pathetic" narratives of *Troilus and Cressida* and *Patient Griseldis* [the *Clerk's Tale*]. Modern opinion places Chaucer's humor parallel to Shakespeare's in that it is "kindly and never cruel . . . ." and though "broad and unashamed . . . it never sides with evil or mocks at good." In his blended humor and pathos, and in his great verse artistry, he was first presented in a sound edition in 1775; so that Drake rightly makes a point of emphasizing Chaucer's noblest qualities.

In poetical history, Dunbar is the next instance of "first-rate abilities for humor and comic painting, [united] with an equally powerful command over the higher regions of fiction and imagination." His *The Thistle and the Rose*, and *The Golden
Targe [or The Thrissil and the Rois, and The Goldyn Targe] display "great warmth and luxuriancy of description, and great skill in the invention and arrangement of the allegorical imagery, while they rival in opulence and strength of colouring the most highly-finished allegorical pictures of his great master, Chaucer . . . ." 245

The Scottish Text Society's edition of Dunbar states that his imitation of Chaucer is "seen rather in his language than in direct imitation of particular poems." 246 However, he did follow the Chaucerian types or forms of poetry, especially the dream allegory and the humorous narrative.

Dunbar's minor poems are lyrics Drake characterises as "of an ethic and satiric vigour" with "frequent touches of moral sublimity and bold personification, blended too, as is often the case, with strokes of genuine pathos." 247 Present-day criticism cites Dunbar's genius and his addition of original life and humor to the old matter as his outstanding features. 248 "The satirical and occasional poems constitute at once the greater and more important part of Dunbar's work." 249 His satire is not gently Chaucerian but more nearly approaches Burns in its "elfin quality which relieves his boisterous strain of ridicule." 250 Thus we see that Drake's comparisons were well and soundly based on a sympathetic and understanding reading of the three

---

245 p. 7.
247 in S., II, 8.
248 Cam. Hist., p. 90.
249 P. 91.
250 Ibid.
poets Chaucer, Dunbar, and Burns.

That Burns has rivalled Chaucer and Dunbar in "humor, description, and moral satire, and even surpassed them in the pathetic, the terrible, and the sublime" is to be seen from his poems which Drake divides into the following groups: (1) productions of a great and equal portion of pathos and descriptive power, as in A Winter Night, Despondency, The Mountain Daisy and others, and the majority of the songs, which are "for their exquisite tenderness, and the beauty of their local scenery, perfectly unrivalled . . ."; (2) those of a "higher province of the pathetic and sublime": The Cotter's Saturday Night, The Vision, Bruce to his Troops, and The Song of Death, "effusions warm from the heart, and instinct with all the energy, sublimity, and feeling, which patriotism, religion, and domestic affection could supply"; (3) those of "that remarkable interunion of humour with the deeper emotions of the mind and heart . . ." so strongly characteristic of Burns: as examples of this humor combined with tenderness, or moral satire, or vivid powers of descriptions Drake lists The Holy Fair, The Brigs of Ayr, Halloween, and other poems; and (4) those of a "still rarer combination of humorous delineation with the terrible and sublime" as the Address to the Deil and Tam O'Shanter, the latter being "so masterly a display of contrasted talent." 251

251 M. in S., II, 10-11.
Thus Drake closes his lengthy parallelism with the eighteenth century poet Burns, whose work was "as solidly based on fact as Crabbe's, as intimately connected with sentimentalism as Cowper's, but ranged far beyond them in its fusion of humorous, emotional, and imaginative power."252

Among the sketches of the poets of the Augustan period who contributed to the periodical essays, the most interesting for a study of preromanticism are those of Pope, Swift, and Joseph and Thomas Warton. Drake's opinion of Pope is based to a very great extent upon Joseph Warton's Essay on Pope, as is evident in his estimation of Pope's rank among the English poets:

