The external style has been from the first an object of unqualified and well-merited praise. Both the chief authors are direct, sincere, and lifelike, and the many short sentences which they mingle with the longer, balanced, ones give point and force. Steele is on the whole somewhat more colloquial and less finished, Addison more balanced and polished, though without artificial formality. Dr. Johnson's repeatedly quoted description of the style can scarcely be improved on--'familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious.'

It still remains to speak of one particular achievement of 'The Spectator,' namely the development of the character-sketch, accomplished by means of the series of De Coverly papers, scattered at intervals among the others. This was important because it signified preparation for the modern novel with its attention to character as well as action. The character-sketch as a distinct form began with the Greek philosopher, Theophrastus, of the third century B. C., who struck off with great skill brief humorous pictures of typical figures--the Dissembler, the Flatterer, the Coward, and so on. This sort of writing, in one form or another, was popular in France and England in the seventeenth century. From it Steele, and following him Addison, really derived the idea for their portraits of Sir Roger, Will Honeycomb, Will Wimble, and the other members of the De Coverly group; but in each case they added individuality to the type traits. Students should consider how complete the resulting characterizations are, and in general just what additions and changes in all respects would be needed to transform the De Coverly papers into a novel of the nineteenth century type.

ALEXANDER POPE, 1688-1744. The chief representative of pseudo-classicism in its most particular field, that of poetry, is Dryden's successor, Alexander Pope.

Pope was born in 1688 (just a hundred years before Byron), the son of a Catholic linen-merchant in London. Scarcely any other great writer has ever had to contend against such hard and cruel handicaps as he. He inherited a deformed and dwarfed body and an incurably sickly constitution, which carried with it abnormal sensitiveness of both nerves and mind. Though he never had really definite religious convictions of his own, he remained all his life formally loyal to his parents' faith, and under the laws of the time this closed to him all the usual careers of a gentleman. But he was predestined by Nature to be a poet. Brought up chiefly at the country home near Windsor to which his father had retired, and left to himself for

mental training, he never acquired any thoroughness of knowledge or power of systematic thought, but he read eagerly the poetry of many languages. He was one of the most precocious of the long list of precocious versifiers; his own words are: 'I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.' The influences which would no doubt have determined his style in any case were early brought to a focus in the advice given him by an amateur poet and critic, William Walsh. Walsh declared that England had had great poets, 'but never one great poet that was correct' (that is of thoroughly regular style). Pope accepted this hint as his guiding principle and proceeded to seek correctness by giving still further polish to the pentameter couplet of Dryden.

At the age of twenty-one, when he was already on familiar terms with prominent literary men, he published some imitative pastorals, and two years later his 'Essay on Criticism.' This work is thoroughly representative both of Pope and of his period. In the first place the subject is properly one not for poetry but for expository prose. In the second place the substance is not original with Pope but is a restatement of the ideas of the Greek Aristotle, the Roman Horace, especially of the French critic Boileau, who was Pope's earlier contemporary, and of various other critical authorities, French and English. But in terse and epigrammatic expression of fundamental or pseudo-classical principles of poetic composition and criticism the 'Essay' is amazingly brilliant, and it shows Pope already a consummate master of the couplet. The reputation which it brought him was very properly increased by the publication the next year of the admirable mock-epic 'The Rape of the Lock,' which Pope soon improved, against Addison's advice, by the delightful 'machinery' of the Rosicrucian sylphs. In its adaptation of means to ends and its attainment of its ends Lowell has boldly called this the most successful poem in English. Pope now formed his lifelong friendship with Swift (who was twice his age), with Bolingbroke, and other distinguished persons, and at twenty-five or twenty-six found himself acknowledged as the chief man of letters in England, with a wide European reputation.

