LITERARY AND REALISTIC INFLUENCES UPON

THE WOMEN OF THE SPECTATOR

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On March 1, 1711, there appeared the first issue of the Spectator, the perfection of the single-essay periodical, a literary phenomenon unique in the eighteenth century.\(^1\) The popularity of this news sheet, published daily until December 6, 1712, was so great that it was estimated that there were 10,000 copies distributed after August 1, 1712, at which time the enforcement of St. John's Stamp Act imposed a half-penny stamp upon newspapers and periodical sheets.\(^2\) The arrival of the Spectator was looked forward to with delight not only in London, but throughout the country as well. Women, whose reading tastes had been sadly neglected, were flattered by the gallant and eloquent attention paid to them; the reading of the Spectator became a part of their daily occupations.

Supposedly this popular news sheet was anonymously written, but it was a well-guessed secret that the major authors were the well-known Whig writers, Richard Steele and

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\(^1\)Walter Graham, *English Literary Periodicals*, p. 77.

\(^2\)Chambers, *Cyclopedia to English Literature*, II, 232.
Joseph Addison. Mr. Steele had been the editor of the London Gazette; doubtless this journalistic opportunity suggested to him the project of the Tatler, the real prelude to the Spectator. Not many issues of the Tatler had accumulated before Steele shrewdly addressed women subscribers: "Ladies who have any particular stories of their acquaintance which they are willing privately to make public, may send 'em by the penny post to Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq." If stories did not come in so markedly, advertisements did: sales of morning gowns, freckle cream, eyewater, and household drugs interlarded notices of merchandise appealing to the masculine readers. In the Tatler Steele rose to his greatest opportunity when he took up the subject of women.

Steele's idea of appealing to women readers had its beginning in the days when he was writing "The Christian Hero"; the Tatler was his first opportunity to divert young women by building upon their "native simplicity, groundless fear, and little unaccountable contradictions." His first papers on women were scarcely more than what might be expected from the smoking room; he began to devote many early issues, however, to women as creatures equally human with men. In treating the subjects of love, marriage, education, amusements, and fashions, he used the device of the "Character." The two

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3 Willard Connely, Sir Richard Steele, p. 104.


5 Ibid., p. 144.

6 Tatler, Nos. 102, 126, and 125.
outstanding types of feminine Characters of the Tatler are the "Prudes" and the "Coquets"; others of particular note are the types of women represented by the various musical instruments. Many of these Characters Steele individualized to the extent of giving them names, as Astraea, an unfortunate wife; Clarissa, for love of whom men were made mad; Cleomira, who painted her face; Sagissa, who took snuff; Laura, a woman of perfection and excellent character; and a host of others.

Such female Characters and portraits as these paved the way in the minds of Addison and Steele's readers for their more highly finished and widely known ones in the Spectator. Most famous of these females are the Maids: Coquets, Jilts, Idols, Cavaliers, Demurrers, Swingers, Picts, Devotees; and the Wives and Widows: Salamanders, Orators, and Devotionists. In addition to these classes, there are many individualized maids and variously named wives, widows, mothers, and mistresses of servants. One sees in these Characters a wide variety of types and a correspondingly wide variety of views on woman's role in society, ranging from the highly personal traits of women in their all-important business of ensnaring proper husbands to their more socialized traits exemplified in their relations with members of their household, with society in general, and with their God, for whom they all too frequently feigned worship.

7 Ibid., Nos. 102, 126, and 125.
8 Ibid., Nos. 27 and 126. 9 Ibid., No. 57.
The employment of the Character, a literary genre of antiquity, had much to do with the great success of the Spectator. Although the Character, by its very nature, tends toward sharpness, Addison and Steele employed an amazing gentleness in dealing with their female subjects. Indeed, they may be said to have created a new genre altogether: Character coupled with mild satire. Best known of the Characters, of course, are the six mythical gentlemen supposedly associated with the Spectator in the editorship of the periodical.\(^{10}\) The Spectator Club consisted of Sir Roger de Coverley, the country squire; Sir Andrew Freeport, the wealthy merchant; Will Honeycomb, the young man of fashion; Captain Sentry, the soldier; and the Clergyman and the Bachelor of the Inner Temple. According to Professor Baldwin, one sees in these Characters "every eccentricity of individualized manner, every whimsical personal trait, and all that surprises, and by its very inconsistency gives life to a literary portrait."\(^{11}\) These traits had been rigidly excluded from previously written Characters. The portraits are so individualized as to seem those of particular persons, while still general enough to enable one to recognize the type in many people he meets. These sketches and those in subsequent papers constitute a

\(^{10}\) *Spectator*, I, Nos. 2 and 6.

faithful description of life and manners and give evidence of an interest in incident as well as Character. Baldwin further asserts that "the essays needed but to have been thrown into the form of a continuous narrative to have given us the modern novel."\(^{12}\) As it was, it prepared the way for this new genre by its incalculable influence on the formation of public taste in that direction.

Although many critics have agreed that Addison and Steele are Character-writers, and although the Spectator Club is their outstanding contribution to the genre, few critics have dealt specifically with the female Characters of these writers. It will, therefore, be the purpose of this paper to present the female Characters of the Spectator as rivals of the male Characters in importance. Addison and Steele saw clearly how great a part the female sex was destined to play in the formation of English tastes and manners.\(^{13}\) They observed, described, and reformed women; they humanized the type and broadened the scope, thus laying the foundation for equal treatment of the female Character with that of men, and thereby making the novel possible.

This study will outline the two great literary genres of character-writing and satire, upon the tradition and practice of which Addison and Steele based their characters of

\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 103.

\(^{13}\) W. J. Courthope, Addison, p. 109.
women in the *Spectator.* Chapter IV will deal briefly with the realistic sources of the female Characters, insofar as these sources can be identified and assessed today. Chapter V will show the varieties of female Characters which, using both literary and realistic sources, Addison and Steele have depicted in the *Spectator,* with some attention to differences between the two authors.
CHAPTER II

"CHARACTERS" OF WOMEN BEFORE THE SPECTATOR

The Origin of the Mode: Theophrastus

In order to achieve the Spectator's purpose of both entertaining and embellishing the fair sex and providing them with the proper finishing touches, Addison, Steele, and their assistants employed the device of the "Character," a literary type with roots in classical literature.

In order to explain Addison and Steele's own important contribution to this genre, it is necessary first to describe the Character as it had been before their time.

Aldington has defined the Character as a "kind of prose sonnet limited to one range of subjects"; Haliwell has described books of Characters as "collections of descriptive notices of various characteristic types and fashions of men." Sir Thomas Overbury, one of the best-known of the seventeenth-century English Character-writers, left a curious and rather vague definition of the Character:

1Spectator, I, No. 10, 33.
2Richard Aldington, A Book of 'Characters,' p. 3.
3Ibid., p. 1.
To square out a character by our English level, it is a picture (real or personal) quaintly drawn, in various colours, all of them heightened by one shadowing. It is a quick and soft touch of many strings, all shutting up in one musical close; it is wit's descent on any plain song.4

Baldwin has defined the character-sketch, or "Character," as it came to be called universally in the seventeenth century, as "a short account, usually in prose, of the properties, qualities, or peculiarities which serve to individualize a type."5 It seems obvious that the subject described must be a type, and not an individual; indeed, sketches of the latter have been termed "Portraits."6 Other sketches, with or without names, seem to be intermediary.

Character-writing, like most literary forms, had its origin in ancient Greece. Theophrastus is generally credited with having invented this device for pointing up the weaknesses of the generality of mankind. In a sense, however, the genre is as old as literature itself. The Hebrew writer's enumeration of the qualities of a virtuous woman in the last chapter of Proverbs became the prototype for similar sketches during the seventeenth century; Sir Richard Steele himself declared, "I do not think there is any Character of Theophrastus

4 Ibid., p. 167.
which has so many beautiful particulars in it, and which is
drawn with such elegance of thought and praise."\(^7\) Richard
Aldington declared that the Character was present even in
the \textit{Iliad} and the \textit{Odyssey} as an integral part of the plots,
even if as only a minor literary form.\(^8\) He further pointed
out Theophrastus's indebtedness to his master, Aristotle.
G. S. Gordon contributed to this idea by crediting Aris-
 totle with putting a method for the representation of man-
ners supposing a philosophy of conduct into form when he
laid down his doctrine of the mean.\(^9\) This doctrine, that
true virtue could be definitely determined by an examina-
tion of deviations from the norm which were marked enough
to become vices, permeated the English philosophy of conduct.
According to this doctrine, the positive of the virtuous
man is a moderate stand, preventing his becoming extreme in
any way. In illustrating the various characteristics devia-
ting from the norm, Aristotle preferred the quality itself,

\(^7\)Baldwin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 77.
\(^8\)Aldington, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 3.
\(^9\)G. S. Gordon, "Theophrastus and His Imitators," \textit{English
Literature and the Classics}, p. 53. Mr. Gordon pointed out
the conjunction of the Character with moral philosophy (p. 54)
and with the Comedy of Manners (p. 51). Thus, when Theophras-
tus invented the Character, Menander perfected the Comedy of
Manners; to LaBruyere, Theophrastus's disciple in France,
corresponded Moliere, the French writer of comedy; to Hall,
Overbury, and Earle, the accepted imitators of Theophrastus
in England, corresponded Ben Johnson and his Comedy of Humours;
to Addison and Steele, writers of the \textit{Tatler} and the \textit{Spectator},
corresponded Congreve, the English Moliere.
although he sometimes depicted types. It is thus apparent that Aristotle might justly be called the originator of the mode, but a more apparent stimulator of the impulse was Theophrastus, his favorite pupil and successor.10

The achievement of Theophrastus as the first of the Character-writers lay in his cutting of the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean from a mere moral definition of illustrative social types to amusing rhetorical descriptions not wholly ethical in approach.11 His thirty Characters are a partial classification of the types in Athens around the beginning of the third century before Christ; partial, for inasmuch as all analyze more or less vicious types, it is surmised that his Characters of Virtues have been lost.12 His Characters are realistic, ordinary, and disagreeable; one sees meanness and sordidness in his Athenians. The Athens of Theophrastus's day, however, had lost all glory but that of learning; his Characters may perhaps be the result of the professor's intolerance and contempt for the townsmen. Perhaps, too, the study of his work may have been responsible for the strong turn of later Characters in the direction of sarcasm and satire.

10Maximilian Graaf Walton, editor, Thomas Fuller's The Holy State and the Profane State, I, p. 28.
12Aldington, op. cit., p. 2.
Theophrastus was in many respects the greatest of all the character-writers "because his method is the most direct, economic and effective, his observation the most classic in its ability to seize upon what is essential and relevant, its tact omission." His method was simple and objective. He began each Character with a definition of some term of social blame—Meanness, Stupidity, Loquacity, and the like—and proceeded to catalog the sort of thing the corresponding person would do or say by continuing, "This man is the sort of person who..." His formula never varied; his Characters were scientific and impartial; he relied upon the simplicity of truth for his effect. There is the "Loquacious Man" who does not limit himself to telling what has happened in the assembly but continues "with the addition of an account of the famous battle of the orators, and the speeches he too was used to make there so greatly to his credit, all this interlarded with tirades of democracy, till his listeners forget what it is all about, or fall half-asleep, or get up and leave him to his talk."

Such a garrulous male can but remind one of Addison's female Orator who could "branch out into a long extempore Dissertation upon the Edging of a Petticoat, and chide her Servant for breaking

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13 Ibid., p. 5.

a China Cup in all the Figures of Rhetorick."15 "The Vain Man" was guilty of the same vice also as was the Spectator's Coquet, who was so bent upon admiring her own person; the "Newsmonger," though lacking in viciousness, might also be likened in a way to Steele's portrait of the gossiping Coquet.16 Despite these vague likenesses, however, the Characters of Theophrastus, which were all men, are lifeless and dehumanized as compared with those of the Spectator; nevertheless, Theophrastus's Characters are in no sense advisory, like Hall's, or insipidly pious like Breton's; neither are they cynical and malicious, like LaBruyere's. One can but admire also his artistic economy and the timelessness of his sketches. Gordon pointed out his two advantages over his successors as his perfectly defined method and set of terms and the "combination of a very civilized with a very simple society; a community of the most active social sense, with its ideals in the past and its thoughts in the present, wholly occupied with the question of how to live conformably, and if possible elegantly."17

Beginning with Theophrastus as the recognized inventor of the Character, the genre progressed in two stages: as a school and as a mimicry.18 The first of these extended from

15 Spectator, III, No. 247, 232.
16 Ibid., V, No. 389, 217.
17 Gordon, op. cit., p. 60.
18 Ibid., p. 64.
Theophrastus's own day to the decline of the schools of rhetoric in the West. Having written in two qualities, as the contemporary of Menander and as the successor of the great Aristotle, Theophrastus took pleasure in his observations of his neighbors, but he did not forget that he was a professor and that, although the spirit of comedy might be the inspiration of the Character, Ethics was its basis and rhetoric its end. Thus, his Characters were accepted as a model collection for the student and the classroom; their immediate popularity was retained throughout antiquity. Embodied in the textbooks of rhetoric, they flourished in the Eastern Empire and passed, disguised, from Rome to England, where the genre was practiced before the Characters were actually known. Thus, the first stage of its history prepared the way for the second; for it was not until 1592 that the Characters, via Casaubon's Latin translation, resumed their place as a substantive work and exacted in England the public acknowledgments of imitators, where their form and method were already familiar in the schools. With the scholastic attention forgotten, the comic spirit of observation of the fellowman was reestablished, and Character-writing entered


20 Aldington and other critics have pointed out Awdelay's Fraternity of Vagabonds (1561) and Harman's Caveat for Cursitors (1567) as having a definite affinity with Character-writing.
on its hundred years of popularity in England, bearing upon it the definite stamp of Theophrastus, the first, and in the minds of many, the greatest of all the Character-writers.

The French Influence: La Bruyère

Of far greater influence than the early English Character-writers upon Addison and Steele and the eighteenth-century periodical essay, however, was the Frenchman, Jean de la Bruyère.21 Influenced, himself, by Casaubon's Ethical Characters and by the French translation, in 1619, of The Characters of Virtues and Vices by Joseph Hall, the first of the English Character-writers to be influenced by Theophrastus, La Bruyère began with his own translation of Theophrastus and the addition, as if by after thought, of some of his own Characters. His book, Les Caractères De Theophraste, Traduits Du Grece; Avec Caractères ou les Moeurs de ce Siecle, published in 1688, received tremendous acclaim in Paris and, in turn, influenced the further development of English Character-writing, particularly in the essay as it merged into the novel.22

Unlike the pale and featureless English Characters, which Professor Baldwin described as "a formal enumeration,

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21 The importance of La Bruyère's influence has been pointed out by Aldington (op. cit., p. 20), Gordon (op. cit., p. 83), and Professor Edward Chauncey Baldwin (op. cit., pp. 479-495).

22 Baldwin, op. cit., p. 79.
but slightly individualized, of the habits and peculiarities that serve to differentiate a social, ethical, and polite type. La Bruyère's Characters were not mere "squibs of rhetoric" or the fruit of a few months' work; they were the concentrated result of years of observation and thought. His relations with Conde gave him entree to the most distinguished French society; among the crowds of nobles and enriched bourgeois, this quiet and sensitive little man of inferior birth veiled his shrewdness, bitterness, and literary talent as he noted the defects and unworthy members of the society of Louis XIV. Thus La Bruyère, owing little to Theophrastus but the bare idea, introduced into the traditional method of Character-writing two important modifications. These Baldwin explains as his individualizing the types he presented without destroying their value as representative of a class, and his combining the features of the Montaigne essay with those of the Character.

In deviating from the beaten path of his predecessors, La Bruyère was not content simply to add touch after touch,

26 *Baldwin, op. cit.*, p. 482. Aside from these two contributions, one notes from the comments of G. S. Gordon that La Bruyère was, of all the writers, the most conscious of the relation of the Character to the Comedy. This distinction, however, was negative; for La Bruyère had the analyst's impatience of invention and shrank from the alliance of stage and study, praising Molière, his own Menander, "with the clouded face of a rival." (*op. cit.*, p. 81.)
each of which indicated from different points of view the same characteristic, depending for the interest of the result solely upon wit. Instead, he secured the reader's interest at once by deceiving him into the belief that the portrait was after that of an individual. This he did, first, by introducing personal details, doubtlessly taken from his observation of the men and women whom he knew to belong to the type he was describing; second, by giving a name, borrowed from the classical plays of the age, to each Character. The personal details were so accurately drawn as to seem to suggest any number of the men and women who were his contemporaries; the names seemed to veil, without wholly concealing, their identities. His success in individualizing his Characters is attested by the subsequent publications of numerous though conflicting keys to the identities of the types described. That many of his Characters were portraits of individuals is well-known; nevertheless, the contradictions of the numerous keys not only serve to invalidate many of the conclusions of their authors, but what is more important, they imply that LaBruyere generalized his portraits considerably. His second innovation in the genre of Character-writing was more than the combining of the features of the Montaigne essay with those of the formal Character; in

27 Aldington, op. cit., p. 23. The portraits of Louis XIV, M. le Prince, and Fontenelle are declared unmistakable.
LaBruyere's departure from the traditional Baconian essay, Baldwin saw in his Characters some of the peculiarities of Pascal's *Pensees* and LaRochefoucauld's *Maximes*. He declared LaBruyere's chapters to be made up of short paragraphs consisting of "ethical and literary criticisms, arranged in no very orderly way, of epigrammatic reflections, and of the Characters. The discursiveness of these criticisms he imitated from Montaigne; the sententious bitterness, from Pascal and LaRochefoucauld; while the Characters were modifications of a literary form hitherto fixed by tradition.  

In the eighty-five Characters of LaBruyere which were studied in the writing of this paper, these two innovations in the genre are obvious. Of the seventy-seven male Characters, at least six bear a close resemblance to male Characters appearing in the *Spectator*. LaBruyere's description of "A Lady's Man" is a cursory portrayal of one who took the little trouble to rule several women, cultivating their minds and memories, fixing and determining their religion, and regulating their hearts. He managed their affairs and accompanied them wherever they went. "He ages without losing his authority. . . .He began by making himself esteemed; he ends by

28 Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 483. Gordon noted that although LaBruyere owed only the bare idea of his work to Theophrastus, he praised this ancient model profusely, ignoring completely his debt to his contemporaries. Montaigne he did not mention among his rivals; of Pascal and LaRochefoucauld he explained only that he was their pupil. (*op. cit.*, p. 81.)
making himself feared. This old and necessary friend dies without being regretted; and ten women whose tyrant he was inherit liberty by his death.\textsuperscript{29} The \textit{Spectator}'s counterpart of this Character, the "Women's Man,"\textsuperscript{30} is remarkable for quarreling impertinently for the sake of the ladies, dressing unlike the rest of the world, passing his days in an "insipid Assiduity about the fair Sex," and having the reputation of being in favor with other women. He was neither a "Man of Sense" nor a fool; his faculty of arguing was far more valuable than a capacity of judging right would be.

Other male Characters of LaBruyère are the effeminate "Narcisse\textsuperscript{31}" and "Theognis,"\textsuperscript{32} the clothes-minded "Iphis,"\textsuperscript{33} and the coxcombs, "Theramene,"\textsuperscript{34} and the "Courtiers."\textsuperscript{35} Their counterparts in the \textit{Spectator} are the "Cott-queen" or the "Husband that wears the Petticoat";\textsuperscript{36} the "Bitter,"\textsuperscript{37} deceiving men admired by the sillier part of mankind; the "Man of Importance. . .provided it be in matters of no consequence";\textsuperscript{38} and the Male Coquetes, or Friibblers.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{29}Aldington, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 484.
\textsuperscript{30}\textsuperscript{30}II, No. 156, p. 469.
\textsuperscript{31}Aldington, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 499.
\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., p. 514.
\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 528.
\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., p. 503.
\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., p. 504.
\textsuperscript{36}VII, No. 504, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{37}VII, No. 482, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{38}IV, No. 288, p. 360.
\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., p. 504.
LaBruyere's eight female Characters are Zenobie; Irene; Lise; the women of the Court; Glycere; Arfure; Climene and Celimene and their associates; and a "Directed" Woman. In the first two one sees Characters apparently unlike any of the women of the Spectator. Zenobie could but be different from any portrayal by Addison and Steele, two Englishmen loyal to their country and thus hardly likely to have written a Character remotely suggestive or satirical of their own Queen Anne. This foolish queen, Zenobie, did not allow the disturbances which agitated her empire nor the war she was waging against a powerful nation since her husband's death to diminish her magnificence in the least; she was, even at that moment, engaged in the building of a superb palace for herself and her children. LaBruyere's malevolence is poignantly clear in his portrait of Zenobie as he commented upon the splendor she achieved by exhausting her treasure and her industry in this incomparable work which, upon completion, he declared, would be purchased by a newly rich shepherd who would embellish it and "make it more worthy of himself and his fortune."

In Irene one sees the typical woman who enjoys ill health. Moreover, no one can overlook the underlying satire on the useless frivolity in woman's life; indeed, it may be suggestive of Swift's more caustic "Journal

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\textsuperscript{40} Aldington, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 499. \textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 521.
of a Modern Lady," a satire on the annals of a woman's day. Irene journeyed a long distance to consult Aesculapius about her maladies. Her weariness he attributed to her long journey. For her lack of appetite in the evening, he advised dining sparingly; for her insomnia and obesity, he prescribed remaining in bed at night and getting up before midday. In lieu of wine, he told her to drink water; and for indigestion, he advised that she should diet. For her weakening sight, he advised spectacles. He attributed her lack of strength and good health to her advancing age, declaring the fastest cure to be death. Appalled by the very simplicity of such advice, Irene demanded if she herself did not already know such remedies. The reply of Aesculapius was LaBruyere's acrimonious conclusion to this Character: "Then why do you not make use of them...without coming so far to seek me out and shortening your days by a long, long journey?"

In LaBruyere's terse description of Lise, one sees a counterpart of the Spectator's Canidia. Both are, as Budgell called the species, "superannuated Coquets." Lise was scornful of other women who pretended to be young and used devices of dress unsuitable for a woman of forty; with her, however, years were less than twelve months and did not make her old. She smoothed on her rouge and adjusted her

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42 Ibid., p. 482.  
43 IV, No. 301, 398.
patches as she reflected upon the ridiculousness of Clarice, who, despite her age, feigned youth by wearing rouge and patches. Canidia was "an haughty Beauty of the last Age."

Her attractiveness now lay only in her ridiculousness; thus, men regarded her with the same satisfaction that a free Nation looked upon a tyrant in disgrace. The great difference in these two Characters, however, seems to be LaBruyere's sententious bitterness in pointing out the follies of others, as compared with the compassionate recognition in the Spectator of Canidia's shortcoming as a trait common to the whole of the human race.

In LaBruyere's description of women of the Court, one sees the prototype of Steele's "Picts," or the "women who paint"—a major class in the female Characters of the Spectator. LaBruyere declared that

The women of this country hurry on the decline of their beauty by artifices which they think render them more beautiful; their custom is to paint their lips, their cheeks, their eyebrows and their shoulders which they expose to view, together with their breasts, their arms, and their ears, as if they were afraid to hide the place whereby they are pleasing or that they do not show enough.

His caustic description continued with a harsh invective

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44 Aldington, op. cit., p. 510. The title of this essay is "The Character of the Court."

against the wearing of false hair by all the people of the Court. Surely the difference in LaBruiere's Characters and those of the Spectator is nowhere more apparent than in the women of the Court and Steele's Picts, of which more will be said in a later chapter. LaBruiere seems to hold fashionable women in general in contempt; Steele, although plainly showing his loathing for any practice offensive to woman's beauty, went a step further in setting up a contrasting model for the women of England.

Glycere, another feminine Character of LaBruiere's, was solitary and unapproachable to all her female friends except Corinne, to whom she whispered and complained of everyone else. This plain woman lacked nothing but the bloom of youth. She flattered and caressed her husband, all the while concealing from him a valuable diamond pendant and, with the help of Parmenon, her favorite servant whom she supported against the antipathy of her husband and the jealousy of the other servants, frequently enjoyed the company of others who were stealthily guided through the back stairway. One sees the empty shallowness of Glycere's life as typical of that of the women of both England and France in the early eighteenth century, although it is certainly a well-known fact that in France women were far less hampered by moral restrictions than were their English sisters who lived across

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46 Ibid., p. 485
the Channel. 47 One sees also many counterparts of this faithless wife in the Spectator, but it will be seen that they are portrayed with a warm understanding of human nature, lacking completely in the caustic malice of LaBruyere. Some of the Characters are Sylvana, 48 Honoria, 49 and the Salamanders, 50 and numerous others.

