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The Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton (1734-1771) Including More than One Hundred Letters Now First Published, Chronologically Arranged and Edited with Introduction, Notes, and Index by Paget Toynbee; Gray; Walpole; West; Ashton

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*The Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton (1734—1771) including more than one hundred letters now first published, chronologically arranged and edited with Introduction, Notes, and Index.* By PAGET TOYNBEE. 2 vols. 8vo. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1915. lx + 354 and 422 pp.

It is a cause of immense satisfaction that a sheaf of unknown letters by Gray and his Etonian friends should have come to light: and that they should have been found and edited by Mr Paget Toynbee is indeed a rare piece of further good fortune. But for the War which in these years monopolizes attention, the publication of this book would have counted as a great event.

Eighty-nine new letters of Gray, eight of Walpole and nine of West were put in Mr Toynbee's hands by Sir Francis Ernest Waller, Bart., of Woodcote, Warwick, to whose memory—he was killed in the service of his country near Neuve-Chapelle on 25th October, 1914—these volumes are dedicated. Sir Francis had inherited them from Mrs Damer, only child of Walpole's cousin and friend, Field-Marshal Conway. The new letters of Ashton were transcribed from Mitford's transcriptions of the originals (now Add. MS. 32,562)—the originals, in all cases but one, having apparently vanished.

Besides these new letters, we have fifteen letters of Gray, one of Walpole, one of West and four of Ashton given in a completer form than that in which they have previously appeared. Mason, Gray's biographer, treated Gray's letters in the most unscrupulous fashion. 'He altered dates, transferred passages from one letter to another, combined together letters of widely different dates, "improved" the grammar and diction, and even went so far as to insert matter of his own.' Miss Berry, who brought out Walpole's letters, 'frequently suppressed passages, sometimes of considerable length and importance, without any indication of the fact.' The discovery of the originals has in these cases put matters right.

The collection is completed by sixty-nine letters of Gray, twenty-nine of Walpole, twenty-nine of West, and nine of Ashton which have been printed before with tolerable completeness and accuracy. Two new poems by Gray—one a school-boy translation of a passage of Statius, the other a sparkling verse-epistle to Walpole of 8th Dec. 1734,—and ten more poems by West, also form part of Mr Toynbee's gift to us.

In editing the letters, Mr Toynbee has followed the originals with meticulous exactness. After minute examination of internal evidence, postmarks, etc., he has been able to assign to the undated letters (a very large proportion) dates which leave little room for doubt.

In his Introduction Mr Toynbee throws a good deal of new light on the biographies of the members of the 'Quadruple Alliance.' He shows that the names under which Gray, Walpole, West and Ashton passed in their mutual correspondence were probably Orosmales (or Orozmales), Celadon, Favonius (or Zephyrus) and Almanzor respectively. Mr Toynbee calls Orosmales 'an alteration apparently, either accidental or deliberate,

of Oromasdes, the name of the principal Zoroastrian divinity.' The alteration goes back however beyond the time of Gray and his friends. Mr Summers points out that the form 'Orosmales' occurs in Orrery's *Zoroastres* and in *The Rival Queens* (*M.L.R.*, pp. 29, 30 *sup.*). Mr Tovey had considered that Ashton's name was 'Plato.' A strong case is however made for 'Almanzor'—though from the pushing character of Ashton as shown in his letters, it is rather surprising if he was Almanzor to find Walpole saying that Almanzor knew nobody at Cambridge but himself and Gray. (After reading Ashton's unctuous letters one wonders what were the amiable qualities which brought him into the band of friends.)

It has frequently been said that Gray was at Pembroke Hall before being admitted to Peterhouse. Mr Toynbee makes it clear that this is an error due to a slip of the pen on the part of Mitford.

Mr Toynbee further disposes of the story that the quarrel between Gray and Walpole was due to Gray's discovery that Walpole had opened and resealed one of his letters. Walpole's account—generous in its self-accusations—is no doubt, as our editor holds, the right explanation.

The new letters of Gray of the years 1734—1738 throw fresh light on that capacity for passionate friendship hitherto only revealed by the letters which at the very end of his life the poet wrote to the brilliant young Swiss, Karl von Bonstetten. Bonstetten, who himself had the intuition into character which comes of an ardent and sympathetic heart, perhaps understood Gray better than anyone who ever met him, though his intercourse with him extended only over two or three months. In his own old age he wrote of Gray words which even to us are surprising, and which would have raised astonishment in those of his contemporaries who knew him only slightly: 'Jede Empfindung war bey ihm leidenschaftlich: so auch die Freundschaft<sup>1</sup>.' We now find that in his youth he had for Horace Walpole—six months his junior—the same passionate affection which he showed afterwards for Bonstetten.

It seems clear that for some years Walpole and not West had the first place in his heart. Gray's friendship for West was perhaps deepened by West's letter of Dec. 2, 1737 (No. 69), and after his experience of Walpole's waywardness and want of consideration on their travels, he perhaps turned to West as his best friend and on his death felt that he had lost everything. The old tenderness of intimacy with Walpole was never renewed on Gray's part even after the reconciliation, though he cannot but have recognised the true regard and admiration which Walpole entertained for him throughout life. The whole of this book—apart from the circumstances which led to the quarrel, which we have from Walpole himself, and which may be imputed to the thoughtlessness of youth in a not very deep nature—raises one's idea of Walpole. His attitude towards Gray in later life was always modest and undeviatingly loyal. Even his powers as a letter-writer are seen to special advantage when his letters come here and there among letters by Gray and others, instead of being read *en masse*. Gray's letters

<sup>1</sup> 'Erinnerungen aus Bonstetten's Jugendleben von ihm selbst geschrieben,' in *Briefe von Bonstetten an Matthisson* (1827), p. 217.

abound in humour and odd fancies and no doubt bespeak a more original and sensitive mind, but Walpole's shine out with a charming vivacity and polish. What can be more brilliant than that written from Paris on Nov. 19, 1765 (No. 233)?

