THACKERAY'S READINGS IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
LITERATURE FOR HENRY ESMOND

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degree of

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by

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## Bibliography
ABBREVIATIONS

1. The Centenary Biographical Edition of the Works of
W. M. Thackeray: with Biographical Introductions by
Anne Ritchie. 26 vols. London, 1910-11. All excerpts
in this thesis from Henry Esmond and the other works
of Thackeray are from this edition.

--- Works

2. The Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace
Thackeray. Collected and Edited by Gordon N. Ray.

--- Letters

3. The Works of Jonathan Swift. With Memoir of the Author

--- Swift: Works

Use of Symbols

When quotations from Esmond or 'the novel' are
referred to in footnotes as 'Op. Cit.', the reference is
to Works, x.
Since its publication in October 1852, the reviewers of Henry Esmond have constantly praised Thackeray for the historical learning and research exhibited in the novel. There have, however, been no serious attempts at an investigation of Thackeray's source-books for Henry Esmond. This thesis is primarily concerned with such an investigation.

Although several editions of Esmond have appeared since 1852, only two of its editors, T. C. Snow and William Snow, have tried to ascertain the veracity of the historical details introduced in the novel (1). Some help in the search for Thackeray's authorities is derived from the notes supplied by them but the editors themselves are not interested in such a search. In their preface they write:

...we must have fallen into countless errors, many of them in the attempt to correct Thackeray... (2)

and again:

One obligation is constant, sometimes named, more often unnamed, and has a special appropriateness to Thackeray— that to the Dictionary of National Biography. How Thackeray would have loved it, if he could have lived to see it (3).


2. Ibid., p. v.

3. Ibid., p. v-vi.
Two other works, to which T. C. Snow and William Snow make several references while discussing the historical background of Esmond, are Dobson's Richard Steele and Wyon's History of Britain during the reign of Anne (1). Both these books were published after the death of Thackeray.

R. L. Forsythe also, in his book A Noble Rake, presents 'a Study in the Historical Background of Thackeray's "Henry Esmond"'(2). But in reality, the scope of the book is not as wide. Forsythe writes in his preface:

...I have attempted to investigate every incident and historical person mentioned in those passages of Esmond wherein Lord Mohun figures (3).

As Mohun makes only a few appearances in Esmond, most of the historical details introduced in it are left untouched by Forsythe. Besides, once again, no attempts are made to trace Thackeray's source-books. By far the most important book, among those upon which Forsythe draws, is Luttrell's A Brief Relation (4). Luttrell's book was published in 1857, five years after Esmond made its appearance. It may

however, be mentioned that the manuscript of *A Brief Relation* was in the library of All Soul's College, Oxford, and was used by Macaulay in his *History of England*. But although Thackeray had read the first two volumes of *The History of England* prior to the writing of *Esmond*, there is no evidence to prove that he himself made use of the manuscript.

As already suggested, a few of the works upon which Thackeray appears to have drawn for *Esmond*, have been referred to by T. C. Snow and William Snow, and also by Forsythe. Such references have been carefully re-examined by the present writer.
CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORICAL NOVEL IN THE HANDS OF THACKERAY

During the concluding years of his life, Thackeray was contemplating the writing of a history of the reign of Queen Anne. It was intended to be a kind of continuation of Macaulay's *History of England* (1). In Thackeray's letters there are many references to this project of his, indicating his attraction for that particular period in history. Alluding to his desire for writing this work, Thackeray told John Skelton, "Queen Anne has long been my ambition" (2); and again, worried about his failing health, he wrote to Rev. Whitwell Elwin, "I wonder shall I have life and health to write Queen Anne? I long to get at it in my old age"(3).

Thackeray's fascination for the eighteenth century was well-known among his friends and relatives. In 1860, Thackeray built himself a house in red brick, in the forgotten Queen Anne style, where he proposed to write his book in suitable surroundings. Referring to the particular apartment in the house where he intended to work on his book, Thackeray expressed his desire "to write the life of Queen Anne in that room with the arched window

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1. In my diary for Jan. 5, 1860, I find this entry:—
   "Saw W.M.T. in bed this morning. He told me of
   the offer made him to continue Macaulay". Francis
   St. John Thackeray, in *Temple Bar*, July 1893 (Vol.98),
   p. 377.


3. Ibid., 236.
John Hollingshead, one of Thackeray's acquaintances, relates an anecdote, which, he thinks, had some bearing on Thackeray's house. Hollingshead admits that "knowing Thackeray's weakness for the Queen Anne period", he often "played upon it", and relates how he once accompanied Thackeray while he went around London, looking for a suitable Queen Anne house, where he could write his future works (2). (3).

The eighteenth century appears to have exerted an influence on Thackeray's life in many different ways. His fondness for club-life for instance, was, to a great extent, the result of his love for the world of the eighteenth century wits and writers (3). Referring to one of Thackeray's favourite haunts in London, Evans's, Hollingshead remarks:

Thackeray's liking for Evans's was more cultivated than mine, and based upon his passionate love for the last century.... Its most celebrated resident perhaps was Admiral Lord Orford, who defeated the French at La Hogue.... These, and a hundred other antiquarian memories, served

1. Ibid., 236.
3. In his lectures on The English Humourists, and also in Henry Esmond, Thackeray speaks of the world of taverns, coffee-houses and other meeting-places of the eighteenth-century wits and writers with a great deal of nostalgic fervour.
to endear the place to Thackeray, for it was a material link between the days of the old Garrick Club and the more beloved days when Queen Anne lived and reigned ...(1)

A testimony to his affinity with the writers of the eighteenth century is given by Thackeray's daughter, who says:

He trod in the actual footsteps of Johnson & Goldsmith, and Steele & Addison. He saw the things they had seen, heard the echoes to which they had listened, he walked up and down the very streets where they had walked. He was one of them, and happy in their good company. (2)

Indeed, Thackeray at times referred to the eighteenth-century men of letters with a great deal of feeling, as if they were contemporaries and acquaintances. Thus, he was in the habit of saying, "I take off my hat to Joseph Addison", (3); and once he explained his dislike of Swift and Sterne in the following manner:

Of course any man is welcome to believe as likes for me except a parson: and I can't help looking upon Swift & Sterne as a couple of traitors and renegades ... with a scornful pity for them in spite of all their genius and greatness (4).