Four other female Characters portrayed by LaBruyere and having their counterparts among the women of the Spectator papers are religious women. These women are Climene and Celimene, 51 and Arfure, 52 who feigned religion; and "A 'Directed' Woman, 53 who sought spiritual guidance. Climene and Celimene were middle-aged women who, having passed the age of frivolous good cheer and idleness in gambling, attending the plays, concerts, masquerades, or pleasant sermons, now exaggerated austerity and retirement, talking little, ruining themselves dismally by presumption and envy, and adhering to religious practices only as a weakness of their age and a fashion to be followed. Arfure formerly found her

47 A complete description of these French women is given by Edmond and Jules Goncourt in The Woman of the Eighteenth Century, Her Life from Birth to Death, Her Love and Her Philosophy in the World of Salon, Shop and Street, Minton Balch and Company, New York, 1927. In Woman Through the Ages, II, Emil Reich declared that "To turn to the English women of the eighteenth century after contemplating her French sister of the same period is like eating a penny bun after enjoying a delicate eclair." (p. 175.)

48 V, No. 342, 66. 49 IV, No. 302, 401. 50 III, No. 198, 8.
virtue obscure and her devotion no more well known than her person; since her husband's acquisition of a fortune in less than six years' time, however, she came to church in a chariot, entered as the orator stopped his sermon for her to take her place, and did not lose a single word he said or a single gesture he made. Indeed, all the priests desired to confess and absolve her; the honor was done, however, by the cure. In presenting a more positive view of woman's religion, LaBruyere declared that a woman might be "more agreeable to her husband, kinder to her servants, more devoted to her family and her affairs, more ardent and sincere to her friends...less the slave of her humours, less attracted to her own interests," love the commodities of life the less, and overwhelmed with superfluous wealth, furnish her children with necessities and at least render them the justice she owed to them; this creature, exempt from self-love and dislike from others, however, was not the one really free from human attachments. Indeed, such a "directed" woman was one who had a spiritual director. One cannot read the first part of this positive view of the religious woman without sensing a kinship of the material to that of the Spectator; upon reaching that portion dealing with her relations with her children, one feels the caustic malice of LaBruyere more keenly than

54 The cure is the parish priest.
55 Aldington, op. cit., p. 483.
ever because of the contrast. In order to appreciate the real bitterness of this satire, one has only to turn to the 
Spectator Characters pertaining to religion: the Devotees, the Devotionists, the Peepers, and the Phantom Woman.
In these Characters the criticism is not less severe than LaBruyere's; there is warmth and understanding, however, and one feels that Mr. Spectator is chastizing his readers with the sober understanding a wise parent uses in dealing with a naughty child. The criticism and punishment are poignantly presented; but the constructive comments so important in raising woman's sense of character and dignity are also quite apparent.

Thus LaBruyere, the Frenchman whose style, with modifications, was adopted by Addison and Steele, presented realistic sketches of the society of Louis XIV. Following in the wake of the seventeenth-century English Character-writers, he came at the end of a long and restless line; man was still in disgrace in the seventeenth century, and LaBruyere felt it. Addison and Steele came at the beginning of something new; the first stirrings of man's restoration were in the air, and they were conscious of the change.

56V, No. 354, 107. 57VI, No. 423, 424.
58I, No. 53, 162. 59VII, No. 503, 88.
60Gordon, op. cit., p. 84.
During the 2,007 years between the writing of the 'Characters' of Theophrastus and those of La Bruyère, the genre reached its peak in popularity when Joseph Hall, Sir Thomas Overbury, Nicholas Breton, John Earle, and Thomas Fuller wrote their Characters in the seventeenth century. It has already been stated that Casaubon's Latin translation in 1592 heralded this revival; it has been further stated that the form and method of the genre were already familiar in England, even before Casaubon wrote.

Four other influences seem contributory to the popularity of the genre to the English writers of this period. First, the greatest creative period of English literature was passing, with all the exuberance incident to it. Writers were becoming more reflective and serious, and, encouraged further by increasing Puritanism, men delighted in introspection and acquired a strong passion for the analysis of human character. Another of these influences was Ben Jonson, whom Aldington and Gordon have cited as the first English writer of genuine

61 They were written in 319 B.C. (Edmonds, op. cit., p. 10)

62 The Aristotelian doctrine of the mean had thoroughly permeated English philosophy of conduct; nevertheless, the numerous forerunners wrote their sketches incidentally, to illustrate special themes. (Walten, Maximilian Graef, editor, Thomas Fuller's The Holy State and the Profane State, I, 22.)

63 Ibid., p. 27.

64 Edward Arber, editor, John Earle, Microcosmographie, p. 7.
Characters. Gordon further expressed his belief that Jons M, who undoubtedly knew the Characters of Theophrastus and occasionally borrowed from them, was nevertheless not a Theophrastian; thus the English Character "is in the main a by-product of the Comedy of Humors, accidentally determined, at an early moment in its history, by the opportune appearance of Theophrastus' model." Another stimulus to the popularity of the Character is suggested somewhat modestly by Aldington: "The genre may have owed its vogue to the interest of James I." Having been a great admirer of Casaubon, James I invited him to England; it was not unlikely that he expressed his admiration for Theophrastus, observed that there were no such English Characters, and made a literary suggestion which reached the ears of Joseph Hall (chaplain to Prince Henry) and Sir Thomas Overbury (who was also a courtier). Certainly there was no more effective way of paying court to the king than by adopting his literary suggestions; consequently, the first two books of English Characters, Hall's *Characters of Virtues and Vices*, and Overbury's *Characters of Witty Descriptions of the Properties of Sundry Persons* appeared almost simultaneously. Undoubtedly a final immediate stimulus to the

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67 *Ibid.*, p. 12. Hall's book was published in 1608 and Overbury's, which was written also by "other learned gentlemen, his friends," was published in 1614.
production of Character sketches was one of the most sensational crimes in history—the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, in 1614, in the Tower. The manner of his death and the great popular cry for vengeance on his murderers sent his own work through eighteen or more editions, with contributions to it by many other writers. Nicholas Breton's three pamphlets, The Good and the Bad, Essay Upon Characters, and Fantasticks soon followed; John Earle's Microcosmographie came next, and Thomas Fuller's The Holy State and the Profane State soon followed. Edward Chauncey Baldwin has described the development of the Character in the hands of these authors through all its changes in the seventeenth century and has pointed out the reasons why it was through the periodical essay, particularly the Spectator, rather than in its own proper form that the Character came to exert its tremendous influence in prose fiction.

Bearing much the same relationship to the biographical sketch that a composite photograph does to that of an individual, the seventeenth-century Character aimed to be that which

68 Watten, op. cit., p. 29.
69 The first was published in 1615. (Baldwin, op. cit., p. 9.)
70 These Characters were published in 1628. (Arber, op. cit., Introduction, p. 3.)
71 This one was published in 1642. (Aldington, op. cit., Introduction, p. vii.)
LaBruyere achieved with so much success: a portrayal justly representative of every individual of a class as a whole, while combining at the same time so many carefully chosen and skillfully grouped individual details as to trick the reader into the belief that the portrayal was, after all, that of an individual. What differentiated the seventeenth-century Character from all that had preceded it was the fact that, whereas it had previously been embodied in some other literary form, it was during that century that it was wholly isolated from these surroundings. Its independent development thus may account for its importance as a factor in the evolution of the novel. Writers turned to a more minute analysis of the character in and for itself, not influenced by the interaction of other Characters upon it.

In the "Characters" of women, certainly there is no doubt that Sir Thomas Overbury was the most important of the seventeenth-century writers. Out of a total of eighty Characters, eleven are of women; moreover, one sees that although he does ridicule them, he is not committed to the unfavorable view of the sex, for he amply acknowledges their virtues. It is in this point that he proves the Character-writer to have the advantage over the pure satirist; perhaps it is this trait which accounts for his giving the English Character, more than any other writer, the distinctive flavor which it maintained throughout the century, and which one sees in the development
of the novel and the periodical essay, particularly in the *Spectator*.\(^{73}\)

In his sketch, "Her Next Part,"\(^ {74}\) Overbury described the role of a fashionable married woman. A woman of good entertainment, she broke to her well-groomed guests her grief in sugar cakes and received from them numerous stories concluding to no purpose. At church she lifted up a certain number of eyes instead of prayers, for her devotion was good clothes; she measured out a nap by the sermon. Her most commendable skill was "to make her husband's fustian bear her velvet. This she does many times over, and then is delivered to old age, and a chair, where everybody leaves her."\(^ {75}\) Similar to this sketch is Overbury's "A Very Woman," who meant well toward men but fell two bows short, strength and understanding. Her virtue is the hedge, modesty, that keeps a man from climbing over into her faults. . . . She thinks she is fair, though many times she goes alone in her opinion. . . . Her chief commendation is, she brings a man to repentance.\(^ {76}\)

Overbury's portrayal of these vain and aristocratic women is balanced by his equally vivid sketches of two simple and lowly women. "A Chambermaid" was her mistress's "she-secretary,"\(^ {77}\) keeping the box of her teeth, her hair, and her paint


\(^{74}\) Aldington, *op. cit.*, p. 97. \(^ {75}\) Ibid., p. 98.

\(^{76}\) Ibid., p. 96.

\(^{77}\) Coffin and Witherspoon, *op. cit.*, p. 228.
very private; her industry was great; having paid for her credulity often, she grew wary of the pedant of the house; she liked the aristocratic form of marriage in that a woman was not tied to answer questions of virginity; her body, mind, and clothes were packed loosely together. In short, chambermaids, like lotteries, might be drawn twenty times ere one was worth the having. Overbury's masterpiece, "A Fair and Happy Milkmaid," was a country wench "so far from making herself beautiful by art that one look of her is able to put all face-physic out of countenance." She did not spoil her complexion and conditions with lying abed, for nature had taught her that too immoderate sleep was rust to the soil; she made her hands hard with labor and her heart soft with pity; she counted no bravery in the world like decency. She was ever accompanied by old songs, honest thoughts, and short prayers; and even her dreams were so chaste that she dared not tell them.

That Overbury did not overlook the baser types of womanhood is exemplified in his three Characters, "A Maquerela, in plain English, A Bawd," "A Whore," and "A Very Whore." The first of these was a hideous old procuress, who, having lost her own beauty, was so possessed by envy that she desired to have all fair women like her and hurried them to such a state by diseases they would otherwise not catch at so young

78 Ibid., p. 226. 79 Aldington, op. cit., p. 126.
80 Ibid., p. 115. 81 Ibid., p. 116.
an age. "A Whore" was the "highway to the Devil, he who looked upon her with desire begins his voyage." She was a medlar who set up her trade without credit; her earnings were like a traitor's, given only to corrupt her. Her being was worn and destroyed continually with the passing of each year. The last of these three Characters was the lascivious one whose only modesty was curiosity, and who dressed herself all day that she might be relished with more delight at night. That these Characters of Overbury's were not without their counterparts in the Spectator is obvious; Steele, especially, wrote many papers regarding women of this type.

In sharp contrast to these satirical and sordid female Characters, "A Good Woman" and "A Good Wife" show that Overbury did acknowledge many fine virtues of woman. The former is portrayed as one whose chief business was to love her husband; her greatest learning was religion; she was kind, honest, and virtuous; "she wears good clothes, but never better, for she finds no degree beyond decency." "A Good Wife" was one who shared her husband's troubles and framed her nature unto his; she neither tattled nor gossiped; her household and

82 Here are a few of these papers from the Spectator: III, No. 205, 110; III, No. 190, 64; IV, No. 266, 294; IV, No. 274, 316. It will be seen in a later chapter that although Steele's attitude toward these women was one of loathing, unlike Overbury, he nevertheless felt only pity for them.

83 Coffin and Witherspoon, op. cit., p. 222.

84 Ibid., p. 225.
her children were her charge; above all, she was both wise and religious. An interesting note to both these Characters is the fact that they bear no class distinction; it seems apparent that Overbury did not refer to virtue as a trait restricted to only the fashionable and aristocratic few, for whom most writing was done.

Widows make up a final group of female Characters in the Overbury collection. There are two of these: "An Ordinary Widow" and "A Virtuous Widow," and like the Spectator widows, they represent the two extremes in their class. The former, "like the herald's hearse-cloth," attended many funerals of husbands with little altering of color. The multitude of her suitors was her chief pride. If she lived to be married three times, she seldom failed to cozen her second husband's creditors. During her widowhood she did not mourn; indeed, she was like a too ripe apple, falling off, herself. The second of the widows was like the purest gold; she received only one man's impression. She married that she might have children, and it was for their sakes that she married no more. Thinking that she had travelled all the world in one man, she therefore directed the rest of her time toward heaven. She lived to be aged; this "latter chastity of hers is more grave and reverend than that e'er she was married, for in it is neither hope, longing,

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85Aldington, op. cit., p. 149. 86Ibid.
fear, nor jealousy." No calamity could come near her, for in the loss of her husband, all else she accounted as mere trifles. Overbury declared that when she was fullest of wrinkles she should be a mirror for the young matrons to dress themselves by; she was indeed a relic to be reverenced.

The Characters of Sir Thomas Overbury have been noted by many critics as being more truly Theophrastian than those of other writers of this period in regard to their objectivity. Baldwin commended these Characters as showing great "subtlety of words but no subtlety of thought;" moreover, he considered Overbury "a shrewd observer, at least of external peculiarities." His observation and skill in portrayal thus make for a visualizing power that gives his Characters their significance in the development of the English Character. Lacking in depth of insight and fine touches of feeling, his Characters are nevertheless pictures of contemporary manners, allied to the comedy of the time. Aldington declared that those which are more descriptive of a permanent type "do not look for the main outlines which persist from age to age but for the peculiar features of the Jacobean embodiment," while

87 Walten, op. cit., p. 32.
88 Baldwin, op. cit., p. 87
89 Ibid., p. 88.
90 Aldington, op. cit., p. 16.
Gordon considered them a "miscellany of the most popular form of gentlemanly light literature of the time." These objectively visible sketches apparently marked an era in the development of the genre.

The Characters of Joseph Hall, the first of the seventeenth-century writers, show plainly how much English Character-writing owed to the Greek model. Like Theophrastus, Hall did not portray women; moreover, Professor Baldwin has pointed out the fact that of eleven Characters of Vices, six are identical in subject with those of Hall's model, while the other five treat far more serious vices than any the genial Greek philosopher had seen fit to include. Thus Hall modeled himself upon Theophrastus, but with a difference: he departed from his original not only in regard to the gravity of his subject, but also in his method of procedure. Instead of merely describing the actions proper to a Character, as his predecessor had done, Hall "commented upon it in general terms, aiming at epigram, pointed expression, lively images, such as Euphuism could supply." Moreover, his attempt at subtlety of analysis is obvious in that he did not merely tell what a man did, but he entered into his mental processes in order to determine what made him act as he did. Hall often failed in this attempt because of an absence of an ability to detect

91 Gordon, op. cit., p. 71.  
92 Baldwin, op. cit., p. 81.  
93 Ibid., p. 84.
mental and moral differences; moreover, Aldington has pointed out his lack of exactness, his frequently futile pursuit of wit, and his tendency toward allegorical personifications. His Characters also lack the pure and lucid classical style of Theophrastus, for Hall was an Anglican divine, sententious-ly commending and reproving as a Christian. Although his influence upon English Character-writing was likely not so great as that of Overbury and some of the later writers, it may be said that he freed the genre from the limitations which an obsequious imitation of his Greek model would have exerted upon it; moreover, his influence upon Addison and Steele may have been considerable though indirect, since the translation of his Characters had a marked effect upon their own model, the French writer, LaBruyere.

The third seventeenth-century English Character-writer was Nicholas Breton. Generally considered "unfeignedly and drearily pious and not a very good writer except in patches," he dedicated his Characters Upon Essays Moral and Divine to Bacon, whom he endeavored to imitate. From the thirty sketches included by Aldington in his collection, two from The Good and the Bad seem apropos to this study. The Effeminate Fool was

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94 Aldington, op. cit., p. 15. 95 Ibid., p. 17.
96 It is this collection that Walten pointed out as being Fuller's nearest approach to the general method of another. (op. cit., I, 34.)
97 Aldington, op. cit., p. 181.
one who loved "nothing but to be gay, to look in a glass, to keep among wenches, and to play with trifles"; he was "a man-child and woman's man, a gaze of folly and wisdom's grief."

This rather verbose Character seems but a shadow of the gallant young fops so aptly portrayed later in the Spectator. The only female Character which Aldington included is "A Worthy Queen." Although Breton's style of writing seems superior in this Character to that of the former, the brief sketch bristles with strange metaphors and a bewildering elaborateness. This "chief of women . . . is like the pure diamond upon the king's finger and the orient pearl unprizable in his eye, the joy of the country and the comfort of the King, and the wealth of the kingdom in the fruit of love. . . ." Perhaps the Characters of Breton, as well as those of Overbury and Hall, may have been designed to pay court to James I; surely there could have been no more effective way to present such a noble portrait of his queen.

John Earle, the most thoughtful of these English Character-writers, is considered by Walker to be the prince of them all; in his little book, Microcosmographie, which Gordon considered the best of these early collections of Characters in English, he not only described the Characters, but he sought

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98Ibid., p. 179.
99Walker, Hugh, English Satire and Satirists, p. 112.
100Gordon, op. cit., p. 68.
the reasons for their being as they were. Thus his Characters have much in common with the sober moralizings of Hall. Like Overbury, however, he achieved his greatest triumph with praise rather than censure; moreover, his sketches were pungent, yet more effective for their lack of artificiality and affectation. His Characters show his peculiar manner of combining the typical with the individual. Baldwin pointed out his deeper insight, wider sympathy, and kindlier humor as the three qualities which mark the development toward the delineations of Character to be found in the work of the novelists. He further declared Earle to be the first who could analyze Character; in attempting to account for such peculiarities as his precursors had observed only superficially, he looked "beneath the surface to a bent or warp of the mind."

Earle's Characters consist chiefly in academical and professional types to be found in a college town. In his fifty-four sketches "A She Precise Hypocrite" is apparently the only female. Finding its counterpart in Steele's Devotees, this Character

... is enamored at the New-fangle of religion ... and her purity consists much in her linen. ... Her devotion at the church is much in the turning up of her eye; and turning downe the leaf in her Booke when she heares named

101Coffin and Witherspoon, op. cit., p. 343.
102Ibid.
103Baldwin, op. cit., p. 90.
104Ibid.
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Chapter and Verse . . . she is so taken up with Faith she has little roome for Charity, and understands no good Workes, but what are wroght of the Sampler . . . she over flowes so with the Bible, that she spils it upon every occasion, and wil not Cudgell her Maides without Scripture. It is a question, whether she is more troubled with the Divell or the Divell with her.105

It was in the hands of Dr. Thomas Fuller that the Character became sufficiently elastic to suit the needs of the eighteenth century essayists and attained the freedom of form which fitted it for its role in the development of the English novel. In his edition of The Holy State and the Profane State M. G. Walten declared that Fuller's sketches contain scarcely a sentence which bears more than a general similarity to passages in the work of his predecessors; moreover, he pointed out five ways in which Fuller's style and method are distinctly different.106 First, he liberated the form from the witty style; his straightforward simplicity obviously showed his realization of the importance of instruction in lieu of verbal clothing. Second, he broke away almost completely from the Theophrastian tradition. Fuller was garrulous and digressive, and his sketches were unusually long; he was apparently more interested in Christian morality than in Greek ethics. Third, his sketches are more subjective. He made his type descriptions more vital, individual, and interesting and freed them from any devitalizing intellectualism by exemplifying their qualities in biographical

105Arber, op. cit., p. 63. 106Ibid., p. 34.
accounts and portraits. A fourth innovation by which Fuller helped to fit the Character to take its place in the development of prose fiction is the thread of narration by which he traced the evolution of a dominant trait throughout his works. Last, it was Fuller, whom Walten termed "the most charming of the writers of character,"¹⁰⁷ who realized the full extent to which the Character and the essay might be employed for the presentation of courtesy material. Other writers had used this procedure incidentally, but with Fuller it became a dominant method, a primary purpose; he showed how the average individual of a class should act in various occupations and under different conditions. Walten further pointed out the preponderance of Fuller's good examples over his bad examples as significant of the author's character.¹⁰⁸ I should like to cite this fact as another way in which he is different from his predecessors, whose approaches were most frequently negative. Further insight into all these innovations may be gained from a brief description of Fuller's book.

Walten described The Holy State and the Profane State as an effective medley of four distinct types of literature: Character-writing, essay, biography, and courtesy, all these types "united to form a great book on the conduct, practices,

and spirit of men of many kinds toward their fellows and their God. These four types are fused to support one another and leave a final unified impression, but it is the chapters on Characters that are preponderant. The whole consists of five books, the first four of which compose The Holy State and are positive in purpose. Ideal patterns and examples are displayed as guides for emulation, and essays are introduced to reinforce the effect. Despite Fuller's prefatory statement of a lack of a definite pattern, Walten pointed out that Book I deals with the family and domestic relations within the home; Book II deals with occupations, callings, or stations; Book III consists of essays on subjects of interest to all his gentlefolk, such as "Hospitality," "Anger," "Books," Marriage," and "Fame"; Book IV is concerned with persons of political prominence and may thus be entitled "Public Life." Book V, coterminous with the Profane State, has a negative aim in the vicious examples it sets up to be avoided and condemned; these are frequently opposites of virtuous subjects from other books.

From a total of 105 Characters, thirteen are of women; of these thirteen, eight are biographical portraits. Of the

109 Ibid., p. 11.
110 The essays express truths supplemented in the Character-writings; both treat of courtesy book subjects. The qualities typified in the Character-writings are exemplified and made tangible in the succeeding biographical sketches.
111 Ibid., p. 11.
112 This total treats the Witch of Endor, from I Samuel, 28.
remaining five, "The Good Wife,"113 "The Good Widow,"114 and "The Constant Virgin"115 are the three positive female characters. Declaring women's need of more time to conn their lesson as his reason for beginning with the Character of a good wife, Fuller began by quoting Paul's advice to women to submit themselves to their husbands. He subsequently listed ten requirements of such a wife: to command her husband through constant obedience to him, to stay crossing him until his anger subsides, to remain at home unless she is with her husband or has his permission, to wear plain clothes, to keep her husband's secrets, to double her diligence during his absence, to dishearten wantons through her own modesty and chastity, to keep her husband in sickness, to steer her children into quietness and obedience, and to lighten the work of her servants by "ordering a seasonable enjoying of it."116 The widow was like one whose head had been cut off, yet still lived; her grief was real though moderate; her sorrow was a still rain rather than a storm; she continued a competent time as a widow, chaste and honest; she went about modestly, only on business; she loved to look upon her husband's picture and the children he had left her; she spoke well of him, or not at all; she trusted God's providence; she did not use the funds which justly belonged to

113Ibid., p. 1.  
114Ibid., p. 24.  
115Ibid., p. 34.  
116Ibid., p. 3.
her children in order to purchase the good will of a second husband. The "Constant Virgin" was one who resolved to live chaste and unmarried in order that she might serve God, and serve him more constantly; she spoke of marriage honorably, and she spoke not in the church in the presence of her betters; she blushed at the wanton discourse of others in her presence; she did not bind herself to a vow never to marry, for she counted virginity to be unspotted, not unmarried; she lived with less care and thus died with more cheerfulness.

The two negative female Characters are "The Harlot" and "The Witch." The first of these poignantly differentiates Fuller's Christian morality from Theophrastus' Greek ethics; moreover, it shows, as do his positive Characters, his humane view of, and earnest desire to improve, the individuals in his society. He described the Harlot as "one that herself is both merchant and merchandise, which she selleth for profit, and hath pleasure given her into the bargain, and yet remains a great loser." Fuller introduced "The Witch" with proof that such creatures existed; a description of such a female then followed. Witches were at first only ignorant, malicious, ugly, and garrulous; frequently they became witches in order to defend themselves from witchcraft. They began by doing tricks strange rather than hurtful; at last they "indent downright with the devil." When they were arraigned for their lives, however, even the devil left them to the law to shift for themselves.

117 Ibid., p. 357.  
118 Ibid., p. 367.
The first of these evil Characters was a common subject for the few writers who portrayed women; certainly the type was not overlooked by the writers of the Spectator. The second treats a type of woman which I have not read about in any other precursors of Addison and Steele; in the Spectator, however, Addison expressed his belief in witchcraft, or the "Commerce with Evil Spirits," but at the same time he admitted that he could give no credit to any particular instance of it. Moll White is his individualized portrait of this type of female.