"... by far the greater part of his original productions consists of ethic and satiric poetry, and by those who estimate mere moral sentiment, or the exposure of fashionable vice or folly, when clothed in splendid versification, as the highest province of the art, he must be considered as the first of bards. If, however, sublimity, imagination, and pathos be, as they assuredly are, the noblest efforts of the creative powers, and the most difficult of attainment, Pope will be found to have had some superiors, and several rivals."253

Warton had written: "... in that species of poetry wherein Pope excelled, he is superior to all mankind: and I only say, that this species of poetry is not the most excellent one of the art."254 The Sublime and the Pathetic are the two chief nerves of all genuine poesy. What is there transcendentally Sublime or Pathetic in Pope?"255

---

252 E.C.P.P., p. xxxvi.
255 P. x.
Thus Warton characterises Pope's *Essay on Criticism* as a poem "of that species, for which our author's genius was particularly turned, the DIDACTIC and the MORAL; it is, therefore, . . . a master-piece in its kind."256

Drake cites *The Rape of the Lock* as Pope's best poem. So Warton had said: "... in this composition, Pope principally appears as a POET; in ... [this] he has displayed more imagination than in all his other works taken together."257

In Drake's placement of Pope among the English poets we are given a mid-transition view of Pope, as far as Drake's literary criticism and its gradual development from Augustan ideals tinged with preromanticism to actual "romantic" ideals still colored by remaining vestiges of Augustan or neo-classical standards is concerned. This may be traced in a parallel manner in his treatment of Donne whom he at first in *Literary Hours* (1798) absolutely condemns, but finally in *Noontide Leisure* (1824) approves of. His gradual relinquishment of Pope's poetic tenets in favor of preromantic views which signalled a return to the personal independence and intensity of Donne's poetry is an integral part of his increasing interest in Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, and Chaucer, as well as in the Scandinavian, Celtic and Germanic mythologies and legends.

Jonathan Swift's poetry presents an entirely different aspect of preromanticism in its emphasis upon accurate

257p. 257.
observation, conversational language, and popular practicality of theme. Swift's poetry for Drake "... attained a degree of perfection, of which English rhyme, before ..., had not been thought susceptible." Written in "the language of conversation," Swift's poetry has, with technical beauties of versification, "in the best pieces, combined the most poignant wit and humour, and a rich display of character ..."; though it shows "the same blemish" as his prose -- "the grossest indecencies." 258

Swift's satire and humor are "too strong, too coarse and indiscriminate for the purposes of a periodical paper, written with the professed view of correcting the errors of mankind by gentle and lenient methods ..." In his first contribution to Steele and Addison's periodicals, A Morning in Town (Tatler 9), Swift's imagery is "curious and accurate, and ... [affords] one, among numerous proofs in the works of the Dean, of his vigilant attention to minute occurrences and particulars." 259 His next verse contribution was The City Shower (Tatler 238), which possesses "merit as an accurate description, though it be of circumstances not very pleasing to the imagination." 260 Also noteworthy are Swift's Poem to Stella, On His Passion for Vanessa, Baucis and Philemon, and his Imitations of Horace. 261

Drake's analysis of Swift's poetry was unusually favorable for that time -- the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries -- since Swift was extraordinarily neglected till recent

258 Essays (London, 1805) III, 150.
259 P. 174.
260 P. 180.
261 P. 151.
years; his poems especially wore "undeservedly overshadowed" and "neglected and mishandled" by editors." 262

In succession to Butler in style, Swift's poetry was of a much wider range. "The very conciseness, clarity, and directness which lend to his prose a deceptive simplicity, ... fetter him as a poet and confine him range." 263 Thus another modern editor echoes Drake's view of Swift's poetic value in the following statement: "His invincible command of the plain phrase appears in verse as well as prose." 264

