

NOTES FROM THE LIBRARY

Defoe Pamphlets

The works which may be ascribed to Daniel Defoe with certainty or with strong probability number about four hundred. Relatively few of these, apart from the half dozen upon which his popular reputation rests, have ever been reprinted in the collected editions of Defoe, yet many of his pamphlets possess not only collector's interest but unusual value as original documents for political, social, and economic studies. Defoe was, as Professor Trent has called him, "a Proteus both in literature and in affairs"; consequently any extensive collection of his minor works both reveals his versatility and illumines a variety of aspects of English life of his time. Of these minor works the Rutgers Library at present possesses eighty-five, exclusive of variants and duplicates.

Thirty of this number fall between 1697 and 1703. There is a copy of the ninth edition of *The True-Born English-man* (1701), interesting proof of the popularity of the satire upon which Defoe mounted suddenly to fame and as author of which he continued to identify himself, for years afterward, on the title pages of works which he wished to claim. There is also a good copy of *A true Collection Of The Writings Of The Author Of The True-Born English-man* (second edition, 1705), containing a number of titles not found separately in the Rutgers collection.

Thirty-seven of the Library's Defoe pamphlets fall between 1710 and

1715. Most of these are concerned with the politics of the troubled last years of Queen Anne: *Eleven Opinions About Mr [Robert] H[arle]y*, *The Conduct Of Parties In England*, *A View Of the real Dangers of the Succession*, etc. Some, however, reveal Defoe's perennial interest in trade, the subject upon which he was probably most widely respected in his own time: *An Essay Upon Publick Credit*, *A True Account of the Design and Advantages of the South-Sea Trade*, and so forth.

The practical value of the Defoe collection as a whole is increased by the fact that the Library has over three hundred other pamphlets written between 1690 and 1730. Some of these are Defoeana in the strictest sense; many others, while neither directed against Defoe nor attacked by him, bear on issues with which he was actively concerned. Over fifty pamphlets, for example, are related to the Sacheverell controversy of 1710, in which Defoe was one of dozens of writers warmly engaged.

The acquisition, upon its publication, of the edition of Defoe's *Review* (1704-1712), now in preparation by the Facsimile Text Society, will be an event of importance to all users of the Library who are concerned in any way with the reign of Queen Anne, and the *Review* and the pamphlets will enhance the value of each other. It is to be hoped that the Library's already significant collection can be rounded out during the coming years.

FREDERICK S. ROCKWELL.

The Jeffersonian

The Library's file of *The Jeffersonian* (Albany, New York, weekly from February 17, 1838, through February 9, 1839) presents an interesting Whig experiment in subsidized journalism, tinctured strongly by the sensitive social consciousness of Horace Greeley, its hard-worked editor. Wise Thurlow Weed, realizing that his party's recent victory in the State elections must be consolidated against further tests of strength, prevailed upon his friends to support a paper,—unusual in that it was devoid of advertising and sold below production costs,—to sing party virtues. Money was secured to support for a year an edition of fifteen thousand copies and to pay an editorial salary of \$1,000. For the latter task Weed sought Horace Greeley, then known to him only by hearsay or through the columns of *The New-Yorker*, a weekly which under Greeley's editorship was achieving artistic success and financial failure. Spurred by the need of income and by party zeal, Greeley accepted the double task and for the ensuing year spent half his time in Albany.

Under such auspices was launched a paper staunchly, but not violently, partisan, devoting primary attention to circumstantial accounts, with voluminous reprints, of State and national legislative doings. The dissolution of the Second United States Bank and its panic aftermath in 1837 brought financial questions to the fore, and principal editorial and news attention was devoted to opposing President Van Buren's ill-starred advocacy of the Sub-Treasury scheme, and to supporting State legislative sallies toward easier money.

The Jeffersonian used the Sub-Treasury issue effectively to inspire the Whigs to elect William H. Seward to the Governorship.

So active a mind as Greeley's, however, could not be tied down to mere politics, and both editorial and news columns bore the stamp of his catholic urge to better the world. Free primary education, better teachers, more school libraries were advocated in season and out of season. The state of temperance reform and prison conditions received notice, duelling was roundly condemned, and the sufferings of the Cherokees under the benefits of white civilization were given considerable attention. The shame of spending five millions to crown a Queen in Britain found space along with several paeans to American democracy. On the economic side Greeley found time and space to advocate plentiful currency and easy credit for those hardy pioneers whom he was later to urge to seek the western horizon.