Thus, when the Spectator made its appearance on March 1, 1711, and continued daily until December 6, 1712, its female Characters which so delighted its public were not "sprung full-armed" from the brains of Addison and Steele to delight and amuse a public totally unprepared for such a literary phenomenon. Indeed, it has been shown that Theophrastus, the father of English satire, showed effectively and economically what men do; LaBruyere individualized his Characters without destroying their value as types and combined with these sketches the features of the Montaigne essay. Of the seventeenth-century English writers, bridging the gap between these two to whom Addison and Steele were most indebted, Overbury gave

119 For examples see II, No. 182; III, No. 205; and IV, No. 286, 292.

120 II, No. 117.

121 Moll's death is told about in IV, No. 269, 302.
vividness of presentation and was the first real writer of feminine types; Hall freed the genre from the limitations which a servile imitation of his Greek model would have forced upon it; Breton at least helped to popularize the genre and gave credit to Bacon, whose style the writers of this period had adopted; Earle penetrated into the reasons for man's behavior; and Fuller emancipated the Character from the Euphuistic tradition. W. H. Durham has shown that essays of the type, essentially one subordinating the Character to an idea with the Spectator papers, were in existence during the first eight years of the eighteenth century; that, moreover, these Characters had already been used as important factors in the making of a periodical; and, that this sort of writing served as an indicator of popular taste: the public demanded it.\textsuperscript{122}

There is even one female Character, Clarinette, presented in the form of a moral essay:

\begin{quote}
I can't conceive, says Clarinette, very often, how anyone can live, without at least 3000 pounds a year. It is not ten years ago that Clarinette had not wherewithal to buy a petticoat, and she went abroad to dine with her neighbors to save charges.\textsuperscript{123}
\end{quote}

This sketch, although a mere shadow of a Character, as Durham said, might easily have passed as at least a rejected contribution to the Tatler.

\textsuperscript{122} W. H. Durham, "Some Forerunners of the Tatler and the Spectator," Modern Language Notes, XXXIII, 1918, PP. 95-100.

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., p. 99.
All these facts in no way lessen one's admiration for Addison, Steele, and their assistants in writing the *Spectator*. Indeed, since few of the precursors of these writers were much interested in the female character, and those few generally in a disparaging way, it is the purpose of this study to show how much there remained for the *Spectator* to contribute to the genre, and thus, indirectly, to the new art of the novel.
CHAPTER III

SATIRE ON WOMAN BEFORE THE SPECTATOR

The Origin of the Mode: Ancient Greek and Roman Writers

In their portrayal of their female "Characters," Addison and Steele wrote within the great tradition of the genre, satire. Character-writing, by its very nature, tends toward sharpness; indeed, Alden declares that certain kinds of English satire may have been among the actual ancestors of the seventeenth-century Characters.1

The satire of Addison and Steele on women in the Spectator was in no sense a new mode in literature. Those authors, however, did not always write with a purpose typical of historical satire. In order to judge their contribution to English literature in the satirical genre, it will be necessary to define the satirical tradition by a condensed historical survey, which is the main purpose of this chapter.

Satire is a familiar literary genre. It has been formally defined as:

... a literary manner which blends a critical attitude with humor and wit to the end that human institutions may be improved. The true satirist is conscious of the great frailty of institutions of man's devisings and attempts

through laughter not so much to tear them down as to
inspire a remodeling. If the critic simply abuses he
is writing inventive; if he is personal and splanetic,
he is writing sarcasm; if he is depressed and morose
over the state of society he is writing mere gloom.®

Addison's idea of the purpose of satire was that "Satyr should
expose nothing but what is corrigible, and make a due Discrim-
ination between those who are, and those who are not the proper
objects of it."3

While not always sincere, satire is obviously one of the
most self-conscious literary forms; unconscious satire is a
contradiction of terms, or a mere figure of speech. 4

The dependence of true satire upon wit and humor seems
to warrant the definitions of these two terms in a study such
as this. For our own use, a definition of "wit" which reflects
both the modern and the eighteenth century conceptions seems
apropos: it is "that quality of speech or writing which con-
sists in the apt association of thought and expression, calcul-
ated to surprise and delight by its unexpectedness; later al-
ways with reference to the utterance of brilliant or sparkling
things in an amusing way."5 It is generally agreed that "wit"

2W. F. Thrall and A. H. Hibbard, A Handbook of Literature,
p. 385.

3Spectator, III, No. 209, 125.


5Murray, Bradley, Craigie, and Onions, A New English
is primarily intellectual and is expressed in such things as skillful phraseology, plays upon words, surprising contrasts, paradoxes, epigrams, and comparisons; "humor" implies a sympathetic recognition of human values and deals with the foibles of human nature, good-naturedly exhibited.6 "Humor" may be defined as that "quality of action, speech, or writing, which excites amusement; the faculty of perceiving what is ludicrous and amusing, or of expressing it in speech, writing, or other composition; jocose imagination or treatment of a subject."7

Thus, satire in its true form is more than harsh criticism or fault-finding; it must be accompanied by humor and wit with the intent of improving its subject.

Our second criterion for judging the satire of Addison and Steele is in the underlying motive of the writers themselves; for one can easily see from our definition of satire that this genre is always dependent upon the motives of its writers. Since the aim of satire is the improvement of human institutions, it follows that the true satirist does not write his satire merely for its own sake, to be judged by its own standards; his attentions must be directed to the weaknesses and foibles of the human race instead of those of individuals.

6 Thrall and Hibbard, op. cit., p. 464.
Satire on individuals would merely punish and not improve; one might fear the scourge of this literary form, but in so far as its reforming a generation is concerned, it would have no value.

In a study of the development of satire on woman from ancient Greek and Roman times down to the Augustan Age in which Addison and Steele wrote, one finds few major changes from age to age in the elements of its subject matter and in the attitudes and motives of the various writers who dealt with this subject.

Greece has been called the nation which invented every literary genre known; yet, for satire, one merely sees its presence, with no specialized form, in the literature of this nation. Hesiod, the great epic poet of Boeotia, was likely the first of the Greek writers to have an estimate of woman vastly inferior to that of Homer. A great poet of the plain people, he sang to the aristocratic ladies of the Court, where they presided over their houses with grace and dignity and softened and refined the rough, war-like manners of men. In the midst of such gentility, Hesiod was impressed with the hopelessness of the conditions about him. His people were oppressed by the nobles, and in seeking the causes of this existing evil, he traced them back to the one great evil the

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9 Mitchell Carroll, *Woman in All Ages and in All Countries, Greek Woman*, p. 41.
gods had inflicted upon man; and that evil was woman. To
Hesiod woman was definitely

... a pernicious kind: on earth They dwell, destructive to the race of men:
With luxury they, not life-consuming Want,
Fitly consort. And as drones within
The clos'd roof hive, cooperative in works
Slothful and base, are nurtured by the bees,
These all the day till sinks the fuddy sun
Haste on the wing, their murm'ring labours ply,
And still cement the white and waxen comb;
Those lurk within the sheltering hive, close-roof'd,
And gather in their greasy maw the spoils
Of others' labour, such are womankind;
They whom the Thunderer sent a bane to man,
Ill helpmates of the intolerable toils. 10

Hesiod's harsh invectives against woman indicate his opinion of her presence as a necessary evil, without which man's destiny was not complete. He must endure her as the "rift in the lute that spoils its music." 11

The vein of contempt for woman shown in the verses of Hesiod is echoed in later Greek writers; the next two centuries of Greek history are chiefly known to us through lyric poets who recorded in verses their attitude toward woman. The first of these poets was Archilochus, the father of iambic poetry, who made his work the medium of expression of personal passion and satire. 12 His lyrics are the earliest ones descriptive of

11 Mitchell Carroll, op. cit., p. 96.
12 Ibid., p. 98.
a love betrayed and have earned for him the title of the
"Swift of Greek literature." Simonides of Amorgus, a con-
temporary of Archilochus, continued in Hesiod's tradition of
speaking of woman in tones of disparagement. He was the
author of the famous and scathing Satire on Women. Addison,
who maintained that human nature in its simplicity could be
discovered by looking into the manners of the more remote ages
of the world, quoted the ten species of womankind from the pen
of Simonides. The temperaments of women were likened to the
earth, the sea, and to the natures of various animals. Only
one species, those women composed of the qualities of bees, was
considered in some measure desirable by Simonides; nevertheless,
the faults which he blames, as well as the virtues which he
somewhat grudgingly commends, are simply those which concern
woman as a housekeeper. His satire was concluded with a long
and comprehensive "dunciad" of the supreme evils of the female
sex.

More than a century later Phocylides of Miletus composed
in the same strain of Simonides an epigrammatic satire on
woman, manifestly an imitation of the tirades of his predecessor.

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14 Mitchell, op. cit., p. 100.
15 Spectator, III, No. 209.
16 Mitchell, op. cit., p. 102.
It was for Hipponax, however, to make the bitterest of all the observations on woman by the iambic writers. This brilliant satirist of the sixth century before Christ declared, "Two happy days a woman brings a man; the first when he marries her; the second, when he bears her to the grave."\(^{17}\)

Theognis, another Greek poet, lamented that marriages in his native town of Megara were made for money, and averred that such marriages were the bane of the city.\(^{18}\)

Euripides, the great Greek dramatist, who wrote his plays approximately three centuries after Hesiod lived, placed woman in a very unfavorable light.\(^{19}\) It seems, however, that these attacks were always directed against a particular class of women rather than against women in general; moreover, he ventured to doubt man's infallibility. That his satire was of a personal nature is obvious, since the ancients attributed his many bitter sayings about women to his unhappy marriage.

Thus it was that the Greek satirists regarded woman as the determining factor in man's ill or good fortune. She was not satirized as a type, and humor was lacking. According to our definition of satire, these writers were employing invective, sarcasm, and, as in the case of Hesiod, gloom.

\(^{17}\)Ibid., p. 103.

\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. 104.

\(^{19}\)Edward Cappa, op. cit., p. 237.
Acknowledging the Greeks as the originators of all literary genres, one still can but recognize that it was the writers of Rome who popularized satire, and who, in a sense are the true inventors of this literary form. It was they who gave satire a self-conscious and specialized form, requiring its full development in a critical age. Their work continued in the lashing invective vein, but they allowed a broader sense of humor to soften the satirical sting than is evidenced in the sardonic examples of the Greeks.

Virgil, one of the earliest exponents of Roman satire on woman, lashed out against her inconstancy: "Woman is a fickle and ever-changing creature." Plautus and Terence sordidly portrayed a class of women of the lowest stratum of Roman society who trafficked in female beauty, women trained and educated in both mind and person that they might make profit for their owners by the selling of their charms. Tibullus sang of the fickleness of woman, accrediting this trait to the charms her lovers imagined she had. Ovid satirized the insincerity of his mistress, Corinna, with such undisguised frankness that his work has been called the "glorification of

20 Walker, English Satire and Satirists, p. 41.
21 Alfred Brittain, Women in All Ages and in All Countries, Roman Women, p. 218.
22 Ibid., p. 218.
23 Ibid., p. 227.
animalism and indirectly a defamation of women." The utterly demoralized Roman society was portrayed, for Ovid advanced the theory that the attention paid to woman was merely for the satisfaction of amatory desire and that any woman would capitulate her honor if besieged with resource and indefatigableness. Catullus addressed many of his writings to Lesbia, whom he satirized for inconstancy. Always personal, and most frequently splenetic, one of his gentler works is "Satire LXX":

The woman I love says that there is no one whom she would rather marry than me, not if Jupiter himself were to woo her. Says;—but what a woman says to her ardent lover should be written in wind and running water.\(^2\)

Catullus wrote what is now considered the first modern love lyric in his poems to Lesbia; however, these works were adaptations of the poetry of the Greek poetess, Sappho.\(^3\)

Although each of these Roman writers showed their disparagement of woman, it was Horace, the acknowledged father of satire, who first assailed her, the enemy of common sense, with weapons of humor and sarcasm. He satirized the women who were the daughters of unnaturalized foreigners, whom Roman citizens could not marry, and to whom no other lot than

\(^{24}\)Ibid., p. 224.

\(^{25}\)F. W. Cornish, Catullus, Tibullus, Pervigilium Veneris, p. 51.

\(^{26}\)Tenny Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 19.
that of mistress was open. In his Satires he descants on the
danger attending liaisons with married women; his intimacy
with such women is revealed in this work and also in the sin-
cerity of affection to which he swears in his Odes. Horace
satirized women for their inconstancy; in his knowledge that
he was not the only recipient of her favors, he punished
Lydia, particularly, for her inhospitable treatment of him.
The satires of Horace are eighteen in number, and they seem,
above all, to be personal and reflective throughout.

Juvenal followed Horace, and in the opinion of some
students of satire, outstripped him as the truly great Roman
satirist; his treatment of the subject of woman, however,
took an entirely different vein. In lieu of Horace’s reflec-
tive satire, Juvenal employed the harsh invective, causing
the word “satire” itself to become formidable. Of his six-
ten satires, two are of concern to our subject. The first
describes the evils of the time, among which were loud women,
the poisoners of husbands, the universal reign of lust, the
indecency of dress, and the absurdities of professed virtue.
The sixth satire is particularly upon women: "their lust,
their ill temper, their vulgar tastes and passions, their de-
bauchery, their talkativeness, their dressing and painting,

\[27\] Carolyn Wells, op. cit., Introduction, p. xx.

Under Classical Influence, p. 34.
their superstitions, their treachery to their husbands."\(^2^9\)

Juvenal thought no more of the intelligent women of his day than he did of those devoid of morality, for he described at length the disdainful "clatter" and "clangor" of such females and declared:

Oh, never may the partner of my bed  
With subtleties of logic stuff her head;  
Nor whirl her rapid syllogisms round,  
Nor with imperfect enthymemes confound.  
Enough for me if common things she know,  
And boast the little learning schools bestow.\(^3^0\)

Juvenal's satires are obviously highly finished and too extreme in their charges to be either a true picture or the "spontaneous outpouring of outraged virtue."\(^3^1\) They are a literary performance consciously undertaken. He is noted for his irony, humor, dramatic presentation, reflective philosophical treatment, and pessimistic rebuke; it is these elements which caught the attention of the English imitators and made him, above all the other Greek and Roman satirists, the subject of imitation for the English writers.\(^3^2\)

In the satire of Roman literature on woman Juvenal is followed by Martial, not only chronologically, but also in his elaborate ferocity of attack. Martial, however, was not

\(^{2^9}\)Ibid., p. 35.  
\(^{3^0}\)Alfred Brittain, *op. cit.*, p. 220.  
\(^{3^1}\)R. M. Alden, *op. cit.*, p. 46.  
blind to the nobility of the Stoic heroine, Arria, nor did he overlook the existence of many happy marriages and noble wives. He shared Juvenal's hatred of the cruelty in mistresses who barbarously punished slave girls for trivial oversights; but Martial jested about woman's addiction to fashion and make-up. Thus he made play with false hair and false teeth:

Fabulla swears the hair she buys is hers:
So it's not perjury that she avers!

T's teeth are black, but L's are white-- and why?
T. has her own set; L. prefers to buy.33

Roman satirists of woman thus wrote a continuation of the elaborate and formal ferocity of attack begun by the Greeks. Also like the Greeks, they directed their satire against individuals, with the aim of punishment rather than of reform; nevertheless, their direct rebuke was sometimes modified by a reflective element and a humorous lightness of touch.

Chaucer and Other Poets of the Middle Ages

Satire began its rise in English literature during the medieval period; Geoffrey Chaucer appears to have been the successor to Greek and Roman satirists on woman. Moreover, one sees in his works and in those of his imitators sketches of various types of men and women which were important as a

33E. F. M. Benecke, Position of Women in Greek Poetry, p. 18.
part of the English stream which unconsciously helped to
popularize the "Character" before it was established by the
classical influence.34 One sees in his "Canterbury Tales" a
kindly and quaint satire more like the reflective works of
Horace than the bitterly acidulous works of Juvenal.35 His
verses were written largely for the court circle, to be
heard by the ears of stately lords and ladies; his avoidance
of the introduction of discordant elements is obvious. This
treatment is exemplified in many of his women characters, but
his description of Madame Eglantine's tenderness for a trapped
mouse and her concern for her lap dog illustrate this point:

But for to spoken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She would wepe, if that she saw a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bleddle.
Of small hounds had she, that she fedde
With roasted flesh or mild and wasted breath.
But sore wept she if one of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;
And al was conscience and tender herte.36

The portrait Chaucer has drawn of Madame Eglantine, the
Prioress, is vivid, indeed; her grey eyes, her little soft
red mouth, her fair forehead, and her dainty table manners

34 W. M. Graaf, editor, Thomas Fuller's The Holy State
    and the Profane State, I, p. 22.
36 Everett, Brown, and Wade, Masterworks of World
    Literature, I, 636.
are memorably described. Woman's timeless concern for dress is exemplified in Madame Eglantine; she it was who wore her headdress in a different position from the commonly accepted mode of the day.

In sharp contrast to the Prioress, the Wife of Bath shows Chaucer's tolerant objectivity toward woman. She presents a picture of flippant ease as a well-to-do middle class Englishwoman with her heavy, gaudy garments, her scarlet hose, her red cheeks, her saucy looks, her sensual mouth, her quick energetic movements, her glib tongue, and her penetrating voice. The comic effect of her story and descriptions is raised to the highest pitch; the satire loses much of its bitterness but nothing of its pungency. From this portion of Pope's translation of the prologue of the "Wife of Bath," one may easily see some of the many vanities and foibles of woman:

If poor (you say) she drains her husband's purse
If rich, she keeps her priest, or something worse;
If highly born, intolerably vain,
Vapours and pride by turn possess her brain,
Now gayly mad, now sourly splenetic,
Freakish when well, and fretful when she's sick.
If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,
By pressing youth attack'd on every side:
If foul, her wealth the lusty lover lures,
Or else her wit some fool-gallant procures,
Or else she dances with becoming grace,
Or shape excuses the defect of face.35

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This work is sometimes interpreted as a satire on matrimony, but Walker considers it a satire upon the lasciviousness of woman. Chaucer was aware of woman's frailties and declared:

"...it is fair to have a wyf in pees,
One of us two moste bowne, douteless;
And sith a man is more resonable
Than woman is, ye moste been suffrable."

In the "Wife of Bath," Chaucer has presented one of the most amusing female figures in literature; although she is no pattern of virtues as she describes the five husbands she has had, she is eminently human. One sees her faults as they are revealed in good-humored raillery. In her portrayal Chaucer has presented a great step forward toward the gentle and bantering satire of Addison and Steele in the Spectator.

Two other satirists of the Middle Ages are William Langland and John Gower. They touch but lightly upon the subject of woman, however; and they are chiefly important in estimating the worth of their illustrious contemporary. Immediate successors of Chaucer were John Lydgate and Thomas Occeleve of the early fifteenth century; these writers, too, were vastly inferior to their predecessor, in satire as well as in many other ways. Nevertheless, Occeleve's "Dialogue with a Friend" is harsh evidence that satire on woman continued as a literary form. So, too, is the anonymous piece

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39 Walker, op. cit., p. 28.
"Bagman Roll." In its eight-line stanzas, each character is set over against its opposite. For example, the beauty of one woman is praised, the plainness of another is ridiculed; one is shown to be the miracle of patience, another is said to be as inconstant as the moon; one is portrayed as the epitome of virtue, one as the wanton who went like a snail to church but ran to the temple of Bacchus; one spoke only what tended to virtue; another had a tongue that was quick, sharp, loud, and shrill.

William Dunbar, a Scottish poet of the late fifteenth century, was, with the exception of Chaucer, the greatest literary artist who had hitherto written in English. A great part of his highly imaginative satire was against woman; the most elaborate of his works on this standard theme was "The Twa Maryit Wemen and the Wedo," a satire reminiscent of the character in "The Wife of Bath." Alexander Barclay's "The Ship of Fools" satirized vices and failings of every kind; comparatively little, however, is said about women, although they are denounced for "ire immoderate" and for "wrath and great lewdness." The works of the uncouth

41 Walker, op. cit., p. 28.
42 Ibid., p. 31.
John Skelton, the professional satirist, seem not to touch upon the subject of women unless, perchance, "The Manner of the World Nowadays," a satire on the extravagance of fashion, may have been written by him.

The Court of Henry VIII furnished abundant material for the satire against women; the extravagances of these women in fashions could not fail to find pointed expression. Many selections from Hazlitt's *Early Popular Poetry of England* repeat the traditional complaints of women's pride and excessive love of fine raiment. "The Boke of Mayd Emlyn" portrays the woman with many husbands, who betrayed and used them all. The general spirit of the piece is indicated by the lines which describe her after the death of her third husband:

She was then steadfast and strong,
And kept her a wydowe veraye longe,
In faythe almost two days.\(^43\)

In "The Proud Wyves of Pater Noster," women's prayers became petitions for fine clothing in order that they might better please their husbands. "The Schole-house of Women" was wider in scope in its treatment and maintained that there was a salve for every sore except marriage and the gout. Maidens who were easily pleased before marriage were afterwards pleased by little or nothing; they demanded the last word, claimed much, and gave little in return; they were lazy and

self-indulgent; they talked too much, were unstable, and could not keep counsel. There was safety neither in their beauty nor in their plainness. In short, women could neither do well nor say well.

Unlike Greek and Roman satire on woman, we have found the satire in the English literature of the Middle Ages to the Elizabethan Age to be informal; moreover, it was broad, earthy, and harsh, but it was also humorous. It was directed against women as a class rather than as individuals. It frequently employed the method of direct rebuke, but it was more obvious and less subtle than classical satire. Apparently it contained nothing to inspire social reform.

Elizabethan and Jacobean Satirists

Of the Elizabethan satirists, Sir Thomas Wyatt appears to take first place; it was he who took the first step in the evolution of satiric verse which culminated in that of Dryden and Pope. His works follow closely the Horatian models, and their immediate theme is a satire of the Court. Flattery, deceit, and legacy-hunting were taken up in detail by him. Two writers who satirized loud women were Edward Hake and Henry Fitzjeffrey. John Donne and George Withers satirized women in their marital relations, lashing against their

44Alden, op. cit., p. 45.
45Walker, op. cit., p. 59.
jealousy and the incompatibility caused by their being too young or too old for their husbands. Withers also satirized woman's vanity in his lines on beauty as if he were speaking from the pulpit:

But why in beauty should men glory so;
As well we may perceive there's many do;
Sith 'tis no better than a fading flower,
That flourishes and withers in an hour?
It could not save the good King David's son,
From being justly by his foes undone;
Nay, there's scarce any that enjoy the fame
Can keep unto themselves an honest name. 46

The foolish fashions of women came in for a share of rebuke in the writings of Robert Crowley also:

If theyre heyre wyl not take colour,
then must they by newe,
And lay it cute in tussockis:
this things is to true.
at each syde a tussock,
as bygge as a ball,—
A very fayre syght
for a fornicator bestiall. 47

Still another writer to employ the method of rebuke in his satires on fashions and morals was John Marston. Notable in this study is his "Decorations of Women." Edward Guilpin, in his "Satire II," lashed at the artificial beauty of women and gave the reader a view inside an Elizabethan dressing room:

They know your spirits and your distillations
Which make your eies turn diamonds to charm passions;
Your cerusse now grown stale, your skaine of silke
Your philtered waters and your asses milk.

47 Alden, op. cit., p. 61.
48 Ibid., p. 150.
They were plain asses if they did not know Quicksilver, juyce of lemons, Boras too, Allom, oyle Tarter, whites of egges and gosules, Are made the bawds to morphew, surffs and scauls.

In this exposition of the devices by which women sought to heighten their beauty, one sees a crude anticipation of Pope's "The Rape of the Look." "Satire II" of the little book, Micro-Cynicon, by "T. M.," was written to the "Insolent Superbia" and satirizes proud women: their dress, their fashionable life, their envy of one another, and their cruelty to servants. Another satirist of this period on the clothes of women was Samuel Rowlands; his satire, though somewhat coarse, was essentially good-natured. Time's Whistle, a collection by "R. C.," satirized women for painting and curling their hair; Henry Hutton also wrote jestingly of woman's artificial beauty.

It has been seen that Elizabethan and Jacobean satire on women continued generally in the vein of harsh invective, giving evidence of abuse rather than of conscious effort to improve woman's lot. Humor was lacking. Woman was satirized as a type rather than as an individual; and, as always, her vanity, dress, make-up, loud talking, and inconstancy and incompatibility in love and marriage were subjects for the literary forms of this period. Unlike the writers of the preceding period, the Elizabethan and Jacobean writers were

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48 Ibid., p. 150
inspired by a study of classical antiquity and modeled their works specifically after those of Horace and Juvenal.49

Satire was in eclipse from the closing years of the reign of James I throughout the reign of Charles I, with the exception of the incidental satire in the works of the Character writers, Joseph Hall, Sir Thomas Overbury, Nicholas Breton, John Earle, and Thomas Fuller.