Of Joseph Warton's seventeen odes only two are "entitled to an elevated rank for their lofty tone and high finish": the Odes To Fancy and On Reading Mr. West's Pindar -- of these the first is "much superior." 265 This ode abounds in "a succession of strongly-contrasted and high-wrought imagery, clothed in a versification of the sweetest cadence and most brilliant polish." 266 Modern editors rank Joseph's interest in medieval literature as lower than Thomas', but on the other hand, his appreciation of the greatness of Dante was clearer than his brother's and his interest in Spenser and Milton as real. 267

In The Pleasures of Melancholy, Thomas Warton reveals himself as a "disciple" of Milton and Spenser, though not "a mere imitator." 268 As a poet, Drake believes, Thomas is greatly

263 ibid., p. xiii.
264 E.P.P., p. 171.
265 Essays (London, 1809), II, 117.
266 Ibid.
267 See Hist., p. 538.
superior to his brother Joseph, "both in vigour and fertility of imagination, though, perhaps, less sweet and polished in his versification." In lyric poetry he is "nearer the genius of Collins than of Gray; for, like the former, he was strongly addicted to the wild, the wonderful, and the romantic." Collins, Thomas Warton and Scott, asserts Drake, are a modern triumvirate to parallel Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton.

Clarissa Rinaker's *Thomas Warton* presents the twentieth century view of this poet in much the same manner of mood as Drake's essays:

"Although Warton's love of the past, his appreciation of nature, and his critical method show that he belonged at least as much to the early nineteenth as to the eighteenth century, he was without the uncontrolled emotionalism and the spirit of revolt that marked many writers of the next century; he had the characteristic temper of his own time, -- its composure, its restraint, its common sense."
III.

In the preface to *Memorials of Shakspeare* [so] Drake distinguishes the following writers as the leading eighteenth century critics of Shakespeare: (1) In England: Dryden, Thomas Warton, Mackenzie, Cumberland, Beattie, Godwin, Lamb, Coleridge, Campbell, and Scott — each of whom, except Dryden, is represented by one or several essays —; (2) Abroad: (a) in Germany: Goethe, Lessing, Herder, Voss, Tieck, Wieland, Eschenburg, Frederick Schlegel and Augustus Wilhelm Schlegel; (b) in Italy: Michele Leoni; (c) in Spain: Fernandez Moratin; (d) in France: Le Mercier, Le Tourneur, Ducis, Villermain, and Madame de Stael. Of the second or foreign group only A. W. Schlegel, F. Schlegel, Madame de Stael, Lessing, Goethe, and Villermain are represented by various essays. There also appear several anonymous essays and a few contemporary periodical reviews.

As these essays are not Drake's own but are merely indicative of his deep interest and broad scope of reading in this field of criticism, passages shall not be cited. The prefatory and concluding essays by Drake would repay an interested reader.

*Shakspeare and His Times*, Drake's voluminous contribution to Shakespearean criticism, will now occupy our attention. To the writing of these massive tomes and the research and reflection involved in their composition were devoted the majority of Drake's leisure hours for over thirty years.

After five hundred pages of purely conjectural and subjectively analytical review of Shakespeare's biographical history, legends, anecdotes, social background, -- a common failing of early critics of Shakespeare, as Ralli remarks,-- Drake plunges into a detailed study of Shakespeare's possible or probable sources of inspiration, as evidence in the material of his plays.

Drake's significant statements in this connection are those which illustrate the poet's indebtedness to popular tales and romances: "... a considerable and perhaps the greater portion of Shakspeare's Library consisted of Romances and Tales, ... a conclusion fully warranted from the extensive use which he has made of them in his dramatic works." Noting that there was "... no period ... in which a greater love of romantic fiction existed, than that ... of Elizabeth ...," Drake enumerates five classes of prose romance: Anglo-Norman, Oriental, Italian, Spanish, and Pastoral [or Ballad].

The most interesting section of discussion is that on Shakespeare's use of the pastoral romance or ballad. Drake points out the "peculiar partiality for these popular little pieces" so manifest in the poet's plays, his delight in quoting them and the simplicity and beauty of his own compositions of this type.