For the next dozen years he occupied himself chiefly with the formidable task (suggested, no doubt, by Dryden's 'Virgil,' but expressive also of the age) of translating 'The Iliad' and 'The Odyssey.' 'The Iliad' he completed unaided, but then, tiring of the drudgery, he turned over half of 'The Odyssey' to two minor writers. So easy, however, was his style to catch that if the facts were not on record the work of his assistants would generally

be indistinguishable from his own. From an absolute point of view many criticisms must be made of Pope's version. That he knew little Greek when he began the work and from first to last depended much on translations would in itself have made his rendering inaccurate. Moreover, the noble but direct and simple spirit and language of Homer were as different as possible from the spirit and language of the London drawing-rooms for which Pope wrote; hence he not only expands, as every author of a verse-translation must do in filling out his lines, but inserts new ideas of his own and continually substitutes for Homer's expressions the periphrastic and, as he held, elegant ones of the pseudo-classic diction. The polished rimed couplet, also, pleasing as its precision and smoothness are for a while, becomes eventually monotonous to most readers of a romantic period. Equally serious is the inability which Pope shared with most of the men of his time to understand the culture of the still half-barbarous Homeric age. He supposes (in his Preface) that it was by a deliberate literary artifice that Homer introduced the gods into his action, supposes, that is, that Homer no more believed in the Greek gods than did he, Pope, himself; and in general Pope largely obliterates the differences between the Homeric warrior-chief and the eighteenth century gentleman. The force of all this may be realized by comparing Pope's translation with the very sympathetic and skilful one made (in prose) in our own time by Messrs. Lang, Leaf, and Myers. A criticism of Pope's work which Pope never forgave but which is final in some aspects was made by the great Cambridge professor, Bentley: 'It's a pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer.' Yet after all, Pope merited much higher praise than this, and his work was really, a great achievement. It has been truly said that every age must have the great classics translated into its own dialect, and this work could scarcely have been better done for the early eighteenth century than it is done by Pope.

The publication of Pope's Homer marks an important stage in the development of authorship. Until the time of Dryden no writer had expected to earn his whole living by publishing works of real literature. The medieval minstrels and romancers of the higher class and the dramatists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had indeed supported themselves largely or wholly by their works, but not by printing them. When, in Dryden's time, with the great enlargement of the reading public, conditions were about to change, the publisher took the upper hand; authors might sometimes receive gifts from the noblemen to whom they inscribed dedications, but for their main returns they must generally sell their works outright to the publisher and accept his price. Pope's 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey'

afforded the first notably successful instance of another method, that of publication by subscription--individual purchasers at a generous price being secured beforehand by solicitation and in acknowledgment having their names printed in a conspicuous list in the front of the book. From the two Homeric poems together, thanks to this device, Pope realized a profit of nearly £9000, and thus proved that an author might be independent of the publisher. On the success of 'The Iliad' alone Pope had retired to an estate at a London suburb, Twickenham (then pronounced 'Twitnam'), where he spent the remainder of his life. Here he laid out five acres with skill, though in the formal landscape-garden taste of his time. In particular, he excavated under the road a 'grotto,' which he adorned with mirrors and glittering stones and which was considered by his friends, or at least by himself, as a marvel of artistic beauty.

Only bare mention need here be made of Pope's edition of Shakspere, prepared with his usual hard work but with inadequate knowledge and appreciation, and published in 1725. His next production, 'The Dunciad,' can be understood only in the light of his personal character. Somewhat like Swift, Pope was loyal and kind to his friends and inoffensive to persons against whom he did not conceive a prejudice. He was an unusually faithful son, and, in a brutal age, a hater of physical brutality. But, as we have said, his infirmities and hardships had sadly warped his disposition and he himself spoke of 'that long disease, my life.' He was proud, vain, abnormally sensitive, suspicious, quick to imagine an injury, incredibly spiteful, implacable in resentment, apparently devoid of any sense of honesty--at his worst hateful and petty-minded beyond any other man in English literature. His trickiness was astonishing. Dr. Johnson observes that he 'hardly drank tea without a stratagem,' and indeed he seems to have been almost constitutionally unable to do anything in an open and straightforward way. Wishing, for example, to publish his correspondence, he not only falsified it, but to preserve an appearance of modesty engaged in a remarkably complicated series of intrigues by which he trapped a publisher into apparently stealing a part of it--and then loudly protested at the theft and the publication. It is easy to understand, therefore, that Pope was readily drawn into quarrels and was not an agreeable antagonist. He had early taken a violent antipathy to the host of poor scribblers who are known by the name of the residence of most of them, Grub Street--an antipathy chiefly based, it would seem, on his contempt for their worldly and intellectual poverty. For some years he had been carrying on a pamphlet war against them, and now, it appears, he deliberately stirred

them up to make new attacks upon him. Determined, at any rate, to overwhelm all his enemies at once in a great satire, he bent all his energies, with the utmost seriousness, to writing 'The Dunciad' on the model of Dryden's 'Mac Flecknoe' and irresponsibly 'dealt damnation 'round the land.' Clever and powerful, the poem is still more disgusting--grossly obscene, pitifully rancorous against scores of insignificant creatures, and no less violent against some of the ablest men of the time, at whom Pope happened to have taken offense. Yet throughout the rest of his life Pope continued with keen delight to work the unsavory production over and to bring out new editions.