Steele and other Restoration Dramatists

The Restoration of Charles II to the throne of England in 1660 released a new storm of satirical literary abuse. These attacks were directly against political and religious factions of the day; one finds in the unrestrained broad humor and sneering mockery of Hudibras, however, evidence that the subject of woman was not entirely neglected. The widow, who was wooed with poetry, was "but a desk to write upon," and she laid bare the absurdity of the similes professing to laud her lips, her teeth, her cheeks, her voice, and all the items of her beauty:

The sun and moon, by her bright eyes,
Eclipsed and darkened in the skies,
Are but the patches that she wears
Cut into suns and moons and stars.50

Butler's satire seems not to be directed toward the improvement of woman's status any more than does his treatment of

49Hugh Walker, op. cit., p. 57.

50Ibid., p. 142.
other more prominent subjects from the *Hudibras*. One might assume, however, that they were directed toward woman in general rather than to individuals.

Restoration comedy was the chief literary form for the satirizing of woman. Comic writers of the time took for their subject the relations between the sexes for the reasons that it lent itself easily to jest and that it was the poignant interest of the time. Passion and affection were taken as separate things, not to be confused; love was looked upon as a purely personal reaction, and marriage as a social performance. Naturally, women characters were satirized utterly without restraint. One common subject was the time they spent in making up their faces, attiring themselves, playing at cards, living in frivolity and absolute idleness; their inconstancy, attempts to ensnare male companions, religious insincerity, and dotage on lap dogs, monkeys, and parrots were also subjects for many satirical jests. Like Ovid's animalistic theory of woman's certain capitulation of her honor when besieged with sufficient resource and indefatigableness is Ben Jonson's idea as expressed by Truewit in "Epiæcene; or the Silent Woman":

A man should not doubt to overcome any woman. Think he can vanquish them, and he shall: for though they deny, their desire is to be tempted. Penelope herself cannot hold out long. Ostend, you saw, was taken at last. You

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must persever and hold to your purpose. They would solicit us, but that they are afraid. Howsoever, they wish in their hearts we should solicit them. Praise them, flatter them, you shall never want eloquence or trust: even the chastest delight to feel themselves that way rubbed. With praises you must mix kisses too: if they take them they'll take more—though they strive they would be overcome.52

Particularly satirized were the middle-aged women who were coquettish and attempted fervently to appear young. When Mrs. Fainall, in Congreve's "The Way of the World," declares that a woman will do anything to get a husband and that all women who live to be old feel the cravings of a false appetite when the true is decayed, Mirabell answered:

An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl. 'Tis the green-sickness of a second childhood; and like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall, and withers in an affected bloom.53

Obviously, the harsh and abusive satire founded upon the moral laxity of Restoration times afforded little humor or genuine respect for woman; that this literature tends to social reform is unthinkable.

In sharp contrast to these comedies of the Restoration are the plays of Sir Richard Steele. In his comedies Steele did not omit the use of satire, but he showed, as in all his writings, the true respect he felt for women.


53F. M. Morrell, Four English Comedies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, p. 160.
This attitude may be seen in his first play, "The Funeral," in the characters of Lady Sharlot and Lady Harriot. The contrast between virtue and vice, an object which had not been usually aimed at by the preceding writers of comedies, was furnished by Lady Brumpton, the widow whose husband was not really dead. This contrast may be seen many times in the Spectator. In "The Lying Lover" it is Steele rather than young Cockwit who says, "I don't know how to express myself, but a woman, methinks, is a being between us and angels." The foolish and faithless wife is portrayed by Mrs. Clerimont in "The Tender Husband"; Steele's moral is obvious: wives and sons should be restrained by generous bonds, for "wives to obey must love, children revere." The repentant wife is forgiven by her husband, whose own conduct was far from blameless, while in the comedies of Steele's predecessors, "it was common for the wife to hoodwink her steady-going husband triumphantly." Typical of this sort of woman is Mrs. Pinchwife of Wycherly's play, "The Country Wife." It is interesting to note at this point that Steele's familiarity with the plays of Moliere, the French writer during the reign of Louis XIV,

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54 George A. Aitkin, Steele, Introduction, p. xii.
55 Ibid., p. 107.
56 Ibid., p. 262.
57 Ibid., p. 191.
is often reflected in the plot of this play. The disguise of Captain Clermont as a painter in order to obtain access to Biddy Tipkin was borrowed from Molière's "Sicilien: ou, L'Amour Pientre." 58 "The Conscious Lovers," Steele's most successful play, further reflected his ideas of marriage. The pedantic coxcomb, Gimerton, who was engaged to Lucinda, Mr. Sealand's daughter, no longer desired this marriage when the discovery that Indiana was Sealand's long-lost daughter was made. The obvious reason was the fact that Lucinda's fortune would be halved; the happy result was that both Indiana and Lucinda were able to be married to the men of their choice, whose affections could not be altered by a change in their ladies' doweries. Steele's gallantry to women and his deep concern for their status in marriage is thus evident in his plays: one has only to look to the Spectator papers to see the literary consummation of his high regard for women.

The Augustan Writers

The Augustan Age in England became a period of satire; Addison and Steele's usage of this genre gave them much in common with their contemporaries. Poetry, drama, essays, criticism, all took on the satirical manner in the hands of such men as Dryden, Swift, and Pope. On the subject of woman,

58 Ibid., p. 191.
each of these men of letters, as well as other writers of lesser importance, had some contribution to make. Dryden, who is considered by many the greatest English satirist, gave typical treatment on the subject of woman in his drama of the Restoration period; although his dramatic verse of this later period deals primarily with political and religious controversies, one sees in "Absalom and Achitophel" the subtle shafts of satire on this subject. Reference is made to the lewdness of women and to the mistresses of Charles II.

There is no great English writer in whom the satiric element is so predominant as it is in Swift; he is unrivalled among English prose satirists. His satire on woman is generally scathing; moreover, it is generally directed against types rather than individuals. Always it is the embodiment of intellect. In his "Journal of a Modern Lady" he wrote on the annals of a woman's day. Woman is pictured as an absolute rake, who sleeps till noon, idles away her time at "painting" and dressing, sits up late, loses her money, and goes to bed sick. In "The Furniture of a Woman's Mind,"

59Alden, op. cit., p. 2; Smeaton, op. cit., p. xxxiii.
61Walker, op. cit., p. 197.
62Sir Walter Scott, The Works of Jonathan Swift, XIII, p. 443. This poem was prompted by Lady Acheson of Dublin.
Swift's opinion of woman's addiction to fashions is scathingly expressed. Reference is made in the succeeding chapter to his opinion of woman's proper status in marriage; he felt that her position should be one of utter subordination to her husband. In this work, his attitude regarding woman's education is expressed also. The talkativeness and conceit of learned women lost for them all manner of credit; since woman could never arrive in point of learning to the perfection of a school boy, Swift recommended only the kind of reading inducive to the improvement of good sense and discretion.

Despite Swift's harsh invectives on woman, his love for Stella and his Journal to her show him to be not entirely lacking in kindness toward the sex. Moreover, his poem, "A Gentle Echo on Woman," describing the various moods of woman and playing satirically upon her whims, contains neither hate nor despair.

The successor to Dryden in the line of contemporary satirical verse was Alexander Pope; his satirical portraits of women are among his best known works. His earliest satire

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65 Sir Walter Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 344.
"The Rape of the Lock," has as a contrast a trivial quarrel humorously dignified with epical importance; on the stealing of a mere lock of hair the powers of earth and air are centered. The staple of delicately elaborate mock-heroic satire is the raillery of fashions and the vanities of beaux and belles. In the "unnumbered Spirits" hovering protective-ly around Belinda (Miss Arabella Fermor), one sees Pope's four types of women. These spirits representing the vanities of beauteous dead women are the salamanders, "sprites of fiery termagants"; the nymphs, spirits of the soft yielding minds; the gnomes, spirits of the graver prudes; and the sylphs, spirits of the light and vain coquettes. This passage asserting the need of good sense for the preservation of what beauty gains has the essence of many sermons:

Oh, if to dance all night and dress all day, Charmed the smallpox or chased old age away; Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce, Or who would learn one earthly thing of use? To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint. Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint. But since, alas! frail beauty must decay, Curled or uncurled, since locks will turn to grey; Since painted or not painted, all shall fade, And she who scorns a man, must die a maid; What then remains but well our power to use And keep good humor still whate'er we lose?

Although all of these satires by Pope are personal, his "Epistle II" shows him to be splenetic as well; that the victims were thus punished is evident in the life of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who, as Sappho, is one of the women satirized. In this work Pope declared that

Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
Most women have no Characters at all.
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
And best distinguished by black, brown, or fair. 69

Pope's highly polished satirical shafts depicted Sappho with her diamonds and dirty smock at her "toilet's greasy task"; she was the proud peeress, "prouder as a Punk." Another woman satirized in this work was Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, who appeared as "great Atossa":

Scarce once herself, by turns all Womankind!
Who, with herself, or others from her birth
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:
Shines in exposing Knaves, and painting Fools,
Yet is, whate'er she hates and ridicules.
No thought advances, but her Eddy Brain
Whisks it about and down again. 70

Lady Suffolk was portrayed as Cloe, whom nature formed without a spot, who spoke and behaved with perfection, but who, for all her prudence, lacked a heart. By contrast, Pope presented the Duchess of Queensbury as a woman of truth, goodness, and

68 Iris Barry, Portrait of Lady Montagu, p. 267.
69 Adolphus Ward, op. cit., p. 240.
70 Ibid., p. 240.
71 Ibid.
virtue: one whose
  . . . exacts traits of Body or Mind.
  We owe to models of an humble kind. 72

In concluding his character sketches in "Epistle II," Pope declared that at best, women were a contradiction; they were divided by two kinds:

Those, only fix'd, they first and last obey,
The love of Pleasure and the Love of Sway,
  That, Nature gives; and where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can Pleasure seem a fault?
Experience, this; by Man's Oppression curst,
They seek the second not to lose the first.
  Men, some to Business, some to Pleasure take;
But every woman is at Heart a Rake:
  Men, some to Quiet, some to Public Strife.
But every Lady would be Queen for life. 73

In these various satirical portraits showing Pope's attitude toward woman, his usually harsh invectives are personal and indicative of his sensitive and querulous nature. It is clear that he had no high opinion of the characters of women; it is equally clear that many of his general dicta are false. His pen was a scourge to be feared by all his feminine acquaintances; such literature, artistic as it was, could hardly be expected to bring about social reform.

Of the minor satires written in the Augustan Age on woman, two are relevant to this study.

The first of these works was "Three Hours After Marriage," a drama written jointly by Gay, Pope, and Arbuthnot of the

72 Ibid., p. 240.  
73 Ibid., p. 241.
famous Scriblerus Club. Townley, the wife of Foscile, was the wanton; her two lovers, Plotwell and Underplot, were rivals not only of her husband, but of each other. Plotwell was one of the chief means by which the secondary story of Phoebe Clinket and her "unfortunate Offspring" (her play) were drawn into the general scheme. Phoebe was not an important person in the plot; she was evidently drawn merely to caricature the learned lady authoress, Lady Winchilsea.

Phoebe came upon the stage in an ink-stained dress with pens stuck in her hair; her maid carried strapped to her back a desk on which she wrote.

Taken as a whole, quite apart from any personal application, Phoebe Clinket is the most detestable picture of a learned lady in any of the comedies. She is vain, boastful, and superficial; she is a pedant, a prude, and a hypocrite; and there are no mitigating traits.

The personal satire and the indecent dialogue, together with the improbability of plot, sealed the fate of "Three Hours After Marriage"; it soon fell into disgrace. Gay, fearing that Pope and Arbuthnot would suffer from it, took all the blame himself; the characterization of Phoebe, however, was

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74 Lester M. Beattie, John Arbuthnot, Mathematician and Satirist, p. 229.


76 Ibid., p. 395.

77 Chambers, Cyclopaedia to English Literature, II, 173.
by Pope. It was indeed a natural consequence that Addison should exclaim against the obscenities of such a play.

Gay’s poem, "To a Lady on Her Passion for China," is illustrative of the lighter vein that Augustan satire occasionally took on the subject of women. Fine China is said to be the rival of Laura’s lover. The types of womanhood are compared with the coloring on some antique jar; they, too, are valued for their beauty and are too fine for any of the duties of a household. Their fragile beauty is also like fine China; the difference lies in the fact that

A woman’s not like China sold,
But cheaper grows in growing old.

Thus, the subject of woman came in for its full share of attention from the writers of the Augustan Age. In many ways this satire seems to have followed the patterns set in previous ages, dating to the days of Horace and Juvenal. The elements of the subject matter are much the same; the harsh invective manner of treatment seems, with only a few exceptions of humorous approach, to have been general. Women were satirized both as individuals and as types; in the former case, the aim may have been punishment for the individual concerned; in the latter, it seemed more a matter of harsh and witty criticism rather than a sincere effort toward social reform. One

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78 Ibid. 79 Beattie, op. cit., p. 232.
80 Bredvold, McKillop, and Whitney, op. cit., p. 433.
might fear the scourge of a Pope, but in so far as its reforming a generation was concerned, it could have little value. Obviously, the Augustan writers consciously undertook the satire on woman as a literary art, to be judged only by its own standards. Like the Elizabethan writers, they strove to imitate the characteristics of the ancient Romans; but in this respect they outstripped even the classic writers. Theirs were the highly polished literary masterpieces; others had not the finish in style that these writers achieved.

In this setting, amid a flourishing of satirical verse, the time was ripe for the gentle and humorous raillery of Addison and Steele's Spectator, the true satire in that it strove, not merely to ridicule and entertain, but to praise and reform as well. As has been stated previously, they chose the genre of the Character as their main vehicle of satire on woman.
CHAPTER IV

THE FEMALE AUDIENCE OF THE SPECTATOR

Frivolities of the Fashionable Women

In appealing to the female world as an important part of the reading public of the Spectator, Addison and Steele, though portraying all types, desired to appeal to the women of the upper and middle classes. Their reason was obvious; it was these two groups who had the time and the education to read and appreciate the Spectator's satirical banter. To the first group, who were "already the most beautiful Pieces in human Nature,"¹ these writers proposed to give some finishing touches and "point out all those imperfections that are the blemishes, as well as those virtues which are the embellishments of the Sex."² To the second group, the "ordinary woman," they sought to point out their proper diversions, which at the present seemed contrived for them rather as they were women than reasonable human beings. A third group, the lower classes, they presented in several papers³ with

¹Spectator, I, No. 10, 33.

²Ibid.

³Some papers dealing with servants are I, No. 143, 433; II, No. 107, 326; II, No. 137, 413; V, No. 323, 8; and V, No. 366, 151. There are several others dealing with the general treatment of these women, but these deal with their mistresses' treatment of them.
the obvious intent of appealing to the women of these two upper classes, for it was they who, as mistresses of these less fortunate ones, were apparently able to help them most. To present these female readers of the Spectator in regard to their various social levels, fashions, amusements, educational opportunities, and marriage status shall be the purpose of this chapter.

The Spectator's audience of fashionable and aristocratic women was well chosen; both the women of London and those of the country were in a position to welcome such a diversion.

The rich women had an abundance of time in which to pursue their pleasures. They had their household cares, of course, but servants were plentiful. Often they found time heavy on their hands. They slept till midday, visited with one another, gossiped over the tea table, shopped in the city or leisurely selected wares brought to their own houses, read fashionable romances of the French court and plays of the Restoration, played games, gambled at cards, and attended church services. At night they amused themselves by participating in card games among themselves or gambling freely with their men-folk. In London, Bath, and Tunbridge the gaming table was a central point of interest, while in the manor house it was of less account than the stables and the kennel. Only in a few cases, however, did women ride horseback or hunt, and such women as these were generally not
admired. In short, the aristocratic women of the country found little diversion. They managed their households, attended church on Sundays, and made rare visits to London. Visiting was difficult and was undertaken, as one lady said, "at the hazard of one's bones." One does not wonder that these women "generally felt that life was somewhat stupid."5

These fashionable women sought amusement in various public assemblies. They frequently attended the theater, where the artificiality of fashionable life was satirized. Their very presence there signified their enjoyment of the risque scenes and jests; nevertheless, an essential part of their attire was the mask, the perfect camouflage for their true pleasure. This bit of apparel, moreover, left the way clear for their feigning a wounded virtue at such coarseness.

Although controversies about the immorality of the stage had died down since Restoration times, evangelical prejudice against the theater still persisted.6 One does not wonder at this fact, since Eighteenth-Century drama had inherited from the Restoration an artificial and pretentious form in which fashionable characters frankly confessed and

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4Boas and Hahn, Social Backgrounds of English Literature, p. 164.
5Ibid., p. 165.
6A. G. McKillop, English Literature from Dryden to Burns, p. 288.
acted upon their own malice, frivolity, and sensuality. In their socially realistic settings, these avowals did not appear immoral to their audience if wit were artfully employed; the existence of illicit love and a ridicule of the marriage state were accepted when carried on in the right manner. Beaus and fops who feigned the style of true gallants were the victims of special derision; it was an extreme reaction from chivalry, love, and honor. After 1700 the drama no longer consistently enlisted the best writers; Steele, who wrote many papers on the theater, declared it "remarkable, that the writers of least learning are best skill'd in the luscious Way." In 1702 Queen Anne directed that certain actors at Lincoln's Inn Fields should be prosecuted, and they were found guilty of "uttering impious, lewd, and immoral expressions." Jeremy Collier, who, in the preceding reign, had written his "Short View of the Immorality of the English Stage," published a new pamphlet entitled "A Disuasive from the Playhouse." Largely as a result of this article, the Lord Chamberlain ordered that all plays must be

7Ibid.

8Spectator, I, No. 51, 155. It is interesting to note that Steele was the author of four plays which give evidence of the personality he displays in his Spectator papers. "The Funeral" and "The Lying Lover" show him to be a reformer of manners; "The Tender Husband" shows a sympathetic coloring important in the development of the comedy of humors; and "The Conscious Lovers" is the "archtype of comedy turned to formal moralizing." (A. G. McKillop, op. cit., p. 300.)

9Aitken, op. cit., Introduction, p. xviii.
licensed by the Master of Revels, who was not to pass on anything not strictly agreeable to religion and good manners. The result was that in Dorset Gardens and Lincoln's Inn Fields the theater ceased to exist; there remained only Drury Lane and the Haymarket Theater, opened in 1705 and used for operatic performances. Such was the existing condition of affairs when Steele wrote "The Lying Lovers," for which he afterwards made apology.

More popular than the theater was the Italian opera. The Restoration had enjoyed productions in which the dramatic interest was overshadowed by song, dance, and scenic effect; they had called them "operas." From the time of Queen Anne, however, the Italian opera took the taste of the town; singers and composers were serious rivals of actors and dramatists. Buononcini was important in the field of opera; Handel's *Rinaldo*, however, made him the leading figure in the field.

Addison criticized this opera under the caption that "Common Sense ... requires, that there should be nothing in the Scenes and Machines which may appear Childish and Absurd." To him it was ridiculous that thunder, lightning, illuminations, and fireworks should appear to the audience without

their catching cold or even being burnt; moreover, Handel had composed this opera in a fortnight. Such were the Wits, to whose tastes others so ambitiously conformed themselves. "The Truth of it is, the finest Writers among the Modern Italians express themselves in such a florid Form of Words, and such tedious Circumlocutions, as are used by none but Pedants in our own Country; and at the same time fill their Writings with such poor Imaginations and Conceits, as our Youths are ashamed of before they have been two Years at the University." Addison also observed that Arsinoe was the first opera to give English a taste of Italian music; the rule that nothing was capable of being well set to music that was not nonsense was thus established. At first he noted that the meaning of the passages was unimportant if the numbers of the English verse answered those of the Italian; later, Italian actors gained the hearts of their stage mistresses by singing in their native tongue, while the other actors, frequently understanding no more than the audience itself, responded in English; finally, the whole opera came to be performed in an unknown tongue, so that Englishmen themselves no longer understood the language of their own stage.

\[14\] Ibid., No. 29, 86. Despite Addison's description of the low state of the Italian opera and his insistence that it caused art to conform to taste rather than taste to art, women apparently did not care (or perhaps understand), for the Italian opera continued to be one of their chief diversions.

\[15\] Ibid., I, No. 18, 56.
In short, English music was quite rooted out, and nothing was yet planted in its stead.

The ladies also enjoyed the fashionable watering places at Tunbridge Wells, Bath, and Epsom. Defoe has given us an interesting description of this diversion:

When I came to the Wells, I found a great deal of company there. The ladies that appear here are indeed the glory of the place; the coming to the wells to drink the water seems to be little more than a mere matter of custom; company and diversions is in short the main business of the place.

After the appearance is over at the wells, where the ladies are all in undress, and at the Chapel, the company go home, and as if it was another place you are surprised to see the walks covered with ladies who are completely dressed and gay to profusion; where rich cloaths, jewels, and beauty dazzle the eyes from one end of the range to the other.

Near the well is a long gallery, paved and covered over, to walk on in the bad weather, and where likewise, the band of music have place. There are also rooms to drink chocolate and play at cards.

With these pleasures, there grew up an elaborate code of fashionable gallantry, a system founded on artificiality rather than on true gentility. "Men affected to worship the beauties of the day and to treat all women with exaggerated courtliness." They escorted their ladies to the bells and danced the minuet with solemn ceremony; at plays they attracted

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16 Phillips and Tomkinson, English Women in Life and Letters, p. 108. Aside from these pleasures peculiar to their own age, women amused themselves by seeing the great parades and celebrations in honor of victories won in war and by visiting the Tower of London to marvel at the "beastes" there. Westminster Abbey was, even in this era, a favorite resort for the sightseers, and there were three fairs a year.

17 Boas and Hahn, op. cit., p. 156.
attention by their loud prating. Everywhere they bowed ostentatiously to persons of quality whom they did not know; moreover, they sought to gain for themselves a name for intrigue as a further appeal to the strange curiosity of the female world. In short, these male charmers feigned to be men of importance, especially in matters of no consequence; it was thus that they frequently made their fortunes through rich marriages. In accordance with the elegant and lavish dress of the wealthy women, the clothes of these young gallants were expensive and fantastic. They wore elaborate powdered wigs, fine ruffled shirts, waistcoats, brightly colored long-coats, silk breeches, stockings of various colors, and fine shoes, often with red heels. As the feminine part of society was armed with fans, these young men were armed with swords; they used them on the slightest provocation unless, perchance, the quarrel might be "slept on" and forgotten in the sober morning. This ornate dress, including the sword as a necessary part of the apparel was, like their exaggerated courtliness, a part of the scheme for securing rich marriages; nevertheless, it would have been a jest for these young men to have asserted that anything witty could be said in praise of the married state, or that devotion and virtue were in anyway necessary to the character of fine gentlemen.

Despite the obvious frivolity in the manners of the

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18 Spectator, VIII, No. 602.
young gallants, society had nevertheless gained decency and dignity since the times of the Restoration. A reformation of manners was apparent. Men and women were not so free in their language as they had been; they had begun to place value on grace and ease of bearing. A vulgarity in speech and manners was given over to an elaborate social manner. Although foppishness and simpering affectation were often-times the result, frivolity was, after all, to be preferred to indecency. It is obvious in this veneer of refinement, however, that the position of woman—-even the woman of the upper class—-was low.

Duties of the Ordinary Women

The women of the middle class lived a life which was less artificial than that of the upper class, but one which was rigorously demanding. Housewives of this class often

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The Spectator was instrumental in the attaining of this reformation of manners. The best example, probably, of Steele's fixed purpose is his treatment of duelling. Addison and Steele both owed to membership in the Society for the Reformation of Manners (Tatler, No. 3 and Spectator, I, No.8), an organization composed of Churchmen and Dissenters who co-operated against the license of the age (Trevelyan, I, 68). It issued scores of thousands of tracts against drunkenness, swearing, public indecency, and Sunday trading and instituted innumerable prosecutions. Magistrates were shamed into enforcing laws which had become obsolete. Two church groups, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and its offshoot, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, made an important and lasting impression in the revival of religion. These groups took over the duty of providing charity schools and books, and of distributing Bibles. Publications were provided for the army, the fleet, the rural districts, and, on a modest scale, for America. In the midst of this reform, the Spectator held a foremost position.
performed the duties of cook, general servant, family dressmaker, and nurse. Oftentimes they helped their husbands with shopkeeping, farming, innkeeping, and similar trades. Sometimes they were able to earn additional money for the family by spinning, knitting, straw plaiting, or mop making. This work was all done by hand, and much of it was simple enough for children to be able to help in doing. Many materials thus produced at home were "hawked," or sold about the streets of London by the women themselves. Also, strawberries, milk, and breads were sold in this manner. Some women were engaged in dressmaking, millinery, wigmaking, and head-dressing.