---

274 Sh. and His Times (London, 1817), I, 518.
275 p. 523.
276 p. 574.
Many of the songs, or fragments of songs, scattered through Shakespeare's plays, "... either proceed from the professed clown or fool of the play, or are given as the wild and desultory recollections of derangements, real or feigned ..." Shakespeare's fools are exact copies of their living models. To perform their functions it was necessary that they possess a "lively fancy," a "copious fund of wit and sarcasm," and an unlimited license to utter "what imagination and the occasion prompted ..."; but it was also requisite that "bitterness of allusion, and asperity of remark, should be softened by the constant assumption of a playful and unintentional manner." For this purpose Shakespeare resorted to the indirect method of quotation, generally from ludicrous songs and ballads, to cover what would otherwise have been too clearly felt. Thus the "simple yet sarcastic drollery of the fool, and the wild ravings of the madman, have been alike employed to deepen the gloom of distress." Lear and Hamlet offer particularly good instances of the use of this dramatic device. In conclusion Drake declares that Shakespeare, more than any other of his contemporaries except Spenser, was "addicted" to a study of ballads and "partial" to their fictions; Shakespeare's employment of them was always "... either elucidatory of the business of the scene, illustrative of the progress of the passions, or powerfully assistant in developing the features and shades of character ...".

278 P. 593.
As causes for the remarkable fertility of Elizabethan poetry, Drake lists "superstition, language, and romance," and explains further that the "partial belief" in the supernatural — fairies and witches — and the "awful and mysterious conception of the spiritual world" — ghosts — exactly suited the "higher reasons" of poetry without conflicting too seriously with the advancing deductions of science. In language a rich vocabulary "in natives and exotics," enthusiasm for literary acquisition through the classics, the lack of dictatorial critical canons to bind the poet, and the "fading glory of chivalry and romance" — all contributed to the poet's store.279

The chief distinctions of Elizabethan poetry were its powers of description and creation, its simplicity and energy of diction, and its wide dominion over the feelings.280 Fault might be found especially with the attribution of "simplicity" but that what Drake called "ancient" English poetry had vitality in abundance cannot be denied. The great fault in lyric poetry at that time was, as Drake saw it, "a want of economy in the use of imagery and ornament, and in the distribution of parts as relative to the whole," or "a want of union in style," as cultivated successfully by the moderns, "who since the days of Pope, have paid a scrupulous attention to the mechanism of versification, to the consonancy and keeping of style, and to the niceties and economy of arrangement."281

279-281
Due to the self-dependence and appeal to original sources Elizabethan poetry exhibits a "strength, a raciness, and verisimilitude" very rarely attained since then, merits which "more than compensate for any subordinate defects in the ornamental departments of metre or style."\textsuperscript{282}

Gray is cited by Drake as the outstanding modern who "to very lofty flights of sublimity, has happily united the utmost splendour of diction, and the utmost brilliancy of versification "on a small scale.\textsuperscript{283} On a large scale Drake prefers the Elizabethans to the moderns in literature, as he prefers Michelangelo to Titian in art.

Parallel to the faults of Elizabethan poetry in general, Shakespeare's two principal faults, according to Drake, are: (1) "a want of high-finishing," and (2) "positive defects of want of union in style and want of connection and arrangement in economy . . . ."\textsuperscript{284} Nonetheless Drake severely condemns that "meretricious glare of colouring, that uniform, though seductive polish, and that monotony of versification, which are but too apparent in the school of Pope . . . ." and which have, he says, been carried "to a disgusting excess by Darwin and his disciples," thus vitiating or diluting all development of intense emotion, and paralysing the power of "picturesque delineation" which subsist only in an uncontrolled freedom of execution and a variety and energy in language and rhythm.\textsuperscript{285}

\textsuperscript{282}p. 599.
\textsuperscript{283}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{284}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{285}Ibid.
Therefore the reader concludes that in Drake's actual belief the defects of Shakespeare pale into insignificance when compared with those of the poets whose best qualities are the very features of style that Shakespeare did not possess to any great degree.