As the year's experiment approached a successful close a tentative effort was made to perpetuate the organ. The issue of February 2, 1839, announced temporary suspension of publication until five thousand should promise to support a revived paper selling for one dollar per year. Subscribers were not forthcoming, and the next issue was the last. In it the editor could properly assert that "having steadily avoided all scurrility or malevolence in his writings—he feels that the influence of his paper, however humble and transitory, has been favorable to Good Morals and to a right appreciation of the questions which . . . divide . . . the American People."

L. E. E.

Hollantse Mercurius, 1656-1664

Between the years 1650 and 1690 some forty issues of the *Hollantse Mercurius* appeared. Each of these annual volumes contained a month-by-month review of the outstanding events of public interest during the preceding year. The volumes in the Rutgers University Library comprise the nine years from 1656 up to and including 1664, and hence cover a period which may be fairly described as the high-water mark of Dutch influence in international politics.

In no respect are these volumes more striking than in the testimony they bear of the extent to which Dutch political, economic, and religious life was interwoven with that of all Europe, and indeed of other continents. In fact, no state in Europe resembled the Dutch Republic in the wide geographic dispersion of its interests, and no state was, therefore, so alive to the problems of international justice, war and peace. Hugo Grotius had some years earlier given this national point of view its classical intellectual expression in his *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* and *Mare Liberum* and the editors of the *Hollantse Mercurius* keep recurring to the same theme, albeit in homelier fashion. Their point of view is at times not unlike that of the Dutch poet Jan Vos who exclaimed, "They [the foreigners] fight for themselves, we for all of Europe." Plausible and convincing as this may have appeared to the Dutch in view of the fact that their whole policy in Europe rested on the maintenance of the *status quo* against the pretensions of England to a *mare nostrum* in the seas surrounding the British Isles, and the aggressive nationalism em-

bodied in the British Navigation Acts, as well as against the imperialism of King Charles Gustavus of Sweden in the Baltic, the perennial depredations of "the barbarians" from Tunis and Algiers in the Mediterranean, and the scarcely matured designs of Louis XIV, the sentiment smacks nevertheless of self-deception and even of hypocritical self-righteousness. For outside of Europe the Dutch were as much the aggressor as the aggressed against, and not infrequently applied the very same ideas of exclusive trading rights, arbitrary force and violence, to which they took exception in Europe. Certainly the Portuguese and the English had no cause for satisfaction in the ruthless manner in which the Dutch East India Company ran them underfoot at well-nigh every suitable opportunity that presented itself.

The volumes of the *Hollantse Mercurius* remain an indispensable source to the historian of this period. Their contemporary popularity attests the faithfulness with which they reflected public opinion on at least one important sector of Europe. Aside from the elaborate comment on international politics, the reader will find lively accounts on such diverse subjects as blackmail cases, local riots and arrests, miracles, horse shows, the executions of those implicated in the decapitation of Charles I, the treatment of the corpse of Cromwell, religious persecutions in France, the strange appearance and progress of comets, reports of abnormal human beings, state finances, scattered economic data which make the issues important to students of social history, as well as to those interested primarily in international affairs.

M. G.

Pbilo and Peitbo

Immediately after the re-opening of Queen's College, under the new name of Rutgers in 1825, the two undergraduate debating societies, Philoclean and Peithessophian, started their long and honorable careers. One means by which they sought to stimulate the intellectual life of the College was to invite distinguished men to speak in New Brunswick. Sometimes a person would be elected to honorary membership in one or the other of the societies, and frequently the announcement of such election would accompany an invitation to deliver the "annual oration" or the "anniversary address." Fortunately the replies from many men over a period of nearly thirty years have been preserved, and today, bound in three volumes, these letters are stored in the Library. The Philoclean letters occupy two of these volumes, dated 1825-1853 and 1826-1847; the Peithessophian one, dated 1844-1854. The collection now constitutes an interesting series of autographs of men who were eminent in their generation.