During his last fifteen years Pope's original work was done chiefly in two very closely related fields, first in a group of what he called 'Moral' essays, second in the imitation of a few of the Satires and Epistles of Horace, which Pope applied to circumstances of his own time. In the 'Moral' Essays he had intended to deal comprehensively with human nature and institutions, but such a systematic plan was beyond his powers. The longest of the essays which he accomplished, the 'Essay on Man,' aims, like 'Paradise Lost,' to 'vindicate the ways of God to man,' but as regards logic chiefly demonstrates the author's inability to reason. He derived the ideas, in fragmentary fashion, from Bolingbroke, who was an amateur Deist and optimist of the shallow eighteenth century type, and so far was Pope from understanding what he was doing that he was greatly disturbed when it was pointed out to him that the theology of the poem was Deistic rather than Christian [1] In this poem, as in all Pope's others of this period, the best things are the detached observations. Some of the other poems, especially the autobiographical 'Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot,' are notable for their masterly and venomous satirical sketches of various contemporary characters.

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[1] The name Deist was applied rather generally in the eighteenth century to all persons who did not belong to some recognized Christian denomination. More strictly, it belongs to those men who attempted rationalistic criticism of the Bible and wished to go back to what they supposed to be a primitive pure religion, anterior to revealed religion and free from the corruptions and formalism of actual Christianity. The Deistic ideas followed those expressed in the seventeenth century by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, brother of George Herbert, who held that the worship due to the Deity consists chiefly in reverence and virtuous conduct, and also that man should repent of sin and forsake it and that reward and punishment, both in this life and hereafter, follow from the goodness and justice of God.

Pope's physical disabilities brought him to premature old age, and he died in 1744. His declining years were saddened by the loss of friends, and he had never married, though his dependent and sensitive nature would have made marriage especially helpful to him. During the greater part of his life, however, he was faithfully watched over by a certain Martha Blount, whose kindness he repaid with only less selfishness than that which 'Stella' endured from Swift. Indeed, Pope's whole attitude toward woman, which appears clearly in his poetry, was largely that of the Restoration. Yet after all that must be said against Pope, it is only fair to conclude, as does his biographer, Sir Leslie Stephen: 'It was a gallant spirit which got so much work out of this crazy carcase, and kept it going, spite of all its feebleness, for fifty-six years.'

The question of Pope's rank among authors is of central importance for any theory of poetry. In his own age he was definitely regarded by his adherents as the greatest of all English poets of all time. As the pseudo-classic spirit yielded to the romantic this judgment was modified, until in the nineteenth century it was rather popular to deny that in any true sense Pope was a poet at all. Of course the truth lies somewhere between these extremes. Into the highest region of poetry, that of great emotion and imagination, Pope scarcely enters at all; he is not a poet in the same sense as Shakspere, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, or Browning; neither his age nor his own nature permitted it. In lyric, original narrative, and dramatic poetry he accomplished very little, though the success of his 'Elegy on an Unfortunate Lady' and 'Eloisa to Abelard' must be carefully weighed in this connection. On the other hand, it may well be doubted if he can ever be excelled as a master in satire and kindred semi-prosaic forms. He is supreme in epigrams, the terse statement of pithy truths; his poems have furnished more brief familiar quotations to our language than those of any other writer except Shakspere. For this sort of effect his rimed couplet provided him an unrivalled instrument, and he especially developed its power in antithesis, very frequently balancing one line of the couplet, or one half of a line, against the other. He had received the couplet from Dryden, but he polished it to a greater finish, emphasizing, on the whole, its character as a single unit by making it more consistently end-stopped. By this means he gained in snap and point, though for purposes of continuous narrative or exposition he increased the monotony and somewhat decreased the strength. Every reader must decide for himself how far the rimed couplet, in either Dryden's or Pope's use of it, is a proper medium for real poetry. But it is certain that within the limits which he laid

down for himself, there never was a more finished artist than Pope. He chooses every word with the greatest care for its value as both sound and sense; his minor technique is well-night perfect, except sometimes in the matter of rimes; and in particular the variety which he secures, partly by skilful shifting of pauses and use of extra syllables, is remarkable; though it is a variety less forceful than Dryden's.