This fondness for the eighteenth century coexisted in Thackeray with a general interest in the past ages. Thackeray was highly interested in "Mediaeval records and MSS" (5). His great love for history is also revealed in the following

2. Works, xi, xi.
3. Hannay; Characters and Criticisms, Edinburgh 1865, p. 53.
excerpt from Richard Bedingfield's Recollections of Thackeray:

He told me that he read more history than anything, and advised all authors to make historical studies the greater part of their education. "Read a tremendous lot of history", he said as we walked out of the reading-room of the British Museum. (1)

These and other similar incidents in Thackeray's life betray a deep-seated love for the past ages. In his case it would be right to say that it was not his reading of history that awakened his interest in past ages, rather it was the former which made him desirous of pursuing a systematic study of history.

The beginnings of Thackeray's interest in history and his predilection for the eighteenth century can be traced to his early years in England, which were spent at school and among a close circle of relatives and friends. Members of the Thackeray and the Becher families had for a considerable time been in the service of the East India Company, many of them spending long periods of their lives in India (2). These long sojourns in the East had led to the formation of habits and views that distinguished them from the rest of the community. A natural outcome of this apartness was a greater interest, accompanied by pride, in family history and tradition. Thackeray eventually

1. In Cassell's Magazine 1870 - 71. N.S. Vol. 1, p. 296. Of course, Thackeray did not have a high opinion of the kind of orthodox history-books which only recorded the lives of the kings and presented an account of battles and other political events.

2. Thackeray's mother was Anne Becher before her marriage.
came to share these sentiments and retained them throughout his life (1), and this led to the growth in him of a desire to know more about his ancestors. Thackeray's deep interest in his 'grandfathers and grandmothers' is mentioned by Lady Ritchie who speaks of a visit that Thackeray, later in life, paid to "Hampsthwaite, near Harrogate – whence his ancestors first came" (2).

Hampsthwaite was the birthplace of Thomas Thackeray, the author's great-grandfather, who was the first member of the Thackeray family to come into prominence. Anecdotes about him were still told and listened to among his descendants when Thackeray was a boy. It was through these anecdotes and through an exploration of the career of their subject that Thackeray first became interested in the eighteenth century. He indeed developed a partiality for that age, owing to the affection in which the memory of Thomas Thackeray was held by the succeeding generations of his family.

1. "He used to say that 'it takes three generations to make a gentleman', and though this was not a maxim he would have applied strictly in the case of another man, he was not insensible to the advantage in himself". James Hannay: A Brief Memoir of the Late Mr. Thackeray, Edinburgh, 1864, p.1.

One autumn day, just before his second visit to America, my father sent for an open carriage and a pair of horses, and we drove to Hadley, near Barnet, to see the early Thackeray home... My father seemed to know it all, though he had never been there before. He went into the garden, exclaiming "There was the old holly tree that his father used to write about" Works xxv, xxx.
Another revered forebear, who made a lasting impression on young Thackeray, was his great-grandmother Becher. She lived at Farham where Thackeray was a frequent visitor during his holidays from School. Thackeray many years later remembered her as "a most lovely and picturesque old lady, with a long tortoiseshell cane, with a little puff, or tour, of snow-white (or was it powdered?) hair under her cap, with the prettiest little black-velvet slippers and high heels you ever saw" (1). Her deportment, speech, and manner of dressing all conveyed the impression that she was a relic of a past generation. Thackeray himself once told his daughter that her great-great-grandmother was "one of the finest ladies of the old school I ever saw" (2). She also had her contribution to make in the development of Thackeray's predilection for the eighteenth century.

Among Thackeray's ancestors also was "his favourite hero", General John Richmond Webb, who took part in Marlborough's campaigns. Thackeray's grandfather had married Amelia Webb in 1776 and thus brought about the family alliance with the Webbs. Although Amelia Webb was not a direct descendant of the General, the Thackerays believed otherwise, and a traditional pride in his military exploits was cherished by them (3). An indication

1. Ibid. xx, 263.
2. Letters, iii, 293.
3. Ibid, 446.
of the importance which Thackeray attached to his connection with the Webbs can be had from his use of their family crest and arms which he considered to be "much prettier and more ancient" than his own (1). There is also evidence of another kind proving the presence in Thackeray of a deep family pride in the Webbs. This is contained in Thackeray's presentation of the Marlborough-Webb dispute in Henry Esmond. Thackeray takes a partisan view of the quarrel between the two Generals, and his portrait of the Duke of Marlborough is the most unfavourable in the whole book, with the possible exception of those of Swift and the Pretender (2). His portrait of General Webb, on the other hand, "is drawn with something of the geniality of kinsmanship ..." (3).

Thackeray was indebted to his uncle, the Rev. Francis Thackeray, for a considerable part of his knowledge about the past of his family. Francis Thackeray in his day attained some reputation as a historian, and he was the writer of A History of William Pitt. An idea of his interest in the early generations of Thackerays and Webbs can be had from Thackeray's letter mentioned above, where he (Francis Thackeray) is pointed out as

1. Ibid.
2. It may be argued that in taking liberties with the Pretender's character in Esmond, Thackeray was directed by the demands of the plot. Swift, of course, makes only brief appearances in the novel. At the same time, Thackeray did have a genuine dislike for him. Letters, ii, 763,800.
being in possession of a family-tree of the Webbs (1). At other places in his letters Thackeray mentions his uncle's interest in the family arms and the battle of Wynendael (2). These latter references, it may be noted, belong to the period corresponding with Thackeray's stay in Cambridge, (when, as he once complained, his uncle "asks me to dinner too often" (3)) and before he had tried his hand as a novelist at all.

The years before this that Thackeray spent at Charterhouse also played their part in developing his consciousness of history. The influence of Charterhouse on Thackeray was second only to the circle of relatives that were his constant companions while on holiday from school. There are, in Thackeray's writings, numerous pictures of school-life that bear testimony to the deep impression that Charterhouse made on him.