Although their lack of education and their meager standard of living obviously would have made an appeal of the Spectator to the women of the lower classes useless, Steele nevertheless wrote many papers concerning this group. His intent toward helping them, however, lay in the arousing of a sincere appreciation for them on the part of other more fortunate men and women. The group which the female readers of the Spectator could best help were, of course, the maid-servants. These women were the victims of an absolute rule

20 Steele has shown his appreciation for these women whose lot was to be of any trade or public way of life, and frequent advertisements of their merchandise appear throughout the Spectator. For examples see II, No. 155, 468, and V, No. 336, 50.
of their masters and mistresses. They were punished and ill treated, or, as in some cases, they were reckoned as cherished possessions and cared for accordingly. At any rate, most of them were regarded less as human beings with souls of their own than as a part of their masters and mistresses' property. They were expected to perform duties which nowadays would be considered degrading for maidservants. In many cases their constant Monday morning chore was to get up and wash at two o'clock or even earlier. In as much as possible, these maidservants attempted to follow the pace in fashions set by their more fortunate mistresses; indeed, Defoe said that he was once so misled by the finery of a chambermaid as to kiss her in mistake for the mistress of the house. His complaint was that these women dressed like fine ladies because of the high wages paid to them and their receiving so many garments discarded by their fine mistresses. Defoe undoubtedly was biased in his opinion, however, for the fact that advertisements for runaway servants were the rule rather than the exception in the newspapers of the day proves the harshness of their living conditions and the menial wages for which they worked. Addison and Steele's intent to help these women through appealing to their mistresses is unmistakable.

21 Phillips and Tomkinson, op. cit., p. 164.
22 Ibid., p. 144.
23 Ibid., p. 146.
In the Age of Anne only two professions were open to women: acting and nursing. The former required talent, intelligence, and good looks more than education or training. A few actresses were able to retire with fortunes or make rich marriages. One such actress of the time was Anne Oldfield, who was Steele's idea of a well-dressed woman, one whose clothes "are so exactly fitted that they appear as if they were part of her person." Nursing, although called a profession, was on a very different footing from acting. Practically no training or qualifications were required. Wages earned were very low, and generally only women of the most debased character became nurses. They were dishonest and untrustworthy, and students of history tell of many cases in which they robbed their employers and smothered or starved their patients, or hastened their deaths in other more terrible ways.

The Addiction to the Whims of Fashion

Whatever their station in life, women, then as always, were addicted to the whims of fashion. In maintaining the Spectator's appeal to its female audience, Addison prided himself as an authority on this caprice; he avowed himself "to mark down every absurd Fashion . . . that makes its appearance in the World, during the Course of these my Speculations."  

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24Willard Connely, Sir Richard Steele, p. 172.
25Spectator, VI, No. 443, 367. 26Ibid., V, No. 43, 45.
Although it was generally he who wrote the papers on these modes of fashion, Steele was a man of taste on the subject of women's clothes as well as men's; he knew better than his wife what a woman ought to wear. "Prue, Prue, look a little dressed and be beautiful, or else everybody will be entertained but the entertainer; but, if you please, you can outshine the whole company, and my costly lustre," was his despairing cry. Thus it was that he would have her appear at dinner; but Prue continued to look a little dowdy. His idea of a well-dressed woman was Ann Oldfield, the actress. "She is ever well-dressed and groomed," he said. Lady Mary Pierpont, later Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, met Mrs. Richard Steele socially but had little enough in common with her: "One knew how to use a mirror; the other did not look at herself enough to suit her husband." It is obvious that Steele's wife was far from emerging as a fair prototype of the portrait of womanhood which he set up.

It was, of course, the women of the upper class who had the means and the time for the indulgence in the whims of fashion. Husband-hunting demanded that they be suitable at all times for the chase. One of their more serious interests was the "sacred rites of pride." That is, the painting of

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27 Connely, op. cit., p. 172.
28 Ibid., p. 226.
29 Ibid., p. 182.
the face and the dressing of the hair. Puffs, patches, and powders were employed; the hair was adorned with combs and pins. It was an era when the towering head-dress was momentarily out of style. The small hood was worn by women of taste, and elaborate brocades and embroidered gowns were worn over petticoats "stiff with hoops and armed with ribs of whale." The "plunging neckline" was not unknown in this early day; low-cut dresses were the rule rather than the exception. Muslin was worn in both winter and summer. The muff was a necessity to the outdoor dress as was the fan to the ballroom costume. Though it "grew" to enormous proportions later in the century, it was at this time so small as hardly to admit the hands.

The mode in women's fashions and in their habits of living followed that of the women of France. Against this influence, and against the whims of fashion in general, many English writers other than Addison and Steele had much to say. Pope's "The Rape of the Lock" was a satire on the frills of the day. With good-natured raillery, he satirized "the sacred rites of pride"; woman's elaborate dress also received his highly polished satirical shafts. In the "Furniture of

31 Ibid., p. 120.
32 Connelly, op. cit., p. 172.
33 Bredvold, McKillop, and Whitney, op. cit., p. 248.
a Woman's Mind," Swift's opinion of woman's addiction to fashions is scathingly expressed:

In choosing lace a critic nice;  
Known to groat the lowest price;  
Can in her females clubs dispute  
What lining best the silk will suit,  
What colors each complexion match  
And where the art to place a patch. 34

Regardless of this satire, typical as it was of the consensus of male opinion, women continued to bedeck themselves as fashionably as they could according to their social and economic status.

The Meager Educational Opportunities

Another subject of vital interest to the female audience of the Spectator was education; Steele declared that a part of his "happy influence" over the fair sex, particularly the young part who were neither too old to learn nor too obstinate in their pursuit of the vanities which they had been bred up with from infancy, would be in the office of overseeing the education of the female part of the nation. 35 Other writers, too, were expressing themselves on this subject. Some men defended the denial of education to women as a necessity for keeping them in subjection; however, others ascribed the frivolity, moral levity, gambling habits, and political intrigues of ladies of fashion to their lack of seriousness.

34 Phillips and Tomkinson, op. cit., p. 114.  
35 Spectator, IV, No. 314, 447.
In this first group was Jonathan Swift, who satirized the situation in his poem, "The Furniture of a Woman's Mind."

A set of phrases learnt by rote;  
A passion for a scarlet coat;  
When at play to laugh or cry;  
Yet cannot tell the reason why;  
Never to hold her tongue a minute;  
While all she prates has nothing in't;  
Whole hours can with a coxcomb sit  
And take his nonsense all for wit;  
Can at her morning tea run o'er  
The scandal of the day before  
Improving hourly in her skill  
To cheat and wrangle at Quadrille.  

If a mouse creeps in her sight,  
Can finely counterfeit a fright;  
Can dexterously her husband tease  
By taking fits whene'er she please.  

Of course not everyone was as harsh in regard to women's lack of learning as Swift. Defoe proved himself far ahead of his time in his "Essay on Projects,"37 in which he expressed the view that God gave woman to man and that man should educate her in order to give himself more pleasure. It would seem, he felt, that women were denied the advantages of education for fear they should vie with men in their improvements. The soul, or intellect, was, he felt, placed in the body like a rough diamond and must be polished, or its luster would never appear; it was this rational soul that distinguished mankind from brutes, and education should carry on.

36 The Choice Works of Dean Swift, p. 548.  
37 Bredvold, McKillop, and Whitney, op. cit., p. 160.
this distinction and make all less brutish. In keeping with this neoteric ideal for the education of women, Defoe's academy was neither to expose nor confine them; the only care for preventing intrigue should be the keeping of men "effectually away." Training should differ but little from that of public schools for boys. Women should be taught music, dancing, and the languages, particularly Italian and French; they should be taught the art of speech and conversation, and the reading of good books, particularly history, in order that they might judge affairs.

That most people considered Defoe's idea for an academy for women mere prattle is not surprising when viewed from the actual opportunities available to them in this age. For those who could afford them, there were boarding schools for girls from five to sixteen years of age; such subjects as painting, molding in wax, dancing, writing, music, painting on glass, japanning, needlework, and all things "genteel and fashionable" were taught. Fine young ladies who did not, for whatever reason, attend the boarding schools, had visiting masters to teach them dancing, music, and deportment; they took lessons in sewing from the lady's maid, and in divinity

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39 Ibid., p. 283.
from the family chaplain. For the daughters of the newly wealthy tradesmen there were many privately endowed schools, but not any of them gave an intimation of anything even approximating higher education. Others attended the one hundred or more Charity schools for girls in London and Westminster.

The education of most women, however, took place at home. Girls were taught by their mothers to sew, read, write, and manage the household. Those for whom a more practical knowledge was a necessity were taught to bake, cleanse, preserve, brew, and prepare strange medicines. Some of the more intelligent women taught themselves to read from "chapbooks," cheap paper-bound books which were hawked about the countryside. These little books told tales of magic, mystery, murder, love, and adventure; some, such as Boyle's Familiar Receipts, were helpful. Most women who might have profited by them, however, could neither read, write, nor "cast up accounts."

Thus it was that during Queen Anne's Age in England education for women was meager. It is true that there were a few learned women, like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; but for the

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40 Phillips and Tomkinson, op. cit., p. 192.
41 Myra Reynolds, op. cit., p. 258.
42 Phillips and Tomkinson, op. cit., p. 165.
43 Ibid.
great majority of them, education meant simply the learning of needlework, reading, writing, and in a few cases, the casting of numbers. Everyone agreed that women should have some training beyond that of petty accomplishments to serve as an antidote to natural and moral unsteadiness, but there was disagreement as to the nature and extent of it. Chief arguments against their education were that it would make them unfit for household duties, their pride would be insufferable, the sovereignty of man would be shaken, and that because of their mental instability, learning would "turn their brains." Whatever the raillery of the wits as to this subject, however, they and all others were in complete accord in regard to the purpose of women's education. It was simply to fit young ladies better for their goal in life itself: marriage and housewifery.

The Subordinate Status in Marriage

On the subject of marriage the Spectator did not disappoint its female audience; in fact, Steele set himself to the serious task of making the "Word Wife the most agreeable and delightful Name in Nature." The pressing need for such a change in thinking is evident in the prevailing conception of marriage during the Eighteenth Century. It was not looked

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45 Spectator, VII, No. 490, 50.
upon as an idealistic partnership based upon a purpose of serving society and rearing a family; on the contrary, marriage was regarded as a social and economic contract, designed to protect property and insure male inheritance.

... The social and legal subordination of woman was a necessary aspect of the conception, being bound up in a complex of ideas including the doctrine of inferiority, a rigid observance of distinctions in social status, and a belief that social institutions must have a final power vested in a head. The first duty, therefore, of the moral, law-abiding woman was to submit graciously to the authority of her parents or her husband (a widow being a social anomaly and a constant cause of perplexity). Such subordination was an ethical principle, and deviation from it was regarded as mutiny against law and religion. 46

Under such a system of thinking, it is obvious that women had no legal rights whatever. "A husband might beat his wife with impunity, provided that he use 'reasonable chastisement'--and almost any chastisement was considered reasonable. 47 Married women owned no property; everything they had became their husbands'. Many an heiress was beguiled into marriage by a handsome adventurer who, if he did not desert her after taking possession of her fortune, reduced her to dependence upon his bounty. Later "settlements" were devised, in which a certain part of the property of the wife's was set aside for her children after her death.

Divorce was almost unknown. It was obtainable only through Church courts, and then only if followed by a special

46 R. Blanchard, op. cit., p. 343.
47 Boas and Hahn, op. cit., p. 157.
Act of Parliament; not more than six divorces were thus legalized during the twelve years of Queen Anne.  

Under such austere conditions divorce was difficult even for a man; for a woman it was impossible.

Since it was regarded by almost everyone as a grave misfortune to remain single, women felt no grievance that they should be disposed of in marriage by others. No doubt they were usually consulted as to their destiny, depending upon the circumstances. Daughters of the "great" were not permitted to choose for themselves any more than were the Princesses of the Blood. It is said that Lady Mary Churchill, daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, had set her heart on a private gentleman, but the Duke saw her married to Ralph Montagu, made a duke at that time, before leaving for one of his campaigns. It was an alliance advantageous to the young couple's families. In such marriages as this, a contract was established in order to protect women's rights and properties. Marriage by the adventuress was regarded as a financial investment and was often undertaken after a few hours' or even a few minutes' acquaintance. In the upper and middle classes husbands were found for girls on the principle of frank barter. One father wrote of his daughter, Cloky, whom he had not enough money to dispose of in marriage in England, that

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48 Trevelyan, op. cit., I, 36.
49 Ibid., II, 36.  
50 Ibid.
she was sent to Ireland to seek a husband at a cheaper rate. Marriage for the lower classes was difficult. These women often had no money for dowries, no funds for marriage settlements, and were forced to depend upon physical allure for their matrimonial advancement. The moral laxity of the day placed a small premium on chastity, and the stage presented a practical means for a girl of the lower classes to advance herself socially, thereby increasing her chances for a suitable marriage.

Even in the midst of this era of much needed social reform, many writers were decrying woman's already inferior social position; others, like Defoe, joined the ranks of this reform in her behalf. It was the Spectator, however, which held the position of a sort of code of taste in behavior, reading, and expression all over the kingdom. Addison and Steele saw clearly how important a part the female sex was destined to play in the formation of English taste and manners. Although her position was somewhat emancipated since Restoration times, woman still was destitute of serious and rational employment. Her education was meager and her status in marriage placed her in legal subordination to her husband. Her life was narrowly bounded on one side by superficial amusement and on the other by harsh restraint. The Spectator sought to pacify her by increasing her self-respect; moreover, he

51Ibid., p. 313.
sought to eradicate selfishness and the vices of idleness and in their places to uphold dignified ideals of conduct. In a word, he purported "to enlist the aid of female genius in softening, refining, and moderating the gross conflicting tastes of a half civilized society."\(^{53}\)

CHAPTER V

FEMALE CHARACTERS OF THE SPECTATOR

The Authors' Point of View

In satirizing the foibles of the female sex, Addison and Steele used Characters who have varying degrees of individuality. Although Sir Roger de Coverley, Sir Andrew Freeport, Captain Sentry, Will Honeycomb, Will Wimble, and the Clergyman—the members of the Spectator Club—were individualized to the point that men of letters agree as to their identity, the female Characters received three distinct degrees of individualization; and their identity, if any, was elusive. Many were treated as types; others, with or without names, were possibly intermediary between types and individuals; still another group had specific names and veil, without wholly concealing, the identity of contemporaries.¹ The sketches of types generally bear such details as were taken from Addison and Steele's observation of the women whom they knew to belong in a general way to the types described. It has been shown in a previous chapter that, according to Baldwin, this method of portraying a type was first used by La Bruyere, whose influence upon the

Characters of Addison is particularly apparent. We may see that Steele sometimes gave his Characters names, but we may agree with Walker that they are generally descriptive of classes of women.

In fulfilling their purposes of entertaining and embellishing the fair sex, Steele also divided the female Characters of the Spectator into Maids and Wives and Widows. It is a natural consequence that the Maids, young unmarried women, should comprise the first group; moreover, since husband-hunting was a trade to which women were trained from childhood, it follows that these Characters should be concerned entirely with that portion of the fair sex in quest of husbands. Thus the personal and ensnaring traits of the "Characters of Maids," as we may call them, are represented by the Coquets, the Jilts, the Idols, the Female Cavaliers, the Swingers, the Picts, and even the Devotees, who would have others think their minds to be upon other matters. Such sketches, humorous though they were, would have had but little effect if they had not pointed out the change which the Spectator considered must inevitably befall the training of these Maids; consequently, it seems appropriate that these sketches be concluded with Steele's more individualized portraits of Sharlot Wealthy, the young lady who was perfectly

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2Ibid., p. 483.  
3Walker, op. cit., p. 25.  
4Spectator, V, No. 449,385.  
5Phillips and Tomkinson, op. cit., p. 114.
educated, against her own judgment, in the ensnaring of men; of the unexciting new arrival to London who had not been able to acquire this much-sought-after art; and of Fidelia, the beautiful and perfectly trained young lady whose Character was worthy of imitation of the rest of the sex.

The second group logically consists of those women who had already acquired the protective shelter of the marriage state; consequently, the social traits of these women: their relations with their husbands, their children, their servants, their society, and their God, were portrayed. These "Characters of Wives and Widows" are thus represented by the intermediary Characters of Corinna, Mrs. Freeman, Honoria, Lady Mary Enville, and the shopkeeper's "learned" wife; the class of Salamanders; the individualized grandmother of Sir Roger de Coverley; the intermediary Bluestocking Wife, Clarinda, the mistresses of Patience Giddy and Constantia Comb-brush, Lady Bluemantle, and Lady Blast; the class of Orators; the intermediary Mary Meanwell, Mrs. Mayoress, Mrs. Saunter and her niece, and Flavilla; the audience types of Whisperers, Laughers, Coquets, Examples, Mimicks, and Innocents; the intermediary Fulvia; the individualized Sir Roger de Coverley's "perverse Widow"; the individualized Characters of Leonora, Phoebe, Parthenia, and another Leonora; the class of Devotionists; and the ideal intermediary Wives: Aurelia, Euuratia, and Emilia.

It is perhaps through the great number of irrational and selfish women in this second group, more than for any other
reason, that the _Spectator_, particularly in the person of Richard Steele, may be said to have "discovered women for the English people," making them "Characters" equally complex with men, thus laying the foundation for and actually making possible a new literary genre—the English novel.

The Ensnaring Characters of Maids: General Types

Perhaps the most commonly known Character among the women of the _Spectator_ is the Coquets. Steele's portraiture of this species he had used before in the _Tatler_, depicted them as, above all others, the most mischievous, creating the greatest havoc and disorder in society. In continuing the development of this Character in the _Spectator_, he declared them to be chaste jilts, differing from common ones as soldiers, perfect in exercise, differ from those actually in the service. Coquets were bent upon admiring themselves and giving false hopes to their lovers. Their hearts were fixed on the pleasures they had in the consciousness that they were objects of love and admiration, and they were "ever changing the Air of their Countenances and altering the Attitude of their Bodies, to strike the Hearts of their Beholders with a new Sense of their Beauty." One of their most strategic tactics was the use of the fan; their skill in the exercise of

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6 Connely, _op. cit._, p. 285.

7 _Tatler_, III, No. 126, 50.

8 _Spectator_, I, No. 38, 114.
this weapon had indeed contributed to their laying waste to
the hearts of many young gallants. To their lovers Coquets
were tyrants, overvaluing themselves, and underrating all their
"Pretenders"; even at church their business was the winning of
hearts and throwing them away.9 Mrs. Simper, the church-going
Coquet, smiled, winked, rolled her eyes, and curtsied so pro-
fusely throughout the hymns and prayers as to show plainly
that however she moved, it was not toward "an heavenly ob-
ject";10 and certainly it was not in human nature that her
conduct should move the attention of her beholders toward
spiritual thoughts!

One of the chief diversions of the Coquets was in attend-
ing the country dances popular at this time. Steele described
one of this species as receiving her greatest pleasure in hav-
ing the young fops approach her with good grace and show them-
selves in their addresses to her in the presence of other
young ladies.11 On one particular occasion she had the happi-
ness of dancing where there were six couples, with every wom-
an's partner her professed lover and every woman her avowed
rival. In order to mortify an admirer who pretended to airs
of merit, this scheming female chose to favor in his presence
the most insignificant creature she could find: one Mr. Fan-
fly, the most obsequious, well-shaped, and well-bred woman's

9Ibid., VII, No. 515, 124. 10Ibid., III, No. 284, 348.
11Ibid., VII, No. 515, 124.
man in town. The contest began as to who should plague the other the most; not caring a farthing for her ardent admirer, she had no hard task to outvex him. With little encouragement she made Mr. Fanfly cut "Capers Coupee"¹² and then sink with all the air and tenderness imaginable. After this performance the other gentleman fell into the same way, imitating with all his might the despised Fanfly. Needless to say, the joy this Coquet received at the country dance lay in seeing a stubborn heart break and a man of sense turn into a fool for her sake. Since these things had happened, she had only to look forward to the attendance of the conquered swain upon her wherever she went: to church, to court, to the play, or to the park. Indeed, this was a sacrifice due such women of genius as she, who had the eloquence of beauty and an easy rein which could be so successfully affected on occasion.

Assuming that, despite the designs of such scheming females as this Coquet, the real purpose in attending dances was to enjoy the art itself, this satirist who sought to reform did not fail his readers in presenting the positive side of the picture. It was as simple as the contrast in the personages of Harriamme and Chloe.¹³ Steele defied anyone, let him never be so sensual a brute, to entertain any thoughts

¹² The "coupee" was a form of ballet dancing in which a quick, sharp changing of one foot for the other was made, finishing with an extension.

¹³ Spectator, VI, No. 466, 442.
but the highest respect and esteem toward Marriamne. A graceful motion and change of posture and aspect gave her all the diversities that an excellent dancer required. Chloe, however, was as extremely silly as she was pretty. The idiot had a good ear and a most agreeable shape; but her impertinent smiles and coquettish affectations toward men made her, when she danced, the simpleton from head to foot. Steele declared that no one was ever a good dancer who had not a good understanding; thus the readers might judge for themselves what esteem to place upon such impertinents as those who flew, hopped, capered, tumbled, twirled, turned round, and jumped over their heads, and, in a word, played a thousand pranks which many animals could do better than man instead of performing to perfection what the human figure only is capable of performing. For all his humorous raillery on the Coquet at the country dance and the foolish Chloe, an individualized Coquet, one sees Steele's attitude toward the art itself, trivial as it might be, as unrivalled in giving young women a sense of their own value and dignity, and uninhibited in communicating that value to others.

Coquets found their greatest pleasure in interrupting the amours of others. As a natural consequence of such a design, they spent much of their time in the "laborious accumulation of intelligence," running from place to place with new whispers with no other benefit than the hopes of making others
Indeed, declared Mr. Spectator, there were such coveys of Coquets about London, that, were it not for the more discreet members of the sex who kept them in restraint, it would be impossible to keep such females in any tolerable order. Such was the balance in the behavior of one part of womankind with another that any such individual effort of the Spectator against such "She-slanderers would have been as useless as the efforts of a general in suppressing spies." 15

Although this satirical portrait of Coquets seems in part humorous enough that such vain women might, of their own accord as well as with the aid of jests from their gallants, find themselves ridiculed out of their follies, one cannot overlook the undertone of severity in Steele's comments regarding the gossiping phase of the Coquet's character. Notwithstanding the fact that his description of the balance of the two parts of womankind is in no sense individualized, the contrast calls to mind two of the women whom Steele knew well: Lady Elizabeth Hastings and Mrs. Mary de la Riviere Manley. Lady Elizabeth, a woman of beauty, grace, and charity, was the one whom Steele exalted as the standard-bearer for his Tatler; 16 the notorious Mrs. Manley, who published slanderous gossip collected from her many lovers, did not spare "her old

14 Ibid., IV, No. 272, 310.  15 Ibid., V, No. 389, 217.  
fondler Dick Steele." Although Steele refused to take revenge for Mrs. Manley's "inhumanity," and a connection between the slanderous Coquet and this woman may but be speculated on, we nevertheless see the type as significant of his high respect for virtuous women and his loathing of those who might corrupt them.

In the portrayal of this Character, an interesting contrast may be seen between Steele's work and Addison's in the latter's description of the dissection of a Coquet's heart. The pericardium, which contained numerous tiny pointed scars; the reddish liquid which rose in the presence of persons of quality, fine plumes, embroidered coats, and fringed gloves and fell upon sight of an ill-shaped periwig, a clumsy pair of shoes, or an unfashionable coat; the twisted, turned, and knotted fibers; the heart's communication with the eyes rather than the tongue or brain; and its lightness, hollowness, and content of scores of trifles: all of these qualities displayed a somewhat merciless wit. Addison's satire is nevertheless neither virulent nor ferocious. It simply stresses the insanity of woman's life when she is directed by an empty head and a shallow heart, and at the same time shows Addison, though intent on exalting the sphere of woman, to have far less depth of feeling for women than the genial and kindhearted Steele.