An appendix attached to the bibliography gives Drake's own chronological list of Shakespeare's plays. His estimates of the approximate dates are based on internal evidence (versification, plot, characterization), external references (such as Meres') and in particular a study of Malone's and of Reed's editions of Shakespeare (with which Drake does not always agree). 286

Originally it was the intention of this thesis to present the most distinguishing critical ideas expressed on the various dramas, following Drake's order of arrangement. However this now seems to be impossible if space and time are considered and unnecessary in addition to Drake's own summaries. Drake's studies of Lear, Macbeth, The Tempest, Hamlet, and A Midsummer Night's Dream are lengthiest due to his digressions on superstition and supernatural "machinery." His review of the two parts of Henry IV and of Henry V is also lengthy due to his devotion to the Prince and Falstaff. We may notice with interest that Drake's choice of the "best" plays is as follows: Macbeth, Lear, The Tempest, and Hamlet. He is particularly devoted to Macbeth.

286Shakespeare and His Times (London, 1817), II, 261-2.
Quoting Herder and Schlegel on the difference between classic and romantic drama, Drake compares the classic to "a group in sculpture," and the romantic or Gothic to "an extensive picture," — separation being the essence of the former, and combination of the latter, — or, in other words: "... the spirit of the Grecian drama is plastic and that of the English picturesque."287

Drake then discusses the origins of the romantic drama, with its effect on medieval poetry "in impressing it with an awful and mysterious character"; and its progress is traced to Shakespeare, "the founder of this species of the drama," of whose serious plays "... this reference to futurity, this apprehension of the possible consequences of death, which chills the blood with awful emotion, and mingles fear even with the energies of hope..." is peculiarly characteristic.288 "Macbeth," Drake believes, is the outstanding example.

Ralli emphasizes the fact that Drake's best critical remarks on Shakespeare are those on the origins of the romantic drama, and those reflecting his own "spiritual" rather than "intellectual" impressions — where Drake enriches his subject is "in treating Shakespeare's supernatural scenes."289 Drake's indebtedness to previous writers, especially Thomas Warton's History of English Poetry is acknowledged and is evident; however Drake goes directly to Shakespeare's contemporaries

287 fp. 538.
288 fp. 539-41.
and predecessors and gives his own well thought out considerations, no matter how influenced they may -- partially -- be.

To "unity of action, the indispensable requisite of every well-constituted fable" Shakespeare has added "unity of feeling, as applicable not only to individual characters, but to the prevailing tone and influence of each play ..."; the former is "frequently broken," but the latter "in no respect ... violated ..."290

As illustrations Drake mentions: Romeo and Juliet, a representation of "the freshness and fragrance of youth and spring, their sweetness, their innocency, and alas! their transiency ..."; Macbeth, "a tempest of more than midnight horror, and the still more turbulent strife of human vice and passion ..."; As You Like It, "tender and philosophic melancholy"; Much Ado, "the bustle and vivacity, the light and effervescent wit which animate, and sparkle in, the dialogue ..."291 Drake offers this unity "by which the separate parts of a drama are rendered subservient to a single common object, namely, the product of a combined and uniform impression ..." as one of the most remarkable proofs of Shakespeare's mental "depth and comprehensiveness."292

The mixture and interchange of comic and tragic emotions is "almost always contrived," Drake states, so that the "ludicrous personages of his play should give essential aid to the pre-

290Sh. and His Times, II, 541.
291P. 543.
292P. 543.
determined effect of the composition as a whole . . ."; this cooperation is most apparent when the effect is tragic, as thus the anguish of Lear is augmented by the "sarcastic drollery" of the fool, with an energy and strength that no other expedient could have accomplished. 293 These contrasts of tragic and comic are "of the very essence" of the romantic drama.