Charterhouse was originally a Carthusian monastery founded in 1371 by Walter Manny. Thomas Sutton established the school about the year 1712. Traces of its ancient origin were still perceptible when Thackery was at school in Charterhouse. That the Charterhouse pupils were aware of the ancient nature of their surroundings and were deeply affected by it, is suggested

1. Letters, iii, 446.
2. Ibid, i, 73, 297.
3. Ibid, 183.
by Wardley Wilmot in his reminiscences of his schooldays:

If the Monastery did nothing for the future school, it did this: it left the most ghostly nooks and corners that could be possibly imagined. To come out of chapel on a Saturday night in winter, and proceed down Cloisters, was enough to turn a small boy's hair white. Imagination pictured the whole band of outraged and defunct monks rushing out upon the tremulous urchin, and suffocating him with their canvas robes and cowls (1).

This consciousness of the link that Charterhouse had with the past ages was shared by Thackeray, who, if anything, was more sensitive than the average schoolboy. Presenting his old school as Greyfriars in The Newcomes, Thackeray writes:

There is an old Hall, a beautiful specimen of the architecture of James's time -- an old Hall? many old halls; old staircases, old passages, old chambers decorated with old portraits, walking in the midst of which we walk, as it were, in the early seventeenth century (2).

Together with the historical associations of the buildings, there was in Charterhouse school a continuity of tradition in the methods of teaching and managing the pupils. Stories about pupils of an earlier age were handed down to each succeeding generation of Carthusians and the dormitories attached to the school were "full of ancient memories of past and gone Carthusians" (3). Dr Haig Brown, who was the headmaster of the

3. Works, Vol. xiii, 448
school from 1863 onwards, once remarked to a visitor in 1893 - twenty years after the school was shifted to its new site.

For two hundred and fifty-eight years it had remained on the spot on which Sutton had placed it. Many an old tradition was connected with that site; many a record of great men who had passed their boyhood there, many a curious legend illustrated the ancient walls, and many a pious memory had a shrine within them...” (1)

When the new school buildings were built, many blocks of stone on which "generations of boys, long since dead" had "cut their names", were built into the porch of the new chapel (2).

As in his family circle, so at Charterhouse, Thackeray became aware of a tradition, formed of and embellished with, stories and reminiscences of an intimate nature about people belonging to earlier periods in history. In later life Thackeray was fond of mentioning that Addison and Steele went to school at Charterhouse, and it is suggested that his sympathy for Richard Steele was "the keener, because the Christian Hero was once a gown-boy at the old school" (3)

Charterhouse was situated in the vicinity of Newgate prison and Smithfield Bars. In Newgate the public hanging of criminals was still carried out, and it was not an uncommon practice for the boys at Charterhouse to visit the locality of the prison, for a sight of the wretches hanging there (4).

2. Ibid, p. 659
Thackeray probably did not himself see a hanging at Newgate while at school, but as in the case of other pupils, he could not think of his days at Charterhouse, without recalling its nearness to the prison and other historical places like Smithfield Bars and the Old Bailey. His interest in these ancient surroundings is later shown in *Henry Esmond*, in his description of Esmond's captivity in Newgate prison (1).

As a result of his stay at Charterhouse, he carried with him for the rest of his days, a dissatisfaction with life at school that resulted in the writing of works like *Dr. Birch and his Young Friends*. His life among his relatives during this period was much happier, and it led to the growth in him of a strong family feeling that made of him a domestic novelist. The common fruit of these two aspects of life, however, was the awakening in Thackeray of an awareness of history. Both Charterhouse and the family-group that Thackeray frequented brought the past ages near to him; but with this difference that whereas the former only brought about a general interest in the people and manners of earlier ages, the latter also guided him towards what was to be his favourite period in history - the eighteenth century. The foundations of Thackeray's conception of history which later determined the features of his historical fiction were also laid during these years.

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1. *Works*, x, 125.
Thackeray's first complete novel, *Catherine*, which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* during 1839, was also his first attempt at historical fiction (1). His primary reason, however, for writing it, was not so much to portray a past age as to protest against the sentimentality of the Newgate School of fiction. Bulwer and Harrison Ainsworth were the chief exponents of this branch of novel-writing, endeavouring in some of their works to present notorious criminals in a sympathetic light. Thackeray's intention was to show that the redeeming features imputed to criminals by the Newgate school were, in reality, non-existent. He wanted to

... paint such thieves as they are: not dandy, poetical, rose-water thieves; but real downright scoundrels, leading scoundrelly lives, drunken, profligate, dissolute, low; as scoundrels will be" (2).

Thackeray chose as the original of his story the career of Catherine Hayes, a murderess, who was burnt at Tyburn on 9th May, 1726.

*Catherine* was set in that period of history to which Thackeray was most drawn, but he had not at this time realised

1. *The Yellowplush Papers*, the first instalment of which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in Nov. 1837, was merely a collection of stories linked together by the presence of a common character in all of them.

2. *Works*, xxiv, 50
the strength of this attraction (1). At least his first attempt after Catherine at what might be called historical fiction for its own sake, was set in the 16th century. We begin to hear about this novel, which was never finished, during the closing months of 1840. Richard Barham, author of The Ingoldsby Legends, in a letter written in Nov. 1840, told his publisher Richard Bentley of a visit from Thackeray whom he advised to write a three-volume historical novel "of the Queen-hoo Hall style" (2).

The idea of writing this novel, tentatively called, The Knights of Borsellen, was born out of Thackeray's dissatisfaction with what he had achieved during the period that ended with the publication of The Shabby Genteel Story

1. The following account by one of Thackeray's acquaintances during his visit to Ireland in 1842, suggests that even at that time Thackeray was undecided about his future course:

When Thackeray, in 1842, visited Ulster, he became a great favourite with the officers of a regiment, than stationed at Newry... I found that he had got up a considerable stock of military characteristic and anecdote. I fancy, that he was struck with the great success of Lever's military stories, and may have possibly contemplated doing something in that way; for at that time he had not struck out 'a line' for himself, and was writing desultory articles on a variety of subjects... That he soon afterwards selected a style and field of operation perfectly original and admirably suited to his own powers is now a matter of history, but in 1842 he was, although evidently capable of great things, as yet undeveloped as an author and undecided what course to take. Fitzpatrick W.J.: The Life of Charles Lever, 2 Vols., London, 1879. Vol. II, P. 415.

in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1840. When he first thought of starting to work on *The Knights of Borsellen*, he had already been writing for almost a decade and his success had been of a mixed character. He was aware of his limitations as a journalist and the prospect of sticking to newspaper work for the rest of his life did not appeal to him (1). James Hannay points out that writing leading articles for newspapers was "a kind of work for which he (Thackeray) had no relish, and for which he believed himself to have no turn" (2). The projected novel, therefore, was intended by Thackeray to be his first major work and to serve as a means of raising him above such mediocre success as he had already achieved.