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17 Ibid.  
18 Ibid., p. 153.
A second species of women characterized in the *Spectator* was Steele’s "Jilts." These dangerous animals were but one degree removed beyond Coquets; whereas the hearts of the latter were bent upon admiring themselves and giving false hopes to their lovers, the Jilts were content only by adding to this advantage a certain delight in being torments to others. Thus when their lovers were in the full expectancy of success, Jilts met them with sudden indifference. Their faces mirrored admiration, and the cast of their heads belied a pleasant scorn at the utter astonishment of these poor males in being received like strangers; upon the eventual return of the mournful males, these women paradoxically flew toward them, wondering about them and accusing them of their absence and treating them with a familiarity as surprising as their former coldness. Jilts continued this sport until their lovers were happy again, whereupon they devised some new inconsistency of behavior for interrupting this tranquil state.

In short, the happiness of Jilts consisted only in the power of making others "uneasie." Such was their folly, however, that they carried on this skittish behavior until they had no charms left to render it supportable. Mr. *Spectator* could see no future for such scheming females other than the laying of artificial plots, the writing of perplexing letters from unknown hands, and the ensnaring of all the young fellows.

all of these things only until the identity of the Jilts was discovered by their admirers. Thus, as they had previously given torment by disguising their inclinations, Jilts were subsequently obliged to do it by hiding their persons.

Steele's humorous raillery reached its highest degree when he allowed "Spec" to surmise the situation by telling of one young creature, Kitty, an accomplished Jilt in full possession of her charms, who, while tormenting her lover by keeping him in utter uncertainty, was laid low by the dreadful knowledge that she was with child by his footman.

A third class of the Spectator's female Characters was Addison's "Idols," the victims of passion and praise. Although the weakness of this species frequently produced excellent effects in women of sense who desired to be admired only for their qualities worthy of admiration, and caused them to live in a far more uniform course of virtue than the generality of the male sex, their passion for admiration too frequently did not work according to reason. Thus, in failing to improve the fair sex in everything laudable, this blemish was more destructive to them than their being governed by vice and folly. Idols were wholly taken up in the adorning of their persons. It was very obvious in all the postures of their bodies, the airs of their faces, and the motions of their hands, that it was the business of this species to gain

adorers. Consequently, Idols appeared in all public places and assemblies in order to seduce men to their worship. The playhouse was frequently filled by them; even in church several of them set up their worship. Idols required being accosted in the language of deity. Life and death were in their power; the joys of heaven and the pains of hell were at their disposal. Raptures, transports, and ecstasies were the rewards Idols conferred; sighs, tears, prayers, and broken hearts were the offerings men paid them.

That Idols had been a common breed of woman throughout the ages was evident in the early history of the Chinese, in the Apocrypha, and in the works of Ovid, Milton, and Chaucer. Chaucer presented the strange contrast in the Idolator, who desired only to confine the Idol to himself; and the Idol, whose whole business and ambition was to gain new adorers. As one of Chaucer's Idols sat at a table with three of her votaries about her, all of whom were courting her favor and paying their adorations, she smiled upon one, drank to another, and trod upon the other's foot, which was under the table. Of the three, Chaucer declared them all her troth.

In individualizing the Character of the Idol, Addison

22Addison's source for this material was "A Tale of Chaucer," from the pseudo-Chaucerian poem, "The Remedie of Love," printed in Chalmer's Poets, p. 539. (Spectator, II, Notes, p. 547.)
compared Chaucer's Character with the beautiful Clarinda. Clarinda was worshipped once a week by candle-light in the midst of a large congregation of admirers. She encouraged the zeal of her Idolators, the gayest youths in the nation, by bestowing a mark of her favor upon each one of them before he left her. Indeed, she asked a question to one, told a story to another, glanced an ogle upon the third, took a pinch of snuff from a fourth, and let her fan drop by accident to give a fifth occasion to pick it up. In short, she sent them each away with a feeling of satisfaction with his success and a firm determination to renew his devotions on the same "Canonical Hour that Day Sevennight." 23

Addison declared Idols to be generally the most "untraceable people of all others." 24 Women of this species had something so very becoming that there was no enduring them. As they were so deified by their own designs, so they might be "undeified" by many accidental causes, two of which Addison deemed worthy of note to his female readers. The first of these was marriage; this inverted deification came as a result that "When a Man becomes familiar with his Goddess, she quickly sinks into a Woman." 25 The second was old age, likewise a great decayer of Idols; indeed, there was not so unhappy a creature in the world than the supersannuited Idol,

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25 *Ibid.*, I, No. 73, 228.
especially when she had contracted such airs and behavior as were graceful only when her worshippers were about her. Thus Addison desired that his fair readers give a proper direction to their passion for being admired; it was his wish that they make themselves the objects of a reasonable and lasting admiration, a thing not to be achieved from beauty, dress, or fashion, but rather from those inward ornaments not to be defaced by time or sickness, and which appeared most amiable to those most acquainted with them.

In this sketch one sees the veiled malice with which Addison viewed the woman of England in the Age of Anne: an empty head and a shallow heart. Her life was not only filled with trivialities; she herself was trivial. One can scarcely imagine a more ludicrous situation at any time or place than that of the foolish young fops ogling at the deified Clarinda; nor can one imagine such a shallowness of feeling for woman-kind emanating from the pen of the genial though erratic Richard Steele.

To Addison, Coquetts, Jilts, Idols, and indeed, all of womankind in general, were animals delighting in finery. Unlike her gift of exotic coloring to the male species of birds, nature had poured out all her charms on the female part of the human race; yet these vain creatures were so assiduous in bestowing upon themselves the finest garnitures of art that

26 Ibid., IV, No. 265, 289.
the peacock in all its pride could not display half the colors that appeared in the garments of a British lady when she was dressed for a ball or a birthday. Thus the following of fashions occupied much of woman's leisure and enhanced her beauty; moreover, it was a valuable weapon in her quest for a husband. Consequently, in appealing to his vast number of female readers, Addison felt it entirely within his Spectatorial jurisdiction to mark down any absurdities in feminine dress. Four such ridiculous fashions became subjects for his papers: the headdress and hood, the petticoat, the party patches, and, most Fantastick of all Evils, the mixture in dress of the two sexes by a certain breed characterized as "Female Cavaliers."

Of particular note to Addison was the care which woman had taken through the ages to adorn the outside rather than the inside of her head; so notorious was this observation that in ordinary discourse any reference to man's head was used metaphorically in relation to his understanding, whereas in regard to woman, it always referred to her attire. The headdress was indeed the most variable thing in nature; within his memory he had known it to rise and fall thirty degrees. A definite fact was noted that within a decade it had shot up to such an enormous state that men appeared as grasshoppers in the presence of women; at present the fair sex was dwarfed.

27 Ibid., II, No. 98, 303.
and shrunk into a race of beauties seemingly of another species. How they came to be thus curtailed the Spectator could not tell; nevertheless, he admired them in their present humiliation of being reduced to their natural dimensions and felt that, inasmuch as a good reign was the only proper time for the making of laws against the exorbitance of power, that in the same manner the headdress might be attacked most effectively when fashion was against it. Thus to those female architects who would raise such wonderful structures of ribbons, lace, and wire for the adornment of the outsides of their heads, he proposed their consideration of the impossibility of their adding anything ornamental to what was already the masterpiece of nature. He declared that when we load the head "with such a Pile of supernumerary Ornaments, we destroy the Symmetry to the humane Figure, and foolishly contrive to call off the Eye from great and real Beauties, to childish Gew-gaws, Ribbon-bands, and Bone-lace." 28

In this moulting season of the ladies in regard to their headdress, Addison could but commend the beauty of the small hoods they wore to the operas. 29 He looked with much pleasure upon their colors of blue, yellow, philomot, pink, and pale green; but upon going into the pit and viewing the ladies' faces, he saw so much beauty as could not possibly have been the growth of any country other than England. Although such

28 Ibid., p. 305.  29 Ibid., III, No. 265, 290.
beauty hindered the Spectator from observing any further the color of the hoods, he well knew by the unspeakable satisfaction which appeared in their looks that the thoughts of these beauties were wholly upon the pretty ornaments they wore upon their heads.

With the shrinking of the headgear, it seemed that this superfluity of ornaments, instead of being entirely banished from the fair sex, had merely fallen into their lower parts. What they lost in height they made up in breadth, and contrary to all rules of architecture, widened at the same time they shortened their superstructures. Their petticoats billowed into a most enormous concave and every day rose more and more. The reasons for this phenomenal change were matters of grave speculation. The women's defence that these wide-bottomed hoop-petticoats were airy and proper for the season Mr. Spectator could but look upon as pretence; indeed, it was well-known that there had not been such a moderate summer in many years; besides, there could be no real reason why these modern women should require more cooling than their mothers before them! Many people, indeed, were of the opinion that the hoop-petticoat was made to keep saucy members of the male sex safely away. Certainly a woman's honor could not be better entrenched than after this manner, thus invested in circle within circle of whalebone amidst such a variety of

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30Ibid., II, No. 127, 386.
outworks and lines of circumvallation. Among these various conjectures men of superstitious tempers foretold such things as the downfall of the French king and battles and bloodshed; Mr. Spectator could only declare that it appeared a sign that multitudes were coming into the world instead of going out. Upon noting, however, that all the modish part of the sex were appearing in this same manner, he could but conclude that the garment, which smoothed all distinctions and levelled the mother with the daughter, could but be the design of a group of crafty women. Should the ordinary women become addicted to this fashion, the public ways would be so crowded that London should want street room. Moreover, if men should take it into their heads to wear trunk-breeches (as heaven only knew what their indignation at this female treatment might drive them), a man and his wife would fill a whole church pew. Thus, Mr. Spectator deemed it his bounden duty to unhoop the fair sex and cure them of this fashionable tympany.

Another fashion addict of "Fantastical Coquets" (and also of a few superannuated partisans more zealous of their cause than of their beauty) was the "Artificial Spotting of the Face."\(^{31}\) Addison observed this unlawful practice of wearing Party Patches while attending the Italian opera in the Hay Market. He could but take notice of the two parties

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\(^{31}\)Ibid., II, No. 81, 253. This "Blemish of Party Roga" is also referred to in another paper, VI, No. 432, 338.
of fine women placed in the opposite side boxes who were seemingly drawn in a kind of battle array, one against the other. After a short survey of them, he found them to be patched differently; the faces of one group were spotted on the right side of the forehead, and those of the other upon the left. These differences in the placing of patches and the hostile glances of one side to the other Mr. Spectator found to be party signals to distinguish friends from foes. In the middle boxes between these two opposite bodies were several ladies who patched indifferently on both sides of their faces and seemed to sit where there was nothing to be seen but the opera. Upon inquiry, the Spectator found that the body of Amazons to his right were Whigs; those to the left, Tories; and those in the middle boxes, a neutral party whose faces had not yet declared themselves. In the last group he found the numbers to diminish daily, taking their party with one side or the other; the patches turned to the right or to the left according to the principles of the men who were most in the favor of the individual patchers. Regardless of the motives of a few coquets who patched for a private advantage rather than a public good, Mr. Spectator knew beyond a doubt that there were several women of honor who patched out of principle, with an eye to the interest of their country. Indeed, some adhered so steadfastly to their party and were so far from sacrificing their zeal for the
public good to their passion for any particular person that it was rumored that one particular lady stipulated in her marriage contract that whatever her husband's opinions, she should be at liberty to patch on which side she pleased. Such fervent partisans were not without their troubles, however. The unfortunate Rosalinda, a famous Whig, had a very beautiful and conspicuous mole on the Tory side of her forehead which, like the hanging out of false colors had misled many coxcombs and provided a handle to her enemies to misrepresent her; but if Rosalinda were unfortunate, Nigranilla was unhappy, for she had, of all things, a pimple, which forced her against her own inclinations to patch on the Whig side.

To the many virtuous matrons who were now reconciled by a zeal for their cause to a practice they had formerly believed unlawful and could never have indulged in for the sake of their beauty, Addison deigned to give free liberty to be as violent in their patching as they pleased: these superannuated motherly partisans were in no danger either of spoiling their faces or of gaining converts.32 To all others he declared that party zeal was, in its nature, a male vice made up of angry passions altogether repugnant to the softness, modesty, and other endearing qualities natural to the

32Ibid., I, No. 56, 173.
fair sex. Indeed, there was nothing so bad for the face as party zeal; it gave an ill-natured cast to the eye and a natural sourness to the look, made the lines too strong, and flushed the face worse than brandy. Mr. Spectator had seen a woman's face break out in heats when talking of a great lord whom she had never seen, and never had he known a "Party-Woman" who had kept her beauty more than a twelve-month. Even a man who was violent in party was frequently odious and despiciable, but aside from the damage such unnatural zeal did to a woman's complexion, it threw them into ten thousand heats and extravagances. Their generous souls set no bounds to their love or to their hatred; "and whether a Whig or a Tory, a Lap-Dog or a Gallant, an Opera or a Puppet-Show, be the Ob- ject of it, the Passion, while it reigns, engrosses the whole Woman.

Mr. Spectator implored the women of England to give up this hideous blemish of party rage in order that they might excel the women of other nations in beauty and in all other accomplishments; they should aspire to the virtues peculiar to their sex and distinguish themselves as tender mothers and faithful wives rather than furious partisans. The family was their proper province to shine in; their zeal should be shown only against those who were open, professed, and undoubted enemies of their faith, liberty, and country.

35Such a woman is described in the afore-mentioned paper. She was an ardent admirer of Dr. Titus Oates.
In contemplating his role in the marking down of absurd feminine fashions, Addison looked with pride upon his Spectatorial comments upon the towering headdress, the colored hoods, the hoop-petticoat, and the party patches; one female extravagance, however, kept its ground. There was, indeed, a certain breed of females who dressed themselves in hats and feathers, riding coats and periwigs (or at least had their hair in a bag or a ribbon in imitation of the smart part of the opposite sex). In pointing up the follies in the dress of this mixture of the two sexes in one person, Addison created what might be termed his third feminine Character: the Female Cavaliers. Had one of these equestrian ladies who infested all the highways around London appeared in Juvenal's days, he would have represented her in her riding habit as a greater monster than the centaur; he would have called for sacrifices or purifying waters to expiate the appearance of such a prodigy. Although Mr. Spectator had always treated the sex with greater tenderness and had used the most gentle methods in bringing them off any little extravagance into which they were sometimes unwarily fallen, he felt it absolutely necessary to keep up the partition between the sexes and to take notice of the smallest encroachments which the one made upon the other. Thus he hoped to hear no more complaints of such females. Indeed, his "she-disciples" who had perused his daily lectures

34 Ibid., VI, No. 435, 345.
had apparently profited but little by them if they were capable of giving in to such amphibious areas of dress. There could be but one general key to such behavior of the fair sex: an evil intent in the design to smite more effectually their male beholders. To set them right in this particular, Addison deigned to have them consider whether men would likely be impressed by a figure entirely female or by such as they beheld each day in their own glasses; or, if they pleased, to reflect upon their own hearts as to their impression of a man on horseback in a fontange and a night-rale.

In satirizing the feminine trivialities of fashion and dress, Additon sought to ridicule women out of wearing the absurd towering headdress and hoop-petticoat; his mock-serious style makes it obvious that he was laughing with the fair sex and not at them in regard to their frivolities. His satire on the party patches contains no consequence more serious than that Nigranilla, a Tory, is obliged to patch on the Whig side of her face; one can only consider such characters as might have been drawn from the cyclonic Sarah Churchill or the submissive Abigail Masham and appreciate anew the gentle banter of this rare nonpartisan paper. Perhaps Mr. Spectator is a little more serious in his treatment of the Female Cavalier; the partition of the two sexes was absolutely necessary, and any singularity in dress such as was practiced by Cavaliers was not without some evil intention. He could not forego the observation that this fashion was brought from France, a
country which had infected all the other nations of Europe with its levity.

A fourth class of women Characters of the Spectator papers was the "Demurrers"; naturally, they, too, pertained to the perennial and all-important subject of love, which Addison knew from the Mercury periodicals to mean so much to his female readers. Demurrers were the "Women of dilatory Tempers, who are spinning out the Time of Courtship to an immoderate Length, without being able to close with their Lovers, or to dismiss them."35 Addison feigned many complaints of the poor male readers of the Spectator against this sort of woman: a patient lawyer had suffered as the victim of demurrage for many years; Thirsis had waited for seven years; the unfortunate Philander, a man of "constant Passion and plentiful Fortune," and according to the Tatler, "the most skilful of all men in an address to women,"36 had strangely been debarred from the vows of marriage by the timorous and irresolute Sylvia till she was past child-bearing; Strephon, the "cholerick Lover" and the unremitting writer of tender and ardent letters to the fair sex,37 was irrevocably smitten with one who demurred out of self-interest, bubbling him out of his youth and drilling him on to "five and fifty." Little hopes had he of ever overcoming this vain lady, for it was his belief that

37 Spectator, II, No. 89, 275.
his demurrer would have done with him in his old age if she could find consideration in another. Most unfortunate of all these poor males, however, was honest Sam Hopewell, the genial bottle-champion who had diverted his friends since the year 1681 by the account of his passion. Finally, after thirty years, he succeeded in becoming the master of his Martha; and although she was then as grey as a cat, he nevertheless found her to be a very charming old woman who "never did think of me whilst she had a tooth in her head."

In order to banish from the world the folly of demurrage, which produced uneasiness in private persons and bad influence upon the public, Mr. Spectator presented three considerations to his female readers: first, the shortness of time, necessitating a woman's playing her part in haste and leaving the stage for others; secondly, the proportionately shorter term of beauty, which faded so rapidly that one scarce had time to admire it; and third, the great danger of woman's falling in love at the age of sixty, having failed to satisfy her doubts and scruples before that time. Thus Addison declared that

There is a kind of latter Spring that sometimes gets into the Blood of an old Woman and turns her into a very odd sort of an Animal. I would therefore have Demurrers consider what strange figures they will make, if they chance to get over all Difficulties, and come to a final resolution in that unseasonable Part of their Lives.  

38 Ibid.
One cannot overlook the identity of the terminology of a "latter spring" and the close resemblance to the subsequent comparison with Congreve's "green sickness of a second childhood"39 referred to in Chapter II; yet Addison's treatment of this generalized type might appear at the same time to take on a somewhat individualized nature, bordering upon an intermediary group of Characters. One cannot forget his own prolonged courtship with the elderly Dowager Countess of Warwick. Mr. Addison undoubtedly knew whereof he spoke when he humorously urged the women of England to demur "only out of Form and so far as Decency requires." Moreover, the pungency of his advice that a virtuous woman should reject the first offer of marriage as a good man does that of a bishopric, but that neither should persist in refusing what he secretly approved, was not to be overlooked by the fashionable and intelligent woman of Queen Anne England. Their marital status, for all its subordination and lack of sentiment, had the attractiveness at least of bringing in a new freedom.

A sixth species of women described by Steele, which, though given names, has no actual identity, was the "Swingers." Those creatures were females who had broken through all common rules to obtain more charms than ordinary. Other females

might affect a dancing walk, a familiar run, a pretty shiver, or a graceful mein of carrying their fans; they might even rush into a room and throw themselves upon chairs with daring impropriety and lucky decency; but Swingers got on ropes and allowed themselves to be swung like children by their men visitants, all the while displaying their charms and attire in a most wantonly manner. Ironically, these creatures pretended to be the essence of innocence; and no matter what they did, it was all under the harmless guise of freedom. The jest was that

Mr. Such—one can name the Colour of Mrs. Such-a-one's stockings; and she tells him, he is a lying Thief, so he is, and full of Hoguery; and she'll lay a Wager, that her Sister shall tell the Truth if he says right, and he can't tell what Colour her Garters are of. 40

In all this diversion there were many pretty shrieks, not so much for falling as for the dismantling of the ladies' clothing; meanwhile, elaborate care was taken to avoid improprieties. Whether the gallants tied the young ladies' legs with their hatbands before wafting them into the air was a matter of uncertainty; Mr. Spectator left this problem, posed in the form of a jealous dispute between two of his female readers, unsolved. Rachael Shoestring declared that if such a nicety were observed, it might have been warranted by the fact that Matilda Mohair had crooked legs; the other letter,

40. Spectator, VII, No. 492, 57. A corresponding paper on this type may be found in No. 495, p. 68, of the same volume.
this female's reply to such an insult, declared that such propriety might have gone unheeded because of Rachael's indecorum. This exchange of letters, reminding one of the approach to the novel in the De Coverley Papers, concluded with the idea that such libidinous conduct, however, should serve to bring all sober girls into observation, giving them momentum to swim the tide against such a powerful party in the opposition. Otherwise, these "Rigids" must move with a speaking mien, look significantly, lisp, trip, loll, start, blush, rage, and weep as agreeably as any Swinger in all of England, lest they, for want of charms, stand unasked for by the gallants. In face of such a tragic possibility, Mr. Spectator could but conclude this obvious satire with the dignified and simple statement that "A loose trivial Song gains the Affections, when a wise Homily is not attended to."\textsuperscript{41}

If Steele appears a bit severe in this satirical treatment of the immodest Swingers, one must not forget the high respect in which he held women; he has plainly displayed his loathing of anything offensive to their modesty.

A seventh general type of women described by Steele was the "Picts." These mask-faced females appeared even fairer than they were wont to be, for they were adept in the art of "painting." Ironically, their beauty, which was

\textsuperscript{40}Ibid.
literally designed and created to invite the approach of lovers, was, for fear of dissolving the features or transferring the complexions away from the young ladies, actually obliged to keep them at a distance. By means of a letter of confession from an unfortunate and irate husband, Steele declared Picts to be so exquisitely skillful in their art that "give them but a tolerable Pair of Eyes to set up with, and they will make Bosom, Lips, Cheeks, and Eyebrows, by their own Industry." So great was the astonishment of the young husband upon the discovery of the counterfeit beauty of his mistress that he declared she seemed scarcely young enough in the morning to have been the mother of his bride of the previous night.

In feigning an answer to the unhappy man, Steele told of an amour of his genial friend, Will Honeycomb, with a vain and ill-natured lady of this species. Banished by her and at the same time feeling himself irrevocably her slave, Will was forced to the last refuge: a round sum of money to her maid. Thus, standing conveniently behind the hangings in the lady's dressing room, he observed her design her face for the day, working for a full hour before she became recognizable to him. In time the Pict stood before him in utmost confusion, with a pretty smirk on the finished side of her

42 Ibid., I, No. 41, 123.
face while the other side was expressionless and as pale as ashes. Needless to say, this experience severed for-ever Honeycomb’s relation with the species of Picts.

In concluding the Character of the Picts Steele momentarily adopted a severity of tone utterly unlike the genial humor which Martial, referred to in Chapter II, used in the treatment of false hair and teeth of the Roman women of the first century, A. D. Steele declared that no faith should be kept with cheats and that an oath made to a Pict was of itself void. Such a statement seems but an echo of the harsher satire on the subject in Ben Jonson’s Epicoene: in it Mr. Otter, whose wife took herself asunder each night into twenty boxes and was not reassembled until noon of the next day, was told by Cutbeard that the error personae, in which a man might be contracted to one person, thinking her another, was sufficient grounds for divorce. The contrast between Steele and Jonson in their denunciation of the folly of painting seems to lie in the fact that Jonson, like other Jacobean dramatists, was simply making a merry jest for his audience’s entertainment; Steele, on the contrary, showed a loathing for such a practice as offensive to woman’s true beauty. As further proof of this view, Steele set up

44. Ibid., Act V, Scene 1, p. 258.
a contrasting model, a method cited in Chapter II as being
used in the Middle Ages, in the "British," the truly beau-
tiful and natural women of England. Lapsing again into a
more humorous mood, Steele declared that only Lindamira
should be entitled to cover her delicate complexion with
paint, "as Punishment for chusing to be the worst Piece of
Art extant, instead of the Masterpiece of Nature." For
his own part, the Spectator, who had more fear for the woman
of sense than for the woman of beauty, designed to produce
several faces which had been in public for many years with-
out actually having appeared; such an exhibit at the play-
house would make a very pretty entertainment, indeed.

An eighth class of Characters manifesting the personal
traits concomitant with the ensnaring of the male of the
species is the Devotees; for obviously, the religious ardor
of these females was merely another means of gaining admirers.