"His characters live and breathe before us; we perceive not only what they say and do, but what they feel and think; and we are tempted to believe, that like some magician of old, he possessed the art of speaking through the organs of those whom he wished to represent; so exactly has he drawn, without deviation from the general laws and broad tract of life, each class and condition of mankind." 294

Thus each character develops itself, not through the medium of self-description, but, as in actual experience, through the influence and progression of events, and through the reactions of surrounding persons. 295

The painting of passions involves " . . . some of the noblest attributes of the dramatic poet, and [this is] more peculiarly characteristic of Shakspeare [so] than of any other writer." 296 Pity and terror are two dominant passions portrayed in varying degrees. The intermingling of pity and terror is accomplished "with inimitable felicity" so that an excess of either never occurs. Thus Richard III possesses intellectual vigor which counteracts the disgust caused by his gigantic
iniquity; and the "merciless revenge" of Shylock is alleviated by the harmony of love and pity in the characters around him.  

Shakespeare's comic drama "possesses the same unrivalled merit as his tragic . . ."; force and versatility, richness, depth, facility of expression, originality and fecundity of invention characterize this unique writer's comic plays.  

The "splendour and infinity" of Shakespeare's imagination, and the "stamp of glowing inspiration" place him on a level with Homer, Dante, and Milton; while at the same time "there exclusively belongs to him an insinuating loveliness of fancy that endears him to our feelings . . . "

Morality, "the most valuable result of composition," so completely pervades every portion of his dramas that nearly each page contains "its lessons of virtue and utility." This statement certainly shows Drake's English morality at its top level; it also indicates the early eighteenth century didactic emphasis in poetry.

In Shakespeare "... some coarsenesses and indelicacies . . ." occur which, however, "as they excite no passion and flatter no vice, are, in a moral light, not injurious; some instances of an injudicious play on words, and a few violations . . . of technical costume, form their chief amount . . . ."  

Craig points out that a "new Shakespeare criticism" was an important part of the romantic movement; the eighteenth

---

297P. 548.
298P. 550.
299P. 551.
300P. 552.
301Ibid.
century thinkers, however, "... found in Shakespeare such a marvelously significant and consistent picture of life that they came to think of him as endowed with the insight of a seer and the power of a poet, as greater and more significant than life itself."\textsuperscript{302}

Nevertheless, Drake's opinions of the "unity of feeling" of Shakespeare is a vital contribution.

The purpose of this thesis has been to illustrate by means of quotations from Drake's voluminous works, the contention that he was primarily a "preromanticist" in his literary standards. Because of his prolixity and his frequent absorption in minor literary questions and persons, Drake undoubtedly lowered the value of his essays to a dangerously low level in regard to his position in the history of literary criticism.

Nevertheless, Drake's place as the most widely-read man of the eighteenth century in Scandinavian literature, his reflections of nearly every major trend in contemporary poetry, and his remarkable development into a critic of purely "preromantic" theories -- a progress traceable from Literary Hours, in 1798, to Mornings in Spring, in 1828 -- entitle him to a rank of significance in the history of literature.

Drake's favorite and oft-repeated demands that poetry be characterised chiefly by "the pathetic, the terrible, and the sublime," his gradual relinquishment of "high-polished versification," as in Pope, in favor of originality, sincerity, and simplicity of thought and diction, as in Cowper, and his emphasis on imagination, which with the first three characteristics are mainly to be found in Drake's selection of the first-ranking poet of the eighteenth century, Thomas Gray. -- All these above-named requisites are linked undeniably with the beginnings of romanticism.

Phelps emphasized the truth that the "general character" of eighteenth century literature was "formal, critical, and
prosaic," but that "benath this outward crust the fire of Romanticism was glowing."

So also preromantic is Drake's absolute admiration of Shakespeare, who was the prototype of the "natural genius," the poet untound or unregulated by authoritative rules or unities. A lesser example of the natural poet was Ossian, due to his doubtful authenticity.