Thackeray's work on *The Knights of Borsellen* was interrupted by his wife's illness which made it necessary for him to write articles promising more immediate financial returns. He gradually lost the ardour with which he had undertaken the project. In a letter dated 15th April 1841 Thackeray wrote:

> novel again: though I have very much cooled, on it and lost the best part of six weeks work Wt consisted in reading more than in writing; all the reading and ardor I shall have to get up again .. (3)

1. When there was a vacancy in *The Examiner* which Thackeray stood a good chance of filling, he was not very enthusiastic and remarked; ... it Wt be great labor & no pay but if I had the courage to keep it for 3 years I should have a good smattering of politics, and might so hope to maintain myself in a comfortable dishonesty for the rest of my days. *Letters* i. 400.

2. *Characters and Criticisms*, Edinburgh, 1865, p. 50

In later years when he had time enough, and even some inclination for resuming work on it, he did not do so (1). The completed part of the novel is inferior to much of Thackeray's later writing. It has, however, an importance which is not entirely dependent on any literary merit that it may possess. Thackeray's choice of an historical novel as his first major work, and his inability to complete it, are both significant. The choice was an indication of his inherent love for historical subjects, and the failure was, in a great measure, owing to his attitude towards history.

The influence of Walter Scott can be traced in the historical novels of Thackeray, although it is not the influence of an accepted master. In many ways Thackeray's method in the *Knights of Borsellen* was a departure from the art of historical fiction, which Scott's example had established. Thackeray's treatment of historical subjects, in what might be called its negative aspects, is similar to that present in the novels of Scott. The historical novel in the hands of Scott had discarded the two most common faults that characterized historical fiction before his time. The first of these was a preponderance of historical and antiquarian details. *Queen-hoo Hall*, which is full of archaisms and at times reads like a chronology of

names, places and events can be taken as illustrating this shortcoming (1). There were, on the other hand, novels like Sophia Lee's *The Recess* or *A Tale of Other Times*, whose only claims to being historical novels was based on their ostensibly set in past ages. The manners and events portrayed in works belonging to this category bore little relation to the periods to which they were supposed to belong, and the adventures in which the characters took part at times passed the bounds of human credulity.

The historical novels of Thackeray, like those of Scott, are free from these defects. But this is where the similarity between the two authors comes to an end. Some of Scott's novels like *Ivanhoe* and *The Bride of Lammermoor* can justly be classed as romances (2). There is certainly some indication that Thackeray originally wanted *The Knights of Borsellen* to be an historical romance of the kind to which some of the novels of Scott belong (3). The completed

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1. Daniel Defoe's *Memoirs of a Cavalier* also suffers from this fault, but it has other merits that more than outweigh its shortcomings. *Queen-hoo Hall* was written by Joseph Strutt (1749-1802) and was posthumously published in 1808.

2. Scott has indeed succeeded in presenting life-like pictures of Scottish life and history in a number of his novels. His rustics and some other characters too appear as real. At the same time it can be argued that the main interest in his novels lies in the elements of adventure and also in the heroic portrayal of historical incidents and personages.

3. '... I am about a wonderful romance...' *Letters*, ii, 13.
chapters of the book, however, have qualities not commonly associated with historical fiction. As in Thackeray's novels with an eighteenth century background, so, in The Knights of Borsellen, the characters are presented in the midst of the ordinary activities of day-to-day life. In ch. 1, of the book there is the following description of childhood:

The young Baron John de Borsellen was in every way worthy of his amiable father. At eight years old he was not afraid of the biggest dog or man in the household, and would lash one or the other with his whip or his belt as he had seen his father do. At six he had beaten his nurse first and then his mother, and his father laughed when he heard the story, and swore by St. Ives that the young rogue had served them right. He had from that time quitted the women's apartments, the tender mother, the silly nurse, and the prosy old chaplain, and had taken his place in the hall in a little chair by his father's great one, and had had a little cup that was filled out of the Baron's big silver flagon, and used to sing. (1)

A few pages later Thackeray presents the following family scene as happening immediately after the death of the young Baron's father:

For a while she came down and presided at the table, bringing her younger children with her. Isabeau was, as her father said, growing to be a comely damsel: in a year or two Jehan promised to take her to the Court of my lord of Burgundy, and the young woman was nothing loth. Little Tranck at meal-times occupied the small chair which Jehan in his youth had filled by the side of his father, and John meanwhile worthily filled that huge oaken throne.

1. Works, xxv, 5.
This family intimacy, however, did not last very long, for the company which her son kept was somewhat too boisterous for the widow and her young children, and many jokes passed among Jehan's young companions and much talk was held which made the lady blush to hear, so after a short space she retreated to her own apartments again, carrying the young people with her (1).

On the basis of similar scenes, Henry Esmond has often been hailed as a domestic novel. Since Thackeray had originally intended The Knights Of Borsellen to be a romance, it was while working on it that he became aware of his limitations as an historical novelist. He realised, first of all, that his treatment of historical subjects was such as to put the writing of historical romances outside his domain. This was followed by another realization, to the effect that the period in history in which The Knights Of Borsellen was set was not suitable for the kind of historical novel he was able to write.

Like his interest in history, Thackeray's attitude towards the past, as already suggested, was a legacy of his younger days. Listening to stories about his ancestors and also about the past pupils at Charterhouse he had developed a familiarity with earlier ages that stood in the way of his forming a romantic conception of history. He was induced to think of himself as contemporary with the people of earlier ages, especially the 18th century, and was more interested in their social and personal lives than in the political transactions and great events of the time.