A complete study of the whole contents of the collection would be impossible in this note, but one at once observes that the boys of a century ago were not diffident about going after lions. Here are letters from seven men who were, or had been, or were to be, presidents of the United States. There is a letter from John Quincy Adams, dated April 4, 1829, after he had been out of office for two months. He closes his kind refusal to speak, for he was too old to attempt it, by referring to himself as a "fellow citizen and fellow student."

Then comes one on May 14, 1829, from Adams' successor in the White House, Andrew Jackson, who had only been in his cherished office a few weeks. We commonly think of him as a rough frontiersman, but as we shall see, he was "sensible of the great importance of literary appreciations." His letter is fairly typical of the character of other letters, and so we shall quote a few sentences from it as an illustration of the formula generally employed by those who were "honored" by one or the other of the societies—a formula which tended almost invariably to send thanks, to acknowledge a sense of obligation for the honor of membership, to express respect for the literary objects of the society, and, sometimes, to extend personal greetings to the members.

A first letter from the society to President Jackson had evidently gone astray. In reply to a second invitation to accept membership in Philoclean, Jackson writes:

For this mark of the good opinion of the members composing that society, I pray you, Sir, to convey to them my sincere thanks, and my regret that their former letter on this subject did not come to hand. I am sensible of the great importance of literary appreciations, and trust that the one over which you are now presiding will not be behind others of a similar character in diffusing the blessings of knowledge.

The style of Jackson's letter is a little less frigidly formal than many acceptances.

Eight years later, March 18, 1837, James Buchanan, not to be president for another twenty years, regretted that he was unable because of prior engagements to "deliver the annual

oration." From Williamsburg, Virginia, November 21, 1840, John Tyler, at the time vice president elect, accepted membership in Philoclean. On February 26, 1845, Martin Van Buren, who had been out of office for four years, wrote that he could not accept "their request," presumably that he become an honorary member and deliver the annual oration. And dating his letter the very day after that of Van Buren, February 27, 1845, Millard Fillmore, who still had five years to wait before reaching the White House, also declined the proffered membership. Fillmore's letter is notable for a most unfortunate reason: some autograph hunter clipped the signature out of it, and the authorship can only be known from the endorsement. The last of the presidential letters is one from Zachary Taylor, written January 30, 1850.

If the young gentlemen of a hundred years ago sought out the political lights of the day, they likewise were anxious to associate with themselves the men of letters. The same vandal who cut out the signature of Millard Fillmore similarly took the autograph of Henry W. Longfellow, and he or someone else tore out a whole letter, now only to be identified by the table of contents, by William Cullen Bryant, though fortunately of the latter's letters two others have survived. To these may be added such names as those of J. Fenimore Cooper, Edward Everett, Washington Irving, Noah Webster, and Joseph Hopkinson. On September 2, 1834, Jared Sparks was immersed in his great work on Washington's letters. He had ordered copies of his "Life of Morris" and "Life of Ledyard" sent to Philo-

clean, but the publishers had not attended to the business, so he was enclosing another order for the delivery of the books. He would send "Washington's Writings" as soon as they were published; meantime he enclosed five dollars to be "appropriated toward the purchase of books." One is glad to know that the very copy of the *Life of Ledyard* which Sparks gave Philoclean nearly one hundred and four years ago is now in the Rutgers Library.

The list of eminent figures of the eighteen-thirties, forties, and fifties goes on. American men of letters and men of science accepted membership, one after another: Horace Mann, Mark Hopkins, Fitz Greene Halleck, Andrew D. White. Finally toward the end of the period covered by this collection, December 2, 1852, one Englishman of note, William Makepeace Thackeray, who was visiting the United States at the time, wrote from Clarendon, New York, to apologize for the delay in his reply, for he had "mislaid" the letter from Philoclean, and to thank the society for making him a member. He concludes: "when I visit New Brunswick [I] will gladly avail myself of my rights of membership."

The record ceases in 1854. Whether the societies at this time discontinued their earlier practice of inviting well-known literary and political figures to join their fellowship, the present writer does not know. The picture one gets, however, from the thirty years which followed the re-opening of Rutgers College suggests a great interest in the world of men and events and a strong effort on the part of the undergraduates of those days to come to know public figures.

R. K.