Mr Toynbee has added brief explanatory notes to the letters, and is only occasionally baffled by a specially obscure allusion. Here, as in his treatment of the text, he has done his work in such an ideal manner that one is almost forced to say with Gray (letter 207): 'I have looked with all my eyes, & can not discover one error, w<sup>ch</sup> is the greatest misfortune, that can befall a Critick.' A Cambridge man may however hint that the position of Foulmoor, or Foulmire, which is south of Cambridge, is rather oddly described as 'nine miles from Cambridge (not 'on the road to London,' but) on the road from London to Ely' (I, 30), and it may be further suggested that Malepert (I, 31) is more likely an Etonian schoolfellow of noble blood than a college tutor, who would hardly be likely to promise to return a freshman's call, that the phrase 'your serene Haughtinesses' (I, 32) contains an allusion to Houghton, and 'the ingenuity of the spider to spin fine lines out of dirt' (I, 49) one to *The Battle of the Books*.

It was a happy idea to print together the letters that passed between the four Eton friends. But Mr Toynbee has done his work so perfectly, that one would wish he would go further and give us a complete edition of Gray's letters. The late Mr Tovey deserved well of the author to whom he devoted so great a part of his life. But he was far from being an ideal editor. The notes to his edition of the letters abound in mistakes, and even the long list of corrigenda given in his last volume leaves many untouched. Mr Toynbee has further discovered that his predecessor was not to be relied on in giving an accurate text.

The discovery of all these new letters of Gray's at once deprives Mr Tovey's collection of its professed completeness, and students would gain much by having all the letters in a single work. It may be possible even to find fresh letters. At least my appetite was whetted some years ago when I found in the *Briefe von Bonstetten an Matthiesson* (Zurich, 1827, p. 31) that Bonstetten sent Matthiesson on 23 October, 1816, his letters from various interesting correspondents, including Gray. It is hardly likely that the only letters Bonstetten received from Gray were the three published by Tovey and Gosse. What has then become of the collection sent to Matthiesson? Dr Hans Dübi of Bern promised me in 1912 to make some search for them in the public library of Geneva and elsewhere, adding 'I have no great hopes as the latest Swiss publication upon v. Bonstetten (Rudolf Willy's *Karl Viktor von Bonstetten*, Bern, K. J. Wyss, 1898) mentions no unpublished letters to or from v. Bonstetten.' I have heard no more from Dr Dübi, so gather that his search, if he pursued it, was unsuccessful. Still Mr Toynbee's experience shows that one need never give up hope; and nothing could be more interesting than fresh letters from Gray to the most brilliant and best loved correspondent of his last years.

I have only to add that the present volumes are beautifully illus-

trated. We have three portraits of Gray, three of Walpole, one of Ashton, four facsimiles of Gray's manuscript, one of Walpole's and one of West's.

G. C. MOORE SMITH.

SHEFFIELD.

*The Covent-Garden Journal.* By Sir Alexander Drawcansir, Knt. Censor of Great Britain (Henry Fielding). Edited by GERARD EDWARD JENSEN. New Haven: Yale University Press. London: Humphrey Milford. 2 vols. 1915. 8vo. cxxix + 368 and 293 pp.

Original and complete files of *The Covent-Garden Journal* are exceedingly scarce, and hitherto a selection only of its seventy-two serial essays have been reprinted in Fielding's *Works*. Murphy's edition (1762) reproduced twenty-six of these essays, and Leslie Stephen's (1882) thirty-seven; consequently readers of many lands will owe no little to Mr Jensen for collecting the entire series within a convenient compass. The print, paper, binding and illustrations, and the richness of annotation, call for further congratulation.

During 1751, despite onerous duties as chief magistrate at Bow Street, Fielding had been indefatigable with his pen, producing two editions of *An Enquiry into Robberies* and writing *Amelia*. As the latter yielded him £800 a suspension of literary activity might well have followed, but the calls of a second family, the necessity of a country-house as an escape from the risks of jail-fever, an inflexible determination not to 'trade' in justice, and a foreboding of increasing infirmities, sufficiently account for the launching of *The Covent-Garden Journal*, preluded in the *London Daily Advertiser* of 1 November 1751, and advertised in those volumes of *Amelia* so eagerly taken up by the book-trade, while yet damp from the press, on 18 December 1751.

*The Covent-Garden Journal* ran, first as a bi-weekly and later as a weekly, from 4 January to 25 November 1752. Fielding's was no raw hand at periodical literature. In 1739-40 he had conducted *The Champion*, in 1745-6 *The True Patriot*, and in 1747 *The Jacobite's Journal*. Framed on lines similar to the two latter, the outstanding feature of the new venture was its essays; essays devoid, however, of that political complexion so characteristic of the earlier journals. The supplementary matter consisted of news and information distributed under various headings; as, 'Modern History Abridged,' a record of fashionable gatherings and of social tittle-tattle culled from current newspapers; 'Proceedings at the Court of Censorial Enquiry,' largely devoted to the review of books and matters theatrical; 'Foreign Affairs'; and 'Covent Garden,' a summary of what is now termed Police Court news. Much space was devoted to this last subject, and Fielding seems to have felt that as all other Courts had their reporters there was no reason why the proceedings of the magistrate's court—the only court to which the vast majority of people had recourse—should not have publicity. In these two volumes we are concerned