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(1) Works, xxv, 3.
Although Thackeray's depiction of family-scenes in the completed portion of *The Knights of Borsellen* is sufficiently convincing, he must have realized that it was not possible for him to bring to life people living during the reign of Henry V, with the same fidelity with which he drew his eighteenth century men and women. There were obvious difficulties in the presentation of social and domestic life so remote and different from that in Thackeray's own times. For *The Knights of Borsellen* Thackeray had read conscientiously in the works of Monstrelet and Froissart (1), but these only acquainted him with the broad movements of the history of the times and not with the day-to-day life. Consequently, doubts regarding the success of *The Knights of Borsellen* must have assailed him, resulting, finally, in his giving up the project. Anne Ritchie tells us that towards the end of his life Thackeray was for a time hesitating between resumption of work on *The Knights of Borsellen* and the writing of a new 18th century novel (*Denis Duval*), and that

He finally decided for that story of the eighteenth century which he did not live to finish. Perhaps he thought the early fourteenth and fifteenth centuries too remote from daily life to suit his purpose!... (2)

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1. Works, xxv, xliii
2. Ibid., p. xliiv.
Thackeray's choice of a plot for his next novel with an historical background, The Luck Of Barry Lyndon, which he wrote in 1844, was guided by his desire to imitate Fielding in the presentation of a rogue as the central character in a work of fiction. (The original of Barry Lyndon was Andrew Robinson Stoney-Bowes, a notorious eighteenth century adventurer(1)

In writing Barry Lyndon, Thackeray had taken as his model Fielding's Jonathan Wild, and the book was one more attempt on his part to reach to the front rank of novelists. His admiration for Fielding and his desire to imitate Jonathan Wild were born out of his intellectual affinity with the writers of the 18th century. Barry Lyndon is important both as illustrating this affinity and as bringing out its partial nature. Thackeray's novel "did not please during its appearance in Fraser" (2), and its lack of success can be attributed to the fact that although Barry Lyndon and Jonathan Wild had similar themes, both being tales of moral callousness, there was a difference in the attitude of the two writers towards their heroes. Thackeray, unlike Fielding, succumbed to the temptation of identifying himself with the central character in his novel; "he is Barry

1. Andrew Stoney-Bowes was an ancestor of Thackeray's friend John Bowes. The idea of writing this novel had come to Thackeray during the summer of 1844, while visiting Streatlam Castle with his friend. Letters Vol. ii, p. 29.
rather too often"(1). His attempt to incorporate the details of the career of Stoney-Bowes into the plot of Barry Lyndon and his desire to write a novel of the same kind as Jonathan Wild were not compatible with his subjective and sympathetic treatment of Barry's character. This is the central weakness of the novel; it is both an apotheosis and a disapproval of vice and wickedness.

With the publication of Barry Lyndon Thackeray's period of apprenticeship as an historical novelist, which began with Catherine, came to a close. In Catherine, he had displayed for the first time "not a little of his predilection for a special subject and period - the manners, customs, speech, and folk of the eighteenth century" (2). In The Knights of Borsellen he had attempted to write about an earlier period in history, and found it unsuitable for his purpose. Barry Lyndon helped him to strengthen further his hold on his favourite historical period, and in spite of its lack of success the book presents a convincing picture of eighteenth-century manners and customs.

1. Ibid, p. 95
2. Ibid, p. 53
It was, however, when Thackeray took up *Henry Esmond* that the extent of his attachment to the eighteenth century was finally revealed. *Henry Esmond* was written neither to illustrate a point of view as in the case of *Catherine*, nor was it written, as *Barry Lyndon* was, to imitate a novel. Unlike *Catherine* and *Barry Lyndon*, the central character in *Henry Esmond* is not drawn from an eighteenth-century original. Thackeray's presentation in *Henry Esmond* of a story set in that age, therefore, is a more conclusive indication of his inherent love for the eighteenth century and his feeling of kinship with its people.

In *Henry Esmond* Thackeray made use of lessons acquired during his work on *Catherine* and *Barry Lyndon*. In the two earlier novels he had portrayed villainous characters, but while doing so, had become aware of his inability of portraying them objectively (1). The lack of enthusiasm with which they were received by the reading public had also brought home to him the fact that detachment in the presentation of villainous characters

1. In a letter to his mother, written after the publication of *Catherine*, Thackeray says: it is very ingenious in you to find such beauties in *Catherine*... was a mistake all through—it was not made disgusting enough... you see the author had a sneaking kindness for his heroine, and did not like to make her utterly worthless. *Letters*, 1, 432 - 433
was particularly necessary (1). Besides, his aversion to the romanticising of villains in the works of fiction was such as to make him conscious of a moral guilt whenever he himself felt sympathetic towards such characters. This consciousness is revealed in a letter:

... I was writing Bluebeard all day very sardonic and amusing to do, but I doubt whether it will be pleasant to read or hear, or even whether it is right to go on with this wicked vein. And also I must tell you that a story is biling up in my interior, in which there shall appear some very good lofty and generous people. Perhaps a story without any villain in it would be good, wouldn't it? (2)

Thackeray's reference in the latter part of the letter is to Henry Esmond. The role played by Lord Mohun in Esmond can be likened to that of a villain, but he also has his moments of grace.

In Vanity Fair and Pendennis, both of which were set in the nineteenth century, Thackeray had drawn many of his characters from persons he knew. In Vanity Fair he had adopted the role of a "satirical moralist" and had taken "truth & Justice and kindness" as the great ends of his

1. The alternative was, of course, the romantic portrayal of the kind made fashionable by works like Bulwer's Eugene Aram and Ainsworth's Jack Sheppard.

2. Letters, II, 736.
profession (1). It was an adherence to his avowed purpose in writing this book that led him to draw his characters from among his acquaintances and also to present such social manners and foibles as he knew actually to exist. In Henry Esmond he was writing of life in the eighteenth century but because of his feeling of kinship with that age he continued to draw his characters from among his own friends and relatives. When Thackeray, in April, 1852, wrote to Mrs. Gore:

I have got into the confounded old character in spite of the change of costume — its the same woman over again who has bored you all so (2)

he was referring to the similarity between Lady Castlewood and his two earlier nineteenth-century characters, Amelia Sedley and Laura Pendennis, all of whom were partly drawn from Mrs. Brookfield (3). Henry Esmond himself is a kind of image of Thackeray. While working on the opening chapters of the novel Thackeray told his mother that Esmond was "a handsome likeness of an ugly son of yours" (4). Thackeray, besides having recourse to his personal history in tracing Esmond's career, also at times used him as his

1. Ibid., 282
2. Ibid., iii, 27.
3. Mrs. Brookfield was the wife of William Brookfield, Thackeray's friend at Cambridge.
mouthpiece, since, because of the autobiographical method used in *Henry Esmond*, he could not address the readers directly, as he had done at several places in *Vanity Fair*.