[Note: The judgments of certain prominent critics on the poetry of Pope and of his period may well be considered. Professor Lewis E. Gates has said: 'The special task of the pseudo-classical period was to order, to systematize, and to name; its favorite methods were, analysis and generalization. It asked for no new experience. The abstract, the typical, the general--these were everywhere exalted at the expense of the image, the specific experience, the vital fact.' Lowell declares that it 'ignored the imagination altogether and sent Nature about her business as an impertinent baggage whose household loom competed unlawfully with the machine-made fabrics, so exquisitely uniform in pattern, of the royal manufactories.' Still more hostile is Matthew Arnold: 'The difference between genuine poetry and the poetry of Dryden, Pope, and all their school, is briefly this: Their poetry is conceived and composed in their wits, genuine poetry is conceived and composed in the soul. The difference is immense.' Taine is contemptuous: 'Pope did not write because he thought, but thought in order to write. Inky paper, and the noise it makes in the world, was his idol.' Professor Henry A. Beers is more judicious: 'Pope did in some inadequate sense hold the mirror up to Nature.... It was a mirror in a drawing-room, but it gave back a faithful image of society, powdered and rouged, to be sure, and intent on trifles, yet still as human in its own way as the heroes of Homer in theirs, though not broadly human.'

It should be helpful also to indicate briefly some of the more specific mannerisms of pseudo-classical poetry, in addition to the general tendencies named above on page 190. Almost all of them, it will be observed, result from the habit of generalizing instead of searching for the pictorial and the particular. 1. There is a constant preference (to enlarge on what was briefly stated above) for abstract expressions instead of concrete ones, such expressions as 'immortal powers' or 'Heaven' for 'God.' These abstract expressions are especially noticeable in the descriptions of emotion, which the pseudo-classical writers often describe without really feeling it, in such colorless words as 'joys, 'delights,' and 'ecstasies,' and which they uniformly refer to the conventionalized 'heart, 'soul,' or 'bosom.' Likewise in the case

of personal features, instead of picturing a face with blue eyes, rosy lips, and pretty color, these poets vaguely mention 'charms,' 'beauties,' 'glories,' 'enchantments,' and the like. These three lines from 'The Rape of the Lock' are thoroughly characteristic:

> The fair [the lady] each moment rises in her charms,
> Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
> And calls forth all the, wonders of her face.

The tendency reaches its extreme in the frequent use of abstract and often absurdly pretentious expressions in place of the ordinary ones which to these poets appeared too simple or vulgar. With them a field is generally a 'verdant mead'; a lock of hair becomes 'The long-contended honours of her head'; and a boot 'The shining leather that encased the limb.'

2. There is a constant use of generic or generalizing articles, pronouns, and adjectives, 'the,' 'a,' 'that,' 'every,' and 'each' as in some of the preceding and in the following examples: 'The wise man's passion and the vain man's boast.' 'Wind the shrill horn or spread the waving net.' 'To act a Lover's or a Roman's part.' 'That bleeding bosom.' 3. There is an excessive use of adjectives, often one to nearly every important noun, which creates monotony. 4. The vocabulary is largely conventionalized, with, certain favorite words usurping the place of a full and free variety, such words as 'conscious,' 'generous, 'soft,' and 'amorous.' The metaphors employed are largely conventionalized ones, like 'Now burns with glory, and then melts with love.' 5. The poets imitate the Latin language to some extent; especially they often prefer long words of Latin origin to short Saxon ones, and Latin names to English--'Sol' for 'Sun, 'temple' for 'church,' 'Senate' for 'Parliament,' and so on.]

SAMUEL JOHNSON, 1709-1784. To the informal position of dictator of English letters which had been held successively by Dryden, Addison, and Pope, succeeded in the third quarter of the eighteenth century a man very different from any of them, one of the most forcefully individual of all authors, Samuel Johnson. It was his fortune to uphold, largely by the strength of his personality, the pseudo-classical ideals which Dryden and Addison had helped to form and whose complete dominance had contributed to Pope's success, in the period when their authority was being undermined by the progress of the rising Romantic Movement.