One sees in this sketch the influence of John Earle, who, in
his Microcosmography, portrayed "A She Precise Hypocrite" as one who toyed with the fashion of religion, overflowing
so much with the Bible that she spilled it upon every possible
occasion. Devotees were disparaging of religion by their

45 Spectator, I, No. 41, 125.
46 Aldington, op. cit., p. 221.
indiscreet and unseasonable introduction of the mention of virtue on all occasions; they incessantly professed they were what no one should doubt them to be, all the while betraying their labors with feigned cheerfulness and alacrity. They lived in the world and denied themselves none of its pleasures, yet they declared at length how insipid all things in it were to them. The one place where these women were really themselves was at church; there they displayed their virtue and fervent devotion to the point of praying themselves out of breath. While other young ladies played at questions and commands or danced with their young male charmers, Devotees read aloud in their closets. To this set of females all love save celestial love was ridiculous; nevertheless, the bitterness with which they spoke of the passion of one mortal to another belied their mingled jealousy and contempt of it. When lovers warmed in their addresses to other young ladies, Devotees exclaimed about the nonsense and yearned for the bell to ring for prayers. None of these ladies ever carried a "white Shock Dog with Bells under her Arm, nor a Squirrel or a Dormous in her Pocket, but always an abridg'd Piece of Morality to steal out when she is sure of being observed."  

The Character of the Devotee is purely a type; its greatest merit lies in its parallel attack on both the frivolity and the affected gravity of the day. Steele’s comment

that even the sacred writings themselves abhorred the conduct of Devotees was a just criticism filling a crucial need of the time; for we have found that even the ruling sovereign could read a religious book all afternoon and gamble at dice all evening.\(^48\)

**Intermediate Portraits of Maids**

Aside from these eight general classes showing the personal ensnaring traits of the Maids, the *Spectator* presents numerous intermediary Characters which portray the egoism, pride, vanity, indolence, and wantonness of the young woman in the Age of Anne. These traits become, if possible, more pronounced in these more individualized Characters. One sees these creatures, however, as innocent victims of the social customs of their times. In his desire to help these Maids, Mr. Spectator presented needlework as an antidote to much of the frivolity in their lives. The pastoral poetess,\(^49\) he declared, might vent her fancy in silken landscapes and crowd a thousand graces into a pair of garters. So great were the advantages of this worthy use of leisure that he submitted three proposals to all the mothers in England: first, that no virgin whatsoever be allowed to receive the addresses of her first lover but in a suit of her own embroidery; second, that before every "fresh servant" she be obliged to appear with

\(^{48}\)Trevelyen, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

\(^{49}\) *Spectator*, VIII, No. 606, 390.
at least a new stomacher of her own making; third, that no one be actually married till she had child-bed pillows and a mantle for her son quite finished. Thus the women of Great Britain would become as exceedingly nimble-fingered as were the ladies of ancient Greece during the time of Homer's Penelope. The lighter side of the picture Mr. Spectator presented as a follow-up was in the form of two letters, the first of which was from Cleora, the Coquet. She railed against his groves of silk and streams of mohair, declaring that she hoped to kill hundreds of lovers before the best housewife in England could stitch out a battle; indeed, she did fear but to provide boys and girls much faster than his disciples could possibly embroider them. She would then by her own efforts purchase the screen and hangings for her home, thereby encouraging the manufacturing industry of her country.

The second letter was from A. B., who agreed with Mr. Spectator's sentiments as to the value of the old custom of needlework but begged further consideration in the case of the poetical ladies who, although perfectly willing to follow his faultless advice, found it more difficult to lay aside their pen and ink so easily. A poem of praise on a grotto "For Chance too regular, too rude for Art," with its "rude Shells in such sweet Order," followed; the gist of the

50Ibid., No. 309, 399. 51Ibid., No. 632, 456.
satire naturally lay in its apparently coming from the pen of one such feminine poetess for whom Mr. Spectator recommended needlework in the first place!

In a more serious vein, Steele sought to help these maids by presenting a refreshing (if somewhat indefinite) plan for reform: a method of education whereby neither the young lady's mind nor her person would be overlooked, and one which would provide her with a happier and more efficient life in the true administration of her home.

Among the intermediary Characters, two illustrate extremes as Steele satirized woman's lack of education and her vain affectation of ignorance to please men. Sharlot Wealthy had been cared for with such tenderness that the education of her mind had been neglected. It was true that everything had been decided for her upon the basis of its good or ill effect upon her person; consequently, since her arrival at the years of womanhood, she had been abused after another manner. She was, indeed, so "killing" that no one could safely speak to her. Men of sense cut short her questions with something or other about her eyes; even her maid, a crude country girl, gave aid to her mistress' votaries by cunningly laying their letters in her way, subsequently avowing innocence to such little deceits. Sharlot implored the Spectator to lay down some rules for behavior and to tell

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52 I, No. 66, 205.  
52 V, No. 342, 70.  
54 VII, No. 534, 182.
people that even the fair ones expected honest, plain answers. The silly homage paid to such young ladies by foolish people and the utter negligence rendered them by intelligent people made their conversation nothing more than what might expose them to ignorance, vanity, and even vice. The second of these Characters was not so "killing"; indeed, how she should be disposed of in marriage, when her person and her education were to be her fortune, was a matter of grave concern for her fashionable London relative. This Country Kinswoman⁵⁵ who had only lately come to the city was, though pretty, "just as Nature left her, half finished, and without any acquired Improvements." She could not comprehend the "visible Graces of Speech" and the "dumb Eloquence of Nature." She expressed herself only with her tongue, and then only to signify her meaning; her eyes performed only the service of seeing, and she was "utterly a Foreigner to the Language of Looks and Glances."⁵⁶ Despite two months' training, she could not yet sigh when she was unconcerned nor smile when she was not pleased; neither could she walk with an irresistible grace, but only to change her place. That she could not restrain from blushing when addressed would

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⁵⁵ I, No. 68, 203.

⁵⁶ This reference brings to mind Lord Halifax's stern admonition against indulging in the "Language of the Eyes." (Walter Raleigh, editor, The Complete Works of George Savils, First Marquis of Halifax, "The Lady's New Year's Gift; or, Advice to a Daughter," p. 29.)
have been pardonable had she known how to carry herself in it and had it not manifestly injured her complexion.

In commenting upon the education of Sharlot Wealthy and the lack of it in the country girl, Steele followed the literary device of balancing, for purposes of contrast, the attractive "fine breeding" with the plain "good breeding." He declared that the general mistake among parents in the educating of their children was that the daughters were trained in the outward graces of their persons, while their minds were neglected. The purpose of educating the young ladies in drawing-room decorum and pretty feminine graces was to enable them to find husbands.

When a girl is safely brought from her Nurse, before she is capable of forming one simple Notion in Life, she is delivered to the Hands of her Dancing-Master; and with a Collar round her Neck, the pretty wild Thing is taught a fantastical Gravity of Behaviour, and forced to a particular Way of Holding her Head, heaving her Breast, and moving with her whole Body; and all this under Pain of never having an Husband if she steps, looks or moves awry . . . To make her an agreeable Person is the main Purpose of her Parents; to all their Cost, to that all their Care is directed; and from this general Folly of Parents we owe our present numerous Race of Coquets. 57

Thus in the education of young ladies, one sees that their fancy was engaged in the turning of all their efforts to the ornaments of their persons; they naturally felt that if they were tall enough, they were also wise enough for any

57 Spectator, op. cit., p. 204.
of the things for which their education made them think themselves designed. Surely, thought Steele, there was a middle way to be followed; the management of a young lady's person was not to be overlooked, but the erudition of her mind was much more to be regarded. According as the two were managed, the mind followed the appetites of the body, or the body expressed the virtues of the mind. Thus Steele gave no assumption that woman's brain would be "turned" by knowledge; he was aroused to indignation by parental neglect of any education for women other than pretty feminine graces and drawing-room decorum. That he never expressed a more definite idea or plan for a course of training other than that the mind and body should improve together separated Steele from the caustic wits, the conservative moralists, and the avid reformers of his day and left him with the fulfillment of his original purpose in writing for women; to "contribute to make Woman-kind, which is the most beautiful Part of Creation, entirely amiable, and wear out all those little Spots and Blemishes that are apt to rise among the Charms which Nature has poured out upon them. . . ."


59 Spectator, I, No. 57, 174.
For what purpose was this training of woman's mind and body? Steele was in harmony with all others of his age in his belief that it should make her "the tender Mother, the prudent Friend, and the faithful Wife"; in a word, that it should fit her for her goal in life: marriage. Two contrasting intermediary Characters, the sisters Daphne and Laetitia, illustrate this belief. Laetitia was one of the beauties of her age; from her very childhood she had heard of nothing but commendations of her features and complexion. The consciousness of her charms had rendered her insupportably vain and insolent; before she even communicated what she had to say, she was listened to with partiality and approbation. Daphne was almost twenty before one civil thing had been said to her; consequently, she found herself obliged to acquire some accomplishments to make up for her want of attractions she saw in her sister. She was seldom submitted to in a debate wherein she was concerned; her discourse had only good sense to recommend it, and she was always under the necessity of considering well what she would say before uttering it. Thus, Daphne, despairing of any inclination toward her person, became an agreeable companion as Laetitia became sullen, grave,

60 Ibid., No. 33, p. 101.
and insipid. Indeed, a young gentleman who aspired to the favor of Laetitia found her sister so much more agreeable that he came to love her and despise Laetitia, overjoying the father, who felt that he could dispose of his beauty at leisure.

It seems fitting to conclude these Characters of Maids, educated only for the ensnaring of husbands, with Steele's outstanding model for young womanhood: Fidelia. Fidelia was the only child of a decrepit father whose life was bound up in hers. She read, danced, sang, and used her spinet and lute to the utmost perfection; her use of these accomplishments was for the old man's diversion. Although she was now twenty-three, neither the application of many lovers, her vigorous time of life, nor her quick sense of what was truly gallant and elegant in the enjoyment of a plenteous fortune could draw her from the side of her father. She employed her whole time in his care and attendance; her filial regard was her diversion, her business, and her glory. She performed the duties of a nurse with all the beauties of a bride; her attendance upon her father did not cause her to neglect her person. Indeed, Fidelia's care and exactness of habit convinced him of her alacrity of mind, and she had, of all women, the best foundation for affecting the praise

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62 Ibid., VI, No. 449, pp. 385-387.
of a seeming negligence. In this house came assemblies of people of the highest merit; their conversation showed only benevolence without passion upon the highest subjects of morality treated as natural and accidental discourse, all of which was owing to the genius of Fidelia.

One can but feel some regard for this self-effacing daughter, yet one can but question the possibility that Dick Steele may have gone from one extreme to another in setting up such an ideal. Fidelia appears suffused with something perilously near mawkish sentimentality. A very interesting study might be a comparison of this Character with some counterparts she might have in our modern soap-operas. Nevertheless, Steele's austerity in dealing with good women becomes as obvious as that in his dealing with the "thoughtless Creatures who make up the Lump of that Sex." His exaggeration is a means of achieving his purpose: the inculcation in the minds of his vast female audience of his ideal of womanhood: the tender Mother, the prudent Friend, and the faithful Wife.

The Social Characters of Wives and Widows

Thus, we approach the next grouping of the Spectator's female Characters: the Wives and Widows. Unlike the personal, ensnaring traits of the Maids, these Characters

63 Ibid., I, No. 4, 15.
portray the social traits. Woman's relation to her husband, her household, her society, and her God is depicted by way of intermediary and individualized characters and by the classes of Salamanders, Orators, and Devotionists.

Many intermediary Spectator Characters portray Addison and Steele's Wives in their relations with their husbands, but Corinna, Mrs. Freeman, Honoria, Lady Mary Enville, and the shopkeeper's "learned" wife are good illustrations of these peevish, vain, and deceitful creatures. The first of these affected so much indifference and becoming heedlessness that she appeared as gay as a Maid in the Character of a Wife. Her husband, who had all the torment imaginable out of mere indolence, was convinced that she meant him no dishonor but pined to death that she had not enough deference for him to avoid the appearances of it. The temperamental Mrs. Freeman had a husband who was "a true, good-natured Man, whom the Rakes and Libertines call Hen peekt." The poor man doted on this wife who had a good share of wit and was an agreeable person; nevertheless, he admitted that when the lady challenged him to a debate, he merely complimented her beauty. One must admit with her that he treated her like a pretty idiot. He himself declared, "She will play the Fool

if I allow her to be wise, but if she suspects I like her for her trifling she immediately grows grave." The masterful Honoria was bent wholly upon conquest and arbitrary power. Her wit and beauty earned for her the esteem of all her acquaintances as a woman of agreeable person and conversation; irrespective of her husband, however, she demanded veneration in the right of an Idol, checking her natural desire of life with an inconsistent fear of wrinkles and old age.

Probably the most domineering of all the Wives was Lady Mary Enville, wife of Jack Anvil, the tradesman who made good. Deciding to cut short the marriage treaty, he threw this lady of quality a Carte Blanche, allowing her to make her own terms. As a result, she had complete disposal of his fortune and regulation of his family. Her people, who were averse to the match at first, later dined with him almost every day and borrowed large sums from him. The servants were all new ones, the house was littered with heaps of fine china, and the children listened constantly to tales of all the "great" men and women of their mother's family. Lady Mary considered herself her husband's superior in both sense and quality; she dictated to him in his business and set him right in points of trade. The young shopkeeper declared that

66Ibid., IV, No. 302, 403.
67Ibid., IV, No. 299, pp. 392-395.
his wife, who had but recently been of great assistance to him in his business, had of late become acquainted with a "Schoolman" who had entertained her so frequently with discourses of the beauties and excellencies of the Greek language that her "learning" hindered her in her "Affairs of the House" and caused her to interfere in a most unreasonable way in his business. Indeed, he feared he should be obliged to ruin himself to procure her a settlement at Oxford with her tutor, for she was already too mad for Bedlam.

A class of wives characterized by Addison was the "Salamanders." Bearing a striking resemblance to Swingers, these females were heroines in chastity, treading upon fire and living in the midst of flames without being hurt. Salamanders knew no distinction in sex in those they conversed with, grew familiar with a stranger at first sight, and were not so narrow as to observe whether the persons they talked with were wearing breeches or petticoats. Like one of the numerous objects of the affections of Will Honeycomb, these women admitted male visitants to their bedsides; they took long walks with them by moonlight and were extremely scandalized at the unreasonableness of husbands or the severity of parents which might debar them from such innocent liberties.

68 Ibid., IV, No. 278, 327.
69 Ibid., III, No. 198, 88. Salamanders make the ninth general class of females.
70 Ibid., I, No. 45, 136.
Salamanders were perpetual disclaimers against jealousy, admirers of the ludicrous "French good breeding," and great sticklers for freedom in conversation. In short, these females spent their lives in an invincible state of simplicity and innocence; they preserved themselves in a "Natural Frost," wondering all the while what people meant by temptations and at the same defying all of mankind to do its worst.

The satirical shafts in this sketch were apparently well-aimed, for one can but see in the Salamanders the typical fashionable woman of the Age of Anne, taking no thought of her husband except for the emancipation her marriage to him provided. Indeed, according to the practice of receiving male visitants to the bedside, Salamanders appear to have been the common breed. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, at this time the most famous woman in London, received Alexander Pope at her toilette the first time they met; many times he "sat on her bed as she drank her morning chocolate and scanned the contents of the day's newspapers," complimented her intimately, and helped her sort her ribbons and polish the poems that dropped from her pen. That Addison knew Lady Mary well is generally known; that he had her or any of the other

71Ibid., p. 137
72Ibid.
73Iris Barry, Portrait of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, p. 21.
74Ibid., p. 154.
75Ibid., p. 217.
76Ibid., p. 143.
fashionable ladies of his circle in mind when he portrayed Sempronia, a Salamander, could be but mere supposition. Nevertheless, he has presented the type with such vividness that it appears to have been individualized. Instead of the usual good natured raillery following the characterization, Addison deviated to a sterner type of moralizing; he declared, "Did they but know how many Thousands of their Sex have been gradually betrayed from innocent Freedoms to Ruin and Infamy; and how many Millions of ours have begun with Flatteries, Protestations, and Endearments, but ended with Reproaches, Perjury and Perfidiousness; they would shun like Death the very first Approaches of one that might lead them into inextricable Labyrinths of Guilt and Misery."77 Such a sober statement appears to be tinged with malice;78 indeed, the restricted life of this sedate Englishman might well be the cause of such a feeling toward some of his more frivolous friends of both sexes. We may, however, consider it a transition from negative satire to positive reform, despite the fact that his good will toward women appears less hearty than Steele's.

In portraying woman's relation to her household, the

77 *Spectator*, III, No. 198, 88.

78 Baldwin referred to the occasional malice in Addison's satire as a feature identical with the works of LaBruyere, his French contemporary. (Edward Chauncey Baldwin, "LaBruyere's Influence upon Addison," *op. cit.*, p. 48.)
Spectator commented upon her dealings with her children and her servants. Although there is a limited number of papers in both these groups, the general attitude of neglect or tolerance of woman toward these persons is obvious. That a wife should provide her husband with numerous progeny was looked upon by the Spectator as one of the most important arguments to support the marriage state; this attitude is also apparent in Sir Roger de Coverley's praise of his grandmother, an excellent country wife who "brought ten children." Steele advocated that the most important circumstance in life to the fair sex was the care of children; these little ones should have the tender care of their mothers in lieu of being subjected to the corruption of ill-tempered and careless nurses. The Bluestocking wife, who herself had been the only child and darling of an indulgent mother, and had employed her early years in learning all the accomplishments of good breeding and polite education, managed her household with a fantastical false economy and treated her children shamefully. She confined both boys and girls to one large

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79. Addison presents this view in VII, No. 500, pp. 78-81.
80. Spectator, II, No. 109, 333. This paper is by Steele.
81. Ibid., III, No. 243, pp. 228-231. The nursing of babies is the subject of this paper.
82. Ibid., V, No. 328, pp. 23-25.
room in the remotest part of the house, with bars on the windows and bolts on the doors. The children were "under the Care and Tuition of an old Woman who had been dry Nurse to her Grandmother." Since they were thus isolated year round, this "learned Wife" prudently thought it needless to be at any expense in apparel or learning; indeed, the eldest daughter was able to read and write only because she had had instruction from the butler. Perhaps Addison intended his readers to cogitate over the possibility of this daughter's being allowed to learn, as the mother had, to sing, dance, play on the lute and harpsichord, paint, speak French and Italian, and know the domestic sciences of preserving, pickling, making pastry and wine, and embroidering and sewing. Surely he is pointing out to all readers the two extremes of over-indulgence and neglect that Wives might follow in the rearing of their children.

Both Addison and Steele have portrayed examples of the disregard women had for their maids. Addison showed Clarinda making excessive demands upon her servants in the care of Veny, her lap dog; indeed, she dismissed her footman because of his rudeness to her little beast. Steele described the plight of Patience Giddy, the maid-servant whose mistress

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83 Ibid., V, No. 328, p. 24.
84 Ibid., p. 8. 
85 Ibid., II, No. 137, pp. 41-45.
never knew what to do with herself; while she changed her clothes twenty times before resolving upon what she would wear for the day, her servants were running to and fro delivering and removing things. Meanwhile, the lady declared that she wanted none of them, that her servants were the dullest creatures in the world, and that she was the most unhappy woman living, in that she should not be dressed in any time. With all the patience in the world, she then avowed herself to fits of temper because of her servants' lack of understanding and ordered them to find out for themselves what they were to do. When she at last was dressed, she went to dinner and disliked everything there; she then ordered her coach numerous times, finally dismissing it in favor of the chariot. Another unfortunate chambermaid was Steele's Constantia Comb-brush. Although she loved her mistress as her life, coupling duty with pleasure, Constantia was "necessitous for Cloaths," and her mistress, who was "seldom out of humor for a woman of quality," gave her cast-off clothes to numerous hangers-on who frequented her house. Their appearance in these clothes was a mortifying sight to Constantia, causing her much uneasiness. The giving of cast-off clothes to servants seems to have been a matter of grave importance; Steele told of a fine woman whom Sir Roger knew

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86 Ibid., V, No. 366, pp. 151-152.
who distributed rewards and punishments in giving becoming or unbecoming dresses to her maids. Therefore, Steele declared that "the general Corruption of Manners in Servants is owing to the Conduct of Masters. Respect and Love go together; and a certain Cheerfulness in Performance of their Duty, is the particular Distinction of the lower part of this Family." Addison and Steele's intent to improve the living conditions of the maid-servants of England seems obvious, even in these brief references; moreover, their method—of appealing to the mistresses of these women—seems logical, for it has been stated in a previous chapter that few women in these lower classes could read or write and that their social and economic status made it impossible for them to help themselves to any great extent.

87 Ibid., II, No. 107, 327.  
88 Ibid.  
89 It may be noted here that the Spectator contains many papers relating to the lower classes of women. One such paper is Addison's translation of Simonides' satire on the ten types of women. Addison asserted that it "affords only to some extent a bearing on some of the lower part of the Sex, and not those who have been refined by a Polite Education." (III, No. 209, 125.) Other papers, including the shop girls, criminals, and fallen women, may be found in Vol. I, No. 78, p. 243; Vol. II, Nos. 137, 414, and 155, 466; and Vol. V, No. 336, p. 50. As in the case of the maid-servants, the appeal to the upper classes to alleviate the sordid conditions of these unfortunate is obvious. They were unable to help themselves in most instances; moreover, they had not the education to enable them to read or write in their own behalf.
In dealing with woman's relation to her society, the state of the ordinary women was recognized by Addison to be very shallow indeed:

Their Amusements seem contrived for them rather as they are Women, than as they are reasonable Creatures; and are more adapted to the Sex than to the Species. The Toilet is their great Scene of Business, and the right adjusting of their Hair the principal Employment of their Lives. The sorting of a Suit of Ribbons is reckon'd a very good Morning's Work; and if they make an Excursion to a Mercer's or a Toy-shop, so great a Fatigue makes them unfit for any thing else all the Day after. Their more serious Occupations are Sewing and Embroidery, and their greatest Drudgery the Preparation of Jellies and Sweet-meats. 90

Steele also noted the desultory existence of his female readers in that many slept till noon, concerned themselves with nothing but their own persons till two, took their necessary food between that time and four, and visited, attended plays, and sat up at cards till toward the ensuing morning. 91

Thus, the "modern" way was that the fair sex do and say as they pleased and yet maintain their beauty; such superficiality afforded the malicious world room for drawing its own conclusions from innocent glances, short whispers, or pretty familiar railleries. Two outstanding intermediary Characters indulging in this slanderous gossip were Steele's malicious Lady Bluemantle 92 and Addison's Lady Blast. 93 The former

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90 Spectator, I, No. 10, 33. 91 Ibid., V, No. 390, 218.
92 Ibid., VI, No. 427, 324-327.
93 Ibid., VI, No. 457, 412-414.
was a peevish old gentlewoman who had for many years "outdone the whole Sisterhood of Gossips in Invention, Quick Utterance, and unprovoked Malice." Although she was of strong constitution, this old lady was both lame and blind; consequently, her own lodgings became the receptacle of all the news, both good and bad. Her excellent memory and her malicious hatred for everyone made her the general intelligence of the town and all that could be said by one woman against another. Thus, groundless stories and indubitable truths were smothered under the general discountenance that they came from "my Lady Bluemantle's Memoirs." Similarly, Lady Blast, whose whisper contained such a malignity that it blighted like an easterly wind, communicated at once all the private transactions of the crimp table, married women of quality to their footmen, made innocent women big with child, and turned visits into intrigues and distant salutes into assignations. If the occasion required, she could tell the slips of grandmothers of her acquaintances and traduce the memory of honest coachmen who had been in their graves above three hundred years. These two Characters seem to be in complete agreement on the social malady of gossip. The fault is foolish and the satire is sharp, but the Characters stand out as being more human than incurable or loathsome, particularly Lady Bluemantle, whose gossiping may be considered her means of atoning for the emptiness brought about
in her life by physical handicap. Above all, one sees the unmistakable intent of both writers toward improving woman's position in society. Addison, as is frequently the case, appears to be having some fun in avowing to obtain gossip from Lady Blast for a "News-letter of Whispers," while Steele, as usual, strikes a little deeper into the situation by admonishing his fair readers with the fact that there was a voluntary Lady Bluemantle at every visit in town. Such loquacious females may be considered members of a tenth major type of female Characters in the Spectator, the Orators.

Addison declared that Orators had always existed; as positive proof of this fact, he cited three cases. The first was that Socrates, the Athenian philosopher, was instructed in eloquence by Aspasia, a woman; the second was that Ovid, the Roman satirist, had told the story of a beautiful female whose tongue, although cut out and thrown upon the ground, could not forbear muttering, even in that posture; the third was Chaucer's statement, in the "Wife of Bath," that women's tongues were made of aspen leaves. Thus, admitting that oratory was an art "most proper for the Female Sex," and avowing that the universities would do well to consider filling the "Rhetoric Chairs with She-Professors," Addison classified these garrulous females into four groups: those like Aspasia, who employed themselves in stirring up the passions; those eloquent and inventive souls who so harshly and fluently
enlarged upon the slips of behavior in others; those well-meaning, malicious gossips who gave lengthy descriptions of fashions, food, social events, and the wits of their own dear children; and the Coquets, who, hating and loving in the same breath, feigned false quarrels and obligations to all the men of their acquaintance.