*Henry Esmond* is, of all Thackeray's novels, the most closely interlinked with the history of its age. Henry is in the thick of the political life of the time and plays no mean part in the national events. Consequently, the book abounds in historical personages and events. That Thackeray's knowledge was equal to the needs of his story cannot be doubted. But as this knowledge in Thackeray coexisted with a familiarity with the eighteenth century, which was not the result of mere learning and research, he was able to make the historical figures in *Henry Esmond* appear more like ordinary human beings than the romantic heroes of the kind portrayed in the novels of Scott. At the same time, this familiarity had also the effect of making Thackeray's fictitious characters in the novel, some of whom had their sources in his personal history, appear real and at home in their surroundings (1).

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1. The publication of *Henry Esmond* was greeted with widespread acclaim and praise for the historical knowledge exhibited by its author. But so different was Thackeray's treatment of characters from that commonly present in historical novels that a number of contemporary critics were unable to see the merits of the book; some of them even denying it the status (continued)
Thackeray's intimate portrayal of character is appropriate to the theme of *Henry Esmond* which is not heroic in the traditional manner of historical novels. The main story is about a lonely childhood, the crumbling of married bliss, and a man's love for two women -- a daughter

(continued from previous page)

of a historical novel. An idea of the attitude of these critics can be had from the following observations by a reviewer of *Esmond*:

Nor are we able to accept the *dramatis personae*, who figure in the story as new creations. To us they wear the look of well-known faces.... and yet so well in this book written, so completely has it caught the spirit of those times, we have no doubt that had it been palmed upon the public as an authentic record, it would have passed muster, provided the public had known nothing of Mr. Thackeray or his previous writings.... We feel the whole of the *dramatis personae*, the creatures of the nineteenth century, dressed up in the quaint attire of by-gone times. Their costume is perfect. Their sayings and doings are in good keeping, but they are stamped in the Thackeray mint, and the impression is too indelible. "The Dublin University Magazine, January 1853 (Vol. 41), p. 74."

*Henry Esmond* was reviewed in *The Athenaeum* on Nov. 6, 1852, and the critic had the following to say:

Though the story, costume, incident and diction of 'Esmond' are different from those of 'Vanity Fair', there is such resemblance between the views of Human Nature shown in each, that we cannot accept 'Esmond'... as a new triumph for the author...

In 'Esmond' -- as we have said -- we find no new creations of fiction. By many degrees the finest character in the book is Viscountess (Francis) Castlewood; -- but Mr. Thackeray's readers know her well already -- differently dressed. Beatrix is but another Becky, -- more brilliant in costume, less sparkling in talent. Esmond, a more original sketch, is of a dull morality... As an historical novel this cannot be accepted. *The Athenaeum*, 1852, p. 1199.
and her mother. Thackeray's achievement in the book lies in his analysis of the characters of the Esmonds --- Henry, Beatrix, Rachel, Francis, and the dowager Viscountess; his measure of success being determined by the extent to which they come to life. This does not mean, however, that Esmond is completely lacking in the elements of adventure and romance. The duels fought by Lord Castlewood, Henry and others, Marlborough's bearing during his many campaigns and General Webb's defiance of him, the coming to England of the Old Pretender and the plot for his restoration during the concluding period of Anne's reign are all presented in the genuine tradition of the historical romance. But these incidents are treated casually and mostly as characterising life during the eighteenth century. They do not form the staple of the novel. Consequently, Thackeray's critics have constantly refrained from classifying him as an historical novelist, and Henry Esmond has not been treated primarily as a romance. This recognition of Esmond as a domestic novel, and a novel of character, establishes, finally, the extent of Thackeray's saturation in the life of the eighteenth century.

(III)

In a study of Thackeray's reading in eighteenth century literature, the significance of his attitude towards history lies in the extent to which it was responsible for his selection
of books and other reading material. Thackeray used to hold that memoirs, lives, letters and works of fiction gave one a more comprehensive and truthful idea of a past age than those books which were only concerned with describing the military and political transactions during any period in history. In the same way, Gil Blas, Don Quixote and other great characters in literature appeared more real to him than historical figures as presented in the books of history (1). Thus, delivering his lecture on Richard Steele, Thackeray expressed the opinion that the works of fiction contained "a greater amount of truth in solution than the volume which purports to be all true" (2). In *The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*, Thackeray makes several allusions to his sources of information, and these also indicate the influence of his conception of history on his reading. These allusions are particularly important in a study of Thackeray's reading for *Henry Esmond*, since his desire of writing the novel had an origin more or less simultaneous with that of his plan to give the Lectures (3). Besides, Thackeray's approach in the Lectures was that of a novelist. As he said

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2. Works, xi, 200.
3. Thackeray's letter to his mother written in Nov. 1850, where he mentions the Lectures for the first time, contains the first reference to *Henry Esmond*. Letters, ii, 708.
in the first of these Lectures (on Swift), he was more interested in the lives and feelings of these writers than in their books (1). Parts of many of the Lectures are also devoted to the portrayal of everyday life and social conditions during the eighteenth century.

Apart from the works of the writers who formed the subject of Thackeray's Lectures, he read chiefly in the memoirs, anecdotes, letters, periodicals and biographies related to the eighteenth century. *Henry Esmond*, however, being, unlike *The English Humourists*, an unbroken narrative covering many years and maintaining a chronological order, required on Thackeray's part a thorough knowledge of the history of the times. Thus, apart from his reading designed to give him an idea of the manners, customs and ordinary life of the period, he had to study in the historians dealing with the eighteenth century. The next chapter of this thesis is concerned with an examination of Thackeray's reading in connection with the historical events described in *Henry Esmond*.