The appreciation of Shakespeare, Milton, and Spenser, -- all "romantic" in spirit -- with a good portion of their poetical inspiration coming from native legends, beliefs, and traditions, (including the Bible), was vitally connected with the growing interest in Old English poetry, prose, and chronicles; in medieval literature, especially Chaucer, whose versification and language had not been properly understood till Tyrwhitt's work; in early mystery and morality plays leading up to Shakespeare's "romantic" drama; and finally in the basic Germanic legends as particularly revealed in the prose and poetic Edda. Thus French neo-classicism gave way to English and Scandinavian romanticism, and the folk ballads, songs, and myths of each nation became part of the poet's library.

That this revival of interest was a gradual process and a steady one is typified in Nathan Drake's essays which mirror his conflicting views of poetry, his inherited neo-classical doctrines and his native romantic tendencies, -- and his genuine-ness as a preromantic critic.

\[^1\] E.R.M., p. 6.
A. Drake's works.


4. *Essays, Biographical, Critical and Historical, illustrative of the Rambler, Adventurer, and Idler, and of the various Periodical Papers which, in imitation of the Writings of Steele and Addison, Have Been Published between the close of the eighth volume of the Spectator, and the commencement of the year 1809*. London: Printed by J. Seeley, Buckingham, for W. Suttaby, Stationers Court, 1809. 2 vols. 499, 503 pp. respectively.


6. *Shakespeare and His Times, including The Biography of the Poet, Criticisms on His Genius and Writings; A New Chronology of His Plays; A Disquisition on the Object of His Sonnets; and a History of the Manners, Customs, and Amusements, Superstitions, Poetry, and Elegant Literature of His Age*. London: Printed by A. Strahan, Printers' Street, for T. Cadell and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1817. 2 vols. 735, 677 pp. respectively.


11. **Memorials of Shakspeare; or, Sketches of His Character and Genius, by Various Writers, now first collected; with a Prefatory and Concluding Essay, and Notes.** London: Printed by A. J. Valpy, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, for Henry Colburn, New Burlington Street, 1828. 494 pp.

B. Supplementary works.


## APPENDIX

Drake's Chronological Table of Plays:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Pericles</td>
<td>1590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Comedy of Errors</td>
<td>1591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Love's Labour's Lost</td>
<td>1591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>King Henry the VI, Part 1</td>
<td>1592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>King Henry the IV, Part 2</td>
<td>1592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Midsummer Night's Dream</td>
<td>1593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Romeo and Juliet</td>
<td>1593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Taming of the Shrew</td>
<td>1594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Two Gentlemen of Verona</td>
<td>1595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>King Richard the III</td>
<td>1595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>King Richard the II</td>
<td>1596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>King Henry the IV, Part 1</td>
<td>1596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>King Henry the IV, Part 2</td>
<td>1596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>The Merchant of Venice</td>
<td>1597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>1597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>King John</td>
<td>1598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>All's Well That Ends Well</td>
<td>1598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>King Henry the V</td>
<td>1599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Much Ado</td>
<td>1599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>As You Like It</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Merry Wives of Windsor</td>
<td>1601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Troilus and Cressida</td>
<td>1601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>King Henry the VIII</td>
<td>1602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Timon of Athens</td>
<td>1602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Measure for Measure</td>
<td>1603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>King Lear</td>
<td>1604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Cymbeline</td>
<td>1605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Macbeth</td>
<td>1606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Julius Caesar</td>
<td>1607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Antony and Cleopatra</td>
<td>1608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Coriolanus</td>
<td>1609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>The Winter's Tale</td>
<td>1610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>The Tempest</td>
<td>1611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>1612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Twelfth Night</td>
<td>1613</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hardin Craig's edition of *Shakespeare* presents a detailed chronological list of the plays on p. 46 that is interesting to compare with Drake's list.