Continuing his treatise on the Orators, Addison declared that

> It has been said in the Praise of some Men, that they could talk whole Hours together upon any thing; but it must be owned to the Honour of the other Sex, that there are among them many who can talk whole Hours together upon nothing... were Women admitted to plead in the Courts of Judicature, I am persuaded they would carry the Eloquence of the Bar to greater heights than it has yet arrived at. If anyone doubts this, let him but be present at those Debates which frequently arise among the Ladies of the British Fishery.

In seeking a reason for woman's loquacity, Addison considered her lack of retentive power, necessitating immediate utterance; the possibility of certain physical qualities rendering her tongue wonderfully voluble and flippant; and the lightness of her tongue, which, according to the "Hudibras," rendered it capable of running faster. Regardless of these possibilities, Addison thought the Irishman's idea that the tongue of woman was indeed glad for a rest when she was asleep seemed a very natural judgment.

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94Ibid., III, No. 247, 232.
In this pungent satire on woman's loquacity, Addison, as in his other Characters, showed the shallowness of woman's life. He did not pass the stern judgment upon the Orators that Steele has passed so frequently upon his Characters, and one misses the profound admiration for woman that Steele has shown; nevertheless, this type, in the lighter and more humorous vein, seems in perfect harmony with the two purposes Addison set up for all the Spectator papers for its female public: the provision of innocent and improving entertainment for the diversion of their minds from smaller trifles, and the addition of finishing touches through the pointing out of the blemishes and embellishments of the sex. In fulfilling the latter purpose, Addison concluded his essay by urging the fair sex to substitute for the disagreeable notes arising in their speech good nature, truth, discretion, and sincerity.

Steele touched gently upon the subject of gaming by means of a letter from Rachel Basto who wrote of those women "not young and past Gallantry." Although he made no definite commitment that it was wrong to employ some leisure time in this diversion, he allowed Rachel to observe that Female Gamesters, who were gentle, good humored, and the very "Pink of good Breeding" in all other respects, were at once

95 Ibid., II, No. 140, 423-424.
“Transmigrated into the veriest Wasps in Nature” as soon as they sat down to their business at the ombre table. He advised them to lose with better grace.

In an equally light spirit Steele ridiculed woman for her formality and waste of time in paying meaningless visits. Mary Meanwell declared that the fair sex needed an announcement in the Spectator for letting them know when one another was in town, or else that newly arrived females should send their footmen (who were good for nothing else) to inform their acquaintances. As it was, no one knew when various females were in town; and if one did not visit them within the week of their stay at home, a mortal quarrel resulted.

There appears to be only one reference each in the Spectator regarding drunkenness and the taking of snuff among women. During the celebration of the ascension of the new King, George I, the mob drank to the King’s health; the women “were guzzling comfortably,” including Mrs. Mayoress, who “clip’d the King’s English.” Steele’s Mrs. Saunter took snuff as she took salt on her food; she affected a wonderful negligence, presenting an upper lip mixed with snuff and sauce to all who were honored to eat with her. Her niece, although

96 Ibid., III, No. 208, 120-121.
97 Ibid., VII, No. 616, 417. The author of this paper is unknown.
98 Ibid., V, No. 344, 75.
not as offensive to the eye, was quite as much so to the ear because of a nauseous rattle when the snuff was delivered and the stops were made by the fingers on the nostrils. Steele declared that the most agreeable conversation or person could not make up for this odious habit. Those females who took snuff only to give themselves occasion for pretty action or to fill up little intervals of discourse were bearable, but even they should not use it or pass it from hand to hand when another who ought to be heard with respect was speaking. Flavilla was so taken with her own behavior with her snuff-box that she offered it to men as well as women in the middle of a sermon; once when she presented her charity at the church offering, she at the same time asked the church warden if he would take a pinch!

In her love for the vain pleasures and amusements, Steele lamented woman's poverty of taste in relation to the plays and public spectacles. He declared that there was such levity in the minds of the fair sex that they seldom attended anything but impertinences. An expression which alluded to bawdry would put a row of them into a pleasing smirk; yet a good sentence that described an inward sentiment of the soul received coldness and indifference. In

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99 Ibid., V, No. 344, 75.
100 Ibid., III, No. 208, 119.
illustrating their prepossession against this reasonable delight, Steele divided the female part of the audience into seven types. The "Whisperers" laid bare their heads together in order to sacrifice everybody within their observation; the "Laughers" kept up an insipid mirth in their own corner and showed, by their noise and gestures, that they had no respect for the rest of the company. The whole business of both these sets\textsuperscript{101} was to draw the attention of the spectators from the entertainment and fix it upon themselves; moreover, it was generally to be observed that the impertinence was ever the loudest when the set happened to be made up of three or four females with one woman's man among them. The conduct of the other five sets\textsuperscript{102} was just as unseemly. The "Prudes" were those whose moods were always contradictory to the occasion: if the play were a comedy, they were conspicuous for their sullenness; if a tragedy, their gaiety was extravagant. "Coquets," in their usual way, were so much taken up with throwing their eyes around the audience and considering the effect of their glances that they could hardly be expected to observe the actors but as their rivals, taking off the observation of the men from them. Another species were the "Examples," or the first of

\textsuperscript{101}Ibid., II, No. 168, 509.

\textsuperscript{102}Ibid., III, No. 208, 119-120.
the modes these were supposedly too well acquainted with what the actor was going to say to be moved by it. The "Mimicks," a set always present in any crowd, were wonderfully diverted with the conduct of all the people around them and were spectators only of the audience. To Steele, however, the type most lamented was the women indifferently called the "Innocents," or the "Unaffecteds." Although these females were sometimes sensibly touched by a well-wrought incident, they were immediately so impertinently observed by the men and frowned upon by some insensible superiors of their own sex that they became ashamed and lost the enjoyment of the most laudable concern, pity. Thus, the whole audience was afraid of letting fall a tear and shunned as a weakness the best and worthiest part of the human senses.

Steele humorously declared that for the preservation of the decency of public assemblies, it would be but reasonable that those who disturb others should pay at least a double price for their places; more seriously, he added that women of birth and distinction should be informed that levity of behavior in the eyes of people of understanding degraded them below their meanest attendants.

Typifying woman's vain love for pleasure and amusement is Addison's intermediary Character, Fulvia. Fulvia, who looked upon her husband as her steward and discretion and housewifery as little domestic virtues unbecoming to a
woman of quality, thought life lost in her own family. Indeed, she fancied herself "out of the World when she is not in the Ring, the Playhouse, or the Drawing-Room. . . . The missing of an Opera the first Night, would be more afflict-
ing to her than the Death of a Child." Poor Fulvia pitied the valuable part of her sex and considered every woman of a prudent retired life to be poor-spirited and unpolished. How could she know that by setting herself to view was but to expose herself as contemptible?

For all these pictures of depraved behavior, both Addison and Steele felt that the stage might be made a per-
petual source of the most noble and useful entertainments, were it under proper regulations. Steele attributed to the style and manner of the plays the natural aversion which

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103Ibid., I, No. 15, 49.
104Ibid., II, No. 93, 290.
105Ibid., I, No. 51, 153. One has only to call to mind the risque scenes and language of the Restoration plays in contrast to those of Steele to appreciate his modesty and his high respect for women. He further defended the modesty and innocence of the fair sex in their lack of defense against hearing indecent language in the audience by posing the ques-
tion: "Could we avoid hearing what we do not approve, as easily as we can seeing what is disagreeable, there were some Consolation; but since, in a box at a Play, in an Assembly of Ladies, or even in a Pew at Church, it is in the Power of a gross Coxcomb to utter what a Woman cannot avoid hearing, how miserable is her Condition who comes within the Power of such Impertinents? And how necessary is it to repeat Invectives against such Behavior? If the Licentious had not utterly forgot what it is to be modest, they would know, that offended Modesty labours under one of the greatest Sufferings to which human Life can be exposed." (Spectator, III, No. 242, 218.)
a properly trained lady of quality might feel. Thus he used lines from his own play, The Funeral, posed in the form of a letter from such a lady, to illustrate the offense of such works to a "Chaste and Regular Audience." Despite his apparent apologies, however, he defended authors in their difficulty of keeping up with a sprightly dialogue for five acts, declaring that when they lacked wit and could not please otherwise, they should help out with a little "Smuttiness." Addison declared that if the English stage were half as virtuous as those of the Greeks and Romans, its influence on the behavior of the politer part of mankind would be quickly seen. The truth of the situation was that the accomplished gentleman upon the English stage was the person familiar with other men's wives and indifferent to his own; the fine woman was generally a composition of sprightliness and falsehood. Thus, one sees the Spectator's efforts to dignify the position of woman in the fashionable world as thorough; he held both the entertainers and the audience responsible for the light banter and ridicule to which marriage was subjected.

Widows, who were a "social anomaly and a constant cause of perplexity," were divided into those who raised love, and those who raised compassion. Their chief glory consisted in their love of their deceased husbands, the care of their

106 Ibid., VI, No. 446, 375.

107 Ibid., VIII, No. 614, 412-424.
children, and such prudent conduct on their part as would do justice to both. A Widow possessed of all three of these qualities made not only a virtuous, but also a sublime, Character; thus, widows, declared the Spectator, were always more sought after than old maids. Not all of them, however, were of this fine a mettle. Addison maliciously portrayed the Characters of a Widow's Club, the object of which was "To cry up the Pleasures of a single Life upon all Occasions in order to deter the rest of their sex from Marriage and engross the whole Male World to themselves." The topics for study in this vicious club were "How to treat a Lover" and "How to manage a Husband." The club consisted of nine members, intermediary Characters, each of whom was notorious in her efforts to secure a suitable new husband as quickly as possible after her last had been measured out upon the ground. Aside from this club, one Widow of particular note was a young woman of good fortune and family, just come to town; she set out to reduce the present exorbitant power and insolence of men by joining the ranks of the Jilts and insulting all who had the vanity to believe it in their power to win her hand.

In this study of the Characters of Widows, it seems apropos to introduce a third group of feminine Characters.

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109 Ibid., VII, No. 539, 198.
from the *Spectator* which, though bearing specific names, seem to veil in part their real identity. It has been said that Addison's part in the development of Sir Roger de Coverley's perverse widow might refer to the Countess of Warwick, the apparently "perverse widow" he himself married; moreover, Leonora has been identified as a Mrs. Perry, a kinswoman of Sir Fleetwood Shepheard. Leonora, formerly a beauty and still a lovely woman, was a widow who had no children and whose disappointment in her first marriage had caused her to resolve never to venture upon a second. She had turned all her passions into a love of her house, her gardens, her furniture, and her books. Addison looked upon this lady, so oddly improved by learning, with a mixture of admiration and pity. Leonora had employed herself in diversions far more reasonable, though less fashionable than those of other women; but susceptible as she was to impression, had she been guided to such books as would have enlightened her understanding and rectified her passions, her improvements over other women would have been remarkable indeed.

There are two more perspicuous Characters of interest in this study. The first is Phoebe, whose absence is poetically lamented by her lover; she has been identified as Joanna Bentley, mother of the acknowledged leader in the later

110Ibid., I, No. 37, 110.
111Ibid., VIII, No. 603, 302.
field of sentimental drama. Parthenia\textsuperscript{112} and another Leonora\textsuperscript{113} have been cited as a Miss Shepheard, the sister of Mrs. Perry. Steele's Parthenia, who seems not quite so highly individualized as the Leonora just described, supposedly wrote to Mr. Spectator out of her desire to embellish her mind, requesting his recommendation of a list of books appropriate to the station and needs of the fair sex. The nature of her letter seems significant of her kinship to the Mrs. Perry just described. In Addison's paper, in which she is personified as Leonora, she wrote to the Spectator out of her deep sorrow for the death of her lover, the man whom she had resolved to marry or remain single, despite her family's objections because of his lack of an estate. The tragedy of the situation lay in the fact that the young man had just inherited a fortune and had made plans for an immediate marriage when he fell sick of a fever and died. This highly individualized character was advised by the kindly and understanding Spectator to consider the sorrows of others, oftentimes much greater than her own loss, and to be patient in that misfortunes and disappointments had frequently become escapes and blessings. Significant in the development of these two individualized Characters is the distinction in the work of the two authors. Addison, who portrayed both the Leonoras, has shown a keenness

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid., I, No. 140, 421.

\textsuperscript{113}Ibid., I, No. 163, 491.
of insight and depth of understanding which I have not found so apparent in his type sketches; on the other hand, Steele, in his description of Parthenia, seems to give the impression that this Character is still but a type. One possible explanation on Steele's behalf, however, is the subject he treated. He could hardly have been expected to show depths of appreciation for woman's intellect, at a time when so little value was placed upon it, as he would have manifested for the affairs of her heart.

The Devotionists were those lightheaded matrons whose only fault was the giving after church of detailed accounts of how two or three hundred people were dressed for the occasion. The Spectator marveled that such a difficult variety of information could be stored within the female brain during the two-hour service, even while the duty of the place was jointly (and oftentimes pathetically) performed along with it. In pointing out this blemish of the fair sex, however, the Spectator shows the Devotionists to be utterly unlike any similar female Characters written before its time. LaBruyere's Climene and Celimene adhered to religious practices only as a weakness of their own age and a practice to be followed; whereas The-She-Precise Hypocrite was so imbued with faith that she had little room for charity. The reforming intention of this brief sketch is thus obvious; one has only

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114 Ibid., V, No. 460, 423-424.
to recall the religious apathy of this Age of Anne, typified for the fair sex by the Queen herself, to appreciate the timely importance of this very human class of Characters, the Devotionists.

It is obvious that the irrational and selfish women portrayed in the *Spectator* far outnumber those whose conduct is motivated by reason; three ideal Wives, however, exemplify the concept of sentimental virtue held by Addison and Steele. The first of these three intermediary Characters is Addison's Aurelia, a woman of quality who delighted in the privacy of a country life. Her husband, who was her bosom friend and companion, had always been in love with her; they both abounded with good sense, consummate virtue, and mutual esteem and were a perpetual entertainment to one another;

Moreover:

> Their family is under so regular an Economy, in its hours of Devotion and Repast, Employment and Diversion, that it looks like a little Common-wealth within itself. They often go into Company, that they may return with the greater Delight to one another; and sometimes live in Town, not to enjoy it so properly as to grow weary of it, that they may renew in themselves the Relish of a Country Life. By this Means they are happy in each other, beloved by their Children, adored by their servants, and are become the Envy, or rather the Delight, of all that know them.115

Eucratia,116 Steele's Character, was wholly feminine in her look, her voice, her gesture, and her entire behavior;

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115 *Ibid.*, I, No. 15, 47-49

indeed, as the image of dignity in man required wisdom and valor, she was possessed of a gentle softness, a tender fear, and a subordination to the other sex which made her still more lovely. Kindness was all her art, and beauty all her arms. Goodness mixed with fear gave a tincture to all her behavior. To have offended her would have been savage; to have used art to gain her would have been cruel. Others were beautiful, but Eucratia was the personification of beauty itself.

Emilia, also Steele's Character, combined wisdom and beauty and was the perfect wife. Her unstudied graces of behavior and pleasing accents of tongue generally drew others to her; simultaneously, her smiles carried a silent reproof to the impulses of licentious love. Her words and her actions were diffused with sweetness and good humor, her person was embellished by nature, her mind was a dwelling place for rational piety, modest hope, and cheerful resignation.

To Emilia religion was

a Principle founded in Reason and enlivened with Hope; it does not break forth into irregular Fits and Sallies of Devotion, but is an uniform and consistent Tenour of Action: It is strict without Severity, compassionate without Weakness; it is the Perfection of that good Humour which proceeds from the Understanding, not the Effect of an easy Constitution.\textsuperscript{117}

Steele felt that such a rare pattern of female excellence should not be concealed; rather, it should be set out to the

\textsuperscript{117}Ibid., IV, No. 302, 401-405.
view and imitation of the world. Emilia was not ignorant of all these charms she possessed; even in her youth when she was surrounded by a crowd of adorers, she took no pleasure in slaughter and destruction and gave no false, deluding hopes to lovers. After having given some time to the decency of a virgin coyness, she gratified her own pretensions by wedding Bromius. His plentiful estate proved his misfortune for a while, for it furnished his unexperienced age with the opportunities of evil company and a sensual life. Emilia's prudent conduct, however, won him over to the government of his reason, and her ingenuity humanized his passions and refined his pleasures. By her own silent example and unrepining behavior, she showed him that virtue was far more persuasive than she could have been had she employed the severity of lectures and admonitions, for the pride of an obstinate man allowed him only to take the hint and correct and advise himself.118 Thus, by an artful train of management and unseen persuasions, she gained an interest in some of his leading passions and made them necessary to his reformation.

Another particular of Emilia's conduct was her observation that the neglect of apparel, even among the most intimate

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118 One can but be reminded by this reference of Steele's despair regarding the dowdiness of his own "Prue," and of his deep admiration for Anne Oldfield's charming manner of dress referred to in the preceding chapter.
friends, insensibly lessened their regards for each other by creating a familiarity too low and contemptible. Thus by these and a thousand other nameless arts, and by the obstinacy of her goodness and unprovoked submission, despite her afflictions and ill usage, Emilia was a happy Wife and had made Bromius a man of sense as well as a kind husband.

One sees these three ideal Wives as a conscious effort on the part of the Spectator to dignify the prevailing conception of marriage in the fashionable world. Steele particularly directed his reform toward this phase of woman's life. He sought "to make the Word Wife the most agreeable and delightful Name in Nature" and declared that "Marriage is an Institution calculated for a constant Scene of as much Delight as our Being is capable of. . . . With all Persons who have made good Sense the Rule of Action, Marriage is describ'd as the State capable of the highest humane Felicity."^{119} Moreover, he asserted that "the married State, with and without Affections suitable to it, is the completest Image of Heaven and Hell we are capable of receiving in this Life."^{120}

He made parents who arranged mercenary marriages for their children the subjects of satire and invective; indeed, he recognized that young ladies forced into marriages of

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^{119}spectator, VII, No. 490, 50-53.
^{120}Ibid., No. 472, 22.
convenience by their parents might become "Scolds." The happy marriage could but exist when "two Persons meet and voluntarily make Choice of each other, without principally regarding or neglecting the Circumstance of Beauty and Fortune." "Pin-money" Addison denounced as arms furnished to a wife by and against her husband; "Separate Purses, between Man and Wife, are, in my Opinion, as unnatural as separate Beds. A Marriage cannot be happy, where the Pleasures, Inclinations, and Interests of both Parties are not the same. There is no greater Incitement to Love in the Mind of Man, than the Sense of a Person's depending upon him for her Ease and Happiness; as a Woman uses all her Endeavours to please the Person whom she looks upon as her Honour, her Comfort, and her Support."

Steele's efforts to bring about one standard of sex morality and matrimonial fidelity and, in general, to dignify the marriage state in the eyes of British youth, is also apparent; he loathed their raillery at marriage and the barbarous disrespect with which they treated their wives. He was in agreement with his age, however, in considering marriage as the one goal for woman and the home as her only province.

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He expressed this view clearly in the following:

We have indeed carried Women's Characters too much into publick Life, and you shall see them now-a-days affect a sort of Fame; but I cannot help venturing to disoblige them for their Service, by telling them, that the utmost of a Woman's Character is contained in the domestick Life; she is Blameable or Praiseworthy according as her Carriage affects the House of her Father or her Husband. All she has to do in this World, is contained within the Duties of a Daughter, a Sister, a Wife, and a Mother... when they consider themselves as they ought, no other than an additional Part of the Species, (for whom they were born) their ambition to excel will be directed accordingly; and they will in no Part of their Lives want Opportunities of being shining Ornaments to their Fathers, Husbands, Brothers, or Children.186

One may appreciate Steele's views on marriage the more by the knowledge that his ideas were not more theories; they were living principles exemplified in his marriage to Mary Sourlock, his beloved "Prue." She was the inspiration for his famous and prolific love letters written from the time of their acquaintance and continuing throughout their life together.187 Barring an undercurrent of anxiety in regard to monetary affairs, they are a charming and convincing evidence that theirs was a happy marriage and that Steele found nothing to prove his views impracticable.

186 Spectator, V, No. 342, 70-71.

187 R. Brimley Johnson, The Love Letters of Sir Richard Steele. From the Introduction, page one, we find that these letters are one of the four great series of such letters in English, the other three being those of Jonathon Swift and the Brownings.
From the numerous female Characters presented in this study, it can be seen that both Addison and Steele were intent upon a genuine reform of woman’s status. Steele showed a greater depth of understanding, respect, and appreciation; Addison displayed less feeling, though he was equally intent upon his purpose. Although Addison’s Characters were more highly individualized, Steele’s were more numerous and varied, as one might expect from his wide acquaintance with the fair sex.

In regard to satire, Addison was more severe, although in a lighter vein; Steele’s severity lay in his deep moralizing. Both, however, were in advance of their times in their use of sympathetic, though humorous, raillery for the sincere purpose of improving the lot of the women of the Age of Anne.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The three-fold purpose of this study has been to determine how the Spectator was influenced by, and what it in turn contributed to, the two literary genres, the "Character" of women and satire on women; and to present the social status of the female audience as it existed and as the Spectator sought to improve it.

Of the twenty-seven female Characters written before the Spectator's publication, few bear much resemblance to the Spectator women. LaBruiyere, to whom Addison and Steele were most indebted, drew his sketches with much malice and bitterness; it is evident that he did not like his Characters. Although we may praise Sir Thomas Overbury for being first to show the virtues as well as the vices of women, we may search his works in vain for something more than a scientific and lifeless description. The five female Characters of Thomas Fuller appear to be more like those of the Spectator than any others found in this study; nevertheless, Dr. Fuller was a clergyman; he was more interested in Christian morality than in the foibles of the fair sex. The one female Character of John Earle bears a remarkable resemblance to the
Characters pertaining to religion; Earle, however, did not write to improve woman's status and consequently used no device for pointing the proper way to his female readers.

From the time of Hesiod, around 800 B.C., to the Augustan Age in which the Spectator was published, satire on woman generally continued in the vein of harsh invective, giving evidence of abuse rather than of conscious effort to improve woman's lot. With the exception of Chaucer, humor was most frequently lacking. The Greek and Roman writers had aimed at punishment of individuals rather than reform of a group; Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Augustan writers, who were inspired by a study of classical antiquity, with the exception of Alexander Pope, satirized woman as a type rather than as an individual. Restoration dramatists, too, identified themselves in this pattern, basing their harsh abuse upon the moral laxity of the times. As a dramatist, Steele alone showed a true respect for woman and a deep concern for her status in marriage; the Spectator contains the consummation of his high regard for women.

The life of the woman of Queen Anne's England was bounded by superficial amusement and harsh restraint. She was of necessity a brainless plaything or a household drudge. Then as always, she was addicted to the whims of fashion; her chief concern, the ensnaring of a husband, required that she be suitably attired for the chase. Her meager educational opportunities consisted mainly in the learning of a few petty
household accomplishments; her status in marriage was one of complete legal and social subordination. Moreover, little had been written to appeal to her primarily as an audience.

It is my conclusion, first, that from all three standpoints the time was ripe indeed for such a publication as the *Spectator*. The importance of the female Character can be measured only in terms of the vast popularity of the *Spectator* itself; it was through these various human types that women readers were able to see their own vices and follies ridiculed and held up to the pitiless light of reason. Seeing their weaknesses thus clearly, the ladies were persuaded at least to attempt to lay them aside. The satire employed by the *Spectator* as a means of developing these Characters was generally light, humorous raillery; one sees Addison's merciless wit and Steele's severe moralizing as evidence of a genuine respect for woman and an obvious intent to reform her position in society. Both writers recognized the desultory existence of their female readers and sought to pacify them and increase their dignity and self-respect. Perhaps they realized that a program of avid reform would be unattainable in the immediate present; perhaps they would not even have approved of such a plan of reform. It is certain, however, that they dealt with matters which, though seemingly inconsequential, were not only of grave importance to woman, but also were matters with which she could attain immediate
results by following their advice. She could improve her social conduct and wear more sensible clothes; she could be more sincere in her religion and more understanding with her husband, her children, and her servants; she could devote more time to the erudition of her mind. Thus, she could best play her role in life as the "tender Mother, the prudent friend, and the faithful Wife." In so doing, she would have fulfilled the Spectator's purpose, and Addison and Steele, using this new approach to the treatment of woman in literature, may be considered the greatest of all reformers.
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