1. Works, xi, 127.
CHAPTER II
HISTORICAL EVENTS

Henry Esmond is divided into three sections. Book I opens with a kind of prologue containing reflections on the nature of history in general and upon the history of the Esmond family in particular. The story proper begins in Chapter I which is set in 1691. But in the chapters immediately following Thackeray sketches the careers of the early Esmonds (ch. 11) and gives Henry's recollections of his childhood and boyhood before 1691 (chs. 111 - VII). Chapter VII once again takes up the narrative as from 1691 and the rest of Bk. I tells events of Henry's life during the reign of William III. The first two chapters of Bk. II continue Henry's career during the same reign, but the remainder of the novel deals with Henry's life during the reign of Queen Anne, with whose death the story concludes. The first notable event described by Thackeray in his history of the Esmond family is the attainment of a titled rank by Francis Esmond at the hands of James I ... The period of time covered in Henry Esmond therefore, extends roughly from the reign of James I to the death of Queen Anne (11).

Thackeray does not usually cite his authorities (1)

1. There are several allusions in Thackeray's letters to his reading for Henry Esmond (Letters, ii, 781, 815, iii, 38). But these references are of a general nature and in only one of his letters he mentions some of the works upon which he drew for the novel. There is also a note written by Thackeray to Etore Crowe in which he mentions The London Gazette in connection with his presentation of the campaigns of Marlborough. These have been examined elsewhere in this thesis.
but for his knowledge of the general historical background of this period he appears to have relied upon a small number of selected historians. Some help in the search for these authorities is derived from the catalogue of books belonging to Thackeray which were sold after his death. The catalogue lists, among others, the following volumes:

a) Anne (Queen) The History of the Reign, digested into Annals, 10 odd volumes

b) Burnet (Bp.) History of his Own Time, from the Restoration to the Treaty of Peace at Utrecht


d) Wade (J.) British History chronologically arranged 1841 (1)

1. Catalogues of the Libraries of Charles Dickens and W. M. Thackeray etc., ed. by J. H. Stonehouse, London, 1935, pp. 137, 139, 145, 155. The dates of publication and the full titles of these works from which the excerpts in this thesis are taken, are as follows:


d) J. Wade: British History Chronologically Arranged, London 1841
Apart from Thackeray's possession of these books and indications in the text of *Esmond* to be considered later, there are other grounds for assuming his reading in some of them. It can, however, be stated here that such indications as are contained in the novel suggest that Thackeray drew upon Hume and Smollett most often is his presentation of the broad movements of history against which the careers of Henry and other members of his family are unfolded. The thirteen volumes of Hume's and Smollett *History of England* were almost certainly bought in 1829, when as a young man at Cambridge, he considered the book a 'positive requisite' for a library he was then intending to form (1). Thackeray's deep interest in the book is also indicated by his ownership of another edition of Hume's part of the work published in 1770 (2). In his diary for 1846 Thackeray records his reading of Hume's *History* (3), and he had also read Hume's biography and written an article on it (4). Thackeray's preference for Hume's *History of England* is also mentioned by Dr. John Brown in a letter written to a friend in December 1851 (5).

1. *Letters*, i, 48
2. *Catalogue of Thackeray's Library*, p. 157
Smollett's contribution to *The History of England* covers part of the reign of William III and the reign of Queen Anne, during which the greater part of *Esmond* is set. Thackeray had a close familiarity with the non-historical writings of Smollett, who was the subject of one of Thackeray's lectures on *The English Humourists*, and whose works, Thackeray felt, gave one a better idea of the life of the times, than the volume which purports to be all true (1). The fact that Smollett was both a novelist and a historian may have presented Thackeray with an additional reason for drawing upon his *History of England*.

Boyer's *Annals of Anne's Reign* was the most comprehensive history of the times with which Thackeray was acquainted. The several volumes of the work are in the form of annual reports, and were published between 1703 - 13. A very large number of documents, speeches in the parliament and from the throne and reports from *The London Gazette* have been incorporated in this

1. *Works, xl, 300.*

The following passage indicates Thackeray's careful reading of Smollett's works:

I have a relic of Thackery. After his death there was a sale of some of his furniture and his books at the house which he had built to please his own taste ... There I bought his copy of Smollett, with some of his own pencilled notes on the margin of a page here and there. Justin McCarthy: *Reminiscences*, 2 vols, London, 1899, 1, 41.
work. Boyer gives an almost exhaustive account of the political and military transactions of the age, but he refrains from expressing his opinion about the reign or its political and social trends. Thackeray, who disliked conventional history-books, does not appear to have drawn upon Boyer while writing about the political life of the times in Esmond. But, as will be seen later, Thackeray relied upon The Annals of Anne's Reign while describing the campaigns of Marlborough.

Burnet, in his History of His Own Time covers the period from the accession of James II to the Treaty of Utrecht in 1712. Thackeray does not allude to his acquaintance with the book in any of his writings, and indications in the text of Esmond, while suggesting his reading in the book, do not put it beyond doubt. Thackeray was, however, most unlikely not to have read the book with more than ordinary curiosity since it was the only comprehensive history dealing in detail with most of the period covered in Henry Esmond, written by a contemporary who himself had played an important part in the history of the age(1). Burnet suffers from a fault shared by many historians who write

1. It can be mentioned here that in the second volume of The History of England, Macaulay gives a detailed account of the character of Burnet (pp.175 - 181), and also makes several references to the role played by him in the history of the times.
about their own age, namely, the fault of taking a partisan view of things. One reason for the absence of traces of Thackeray's borrowing from Burnet may be that as the Esmonds, including Henry, are Tories they obviously take a different view of things than that taken by Burnet, who was a Whig.

Wade, the last of the historians mentioned above, paid particular attention in his British History to the chronological sequence of historical events. Each historical period dealt with in the book begins with an introductory preface followed by a chronological account of the different events of the period in question. Such an arrangement must have proved helpful to Thackeray in his attempt to present historical details in their correct order. On the other hand, the book covers a long period of history in the span of one volume, and the space devoted to each age is necessarily brief. Thackeray, therefore, could not have been greatly indebted to Wade for his knowledge of the historical events described in Esmond.

There is a curious similarity between Thackeray's reflections on the nature of history in the prologue to Esmond and Wade's remarks on the same subject in the preface to British History. The relevant passage from the novel is as follows:

The Muse of History hath encumbered herself with ceremony as well as her Sister of the Theatre. She too wears the mask and the Cothurnus, and speaks to measure. She too, in our age, busies herself with the affairs only of kings; waiting
on them obsequiously and stately, as if she were but a mistress of court ceremonies, and had nothing to do with the registering of the affairs of the common people (1).

Wade expresses the following similar opinion of history:

Hitherto the prevailing character of histories has been biographical. They are the lives of Princes, rather than the records of nations. It is Julius Caesar or Constantine, not the Roman people or the Greek empire, that fills the page of the annalist. The common histories of England offer few exceptions to the ancient models, and the Edwards, Henries, and Richards, crowd the foreground, to the almost entire exclusion of the other and often more important characters, events and occurrences, that really make up the body, form and pressure of the time (2).

It cannot be argued that Thackeray had Wade's preface in mind when he wrote the above comments on the nature of history in *Esmond*. But it is more than likely that because of his similar way of looking at history, Thackeray may have read Wade's *British History* with a keener interest.

Apart from the books mentioned above, Thackeray's library also contained Macaulay's *History of England* (3), the first two volumes of which were published not long before Thackeray began to write *Esmond*. Macaulay was the writer whom Thackeray admired most among his contemporaries (4) and he had read the first two volumes of *The History of England* carefully and with

1. *Works*, X, 1–2
2. *British History*, iii
4. When Richard Bedingfield once asked Thackeray about his favourite contemporary writer, Thackeray replied, "Macaulay is about the most brilliant." *Cassell's Magazine*, (1870–71) ii, 231.

Francis St. John Thackeray also recalls how once defending Macaulay Thackeray exclaimed, "He was a giant". *Temple Bar*, July 1893, vol. 98, p. 377.
a great deal of interest before he began writing *Esmond*. In fact, he once compared his studies for the novel to Macaulay's for *The History of England*:

... it takes as much trouble as Macaulay's History almost and he has the vast advantage of remembering everything he has read...(1)

The following other remarks of Thackeray illustrate the high opinion that he had of the first two volumes of *The History of England*:

a) ...I...pass the time in very comfortable quiet with Macaulay to read... He is not so fiery strong and picturesque as the other Macaulays...it will be pleasant some day to write a nice little History book - but where is the memory of the astounding Macaulay? (2).

b) I have read Macaulay Vol III.- it did not amuse me so much as Prescott or near so much as the first 2 volumes (3).

Both the foregoing excerpts refer to Thackeray's reading in vol. III of Macaulay's *History of England* (4). The second volume of *The History of England* concludes with the proclamation of William and Mary as King and Queen of England, and Thackeray could not have drawn upon Macaulay for his portrayal of the historical background against which the major portion of Henry's career as a young nobleman is presented. But, as will later appear, Thackeray drew upon these volumes extensively for the presentation of social life in the novel. It is also likely

1. *Letters*, iii, 38
2. Ibid., 538
3. Ibid., 542
4. The third volume was published in 1656, and when it appeared Thackeray wrote:

...I...long for Macaulay of w'h I saw a nice English copy yesterday and was going to buy it but for the size of the book... Ibid., 537
that Thackeray went back for first-hand information to some of the source-books referred to by Macaulay in footnotes.

Another work of historical nature in Thackeray's library which he seems to have drawn upon in tracing the careers of the early Esmonds is The Peerage of England (1). Indeed, Thackeray's use of this book is not limited to the early part of the novel. His indebtedness to it was both in his creation of fictitious characters and in his portrayal of historical personages, such as the Duke of Hamilton.

Thackeray's reading in Collins and Macaulay and in the previously mentioned works of Wade, Boyer, Burnet, Hume and Smollett can be assumed with reasonable certainty without proof from the text of Henry Esmond. There are, on the other hand, some books and other reading material with which Thackeray's acquaintance is suggested only through hints in the novel.

It has also to be remembered that the books in Thackeray's own library represented only a part of his reading for Henry Esmond. As a matter of fact, the greater part of the second and third books of the novel were written in the libraries of the Atheneum Club and the British Museum 'in the midst of the volumes to be consulted' (2). In view of the extensive nature of Thackeray's reading and the different reigns which Henry's story covers, a detailed examination of Thackeray's sources of information for the historical events in Esmond is made easier if the occurrences are divided into the following categories:

2. Eyre Crowe: With Thackeray in America, London, 1893, 4-5
a) Events related to the political life of the times
b) Marlborough's campaigns and other events of a military character
c) Other contemporary events.
Events related to the political life of the times.

Part of the careers of Henry's ancestors is unfolded against the background of the conflict between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians. After the defeat of the Royalists, George Esmond, like many other noblemen, follows Charles II into exile. After the revolution of 1688 the country was divided into three parties: the Whigs, the Tories, and the Jacobites. The Whigs approved all the changes brought about by the revolution and were also in favour of the Hanoverian succession. The Tories while accepting the results of the revolution were still not happy about the proposed settling of the English Crown on the Hanoverian dynasty and also favoured the orthodox approach to political problems. The Jacobites were for the restoration of the Stuarts and a number of them secretly owed allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. During the reign of William III there were numerous Jacobite plots for the recall of the Stuarts. After the accession of Anne in 1702 these plots ceased as the Jacobites were led to believe that Anne herself was opposed to the Hanoverian succession. It is only during this later reign that Henry himself as a young man plays an active part in the political scene. Consequently, the events to be considered in this section may be treated as falling under the following periods:

i) from the reign of James I to the death of William III;

ii) the reign of Anne.

i) The events in this period form part of the family history of the Esmonds, both before and after the birth of Henry. The
family history before Henry's time is presented in the form of a sketch with only the notable events mentioned and the experiences of his early years are sporadic, being bits and pieces gathered from the memories of childhood.

A more detailed examination of Thackeray's source-books should be made with reference to the chronological sequence of the Esmond family history. Thackeray mentions the following facts in the career of Francis Esmond, the first Viscount Castlewood:— a) the bestowal on him of a knighthood and then a baronetcy by James I; b) his attendance in Germany on the Elector Palatine who had married James's daughter Elizabeth; c) the award to him of the office of Warden of the Buttery and Groom of the King's Posset; and d) his advancement by Charles I in January 1643 to the dignity of Viscount Castlewood of Shandon in Ireland.

Francis was succeeded by his son George as second Viscount Castlewood. The chief events in his career, both before and after his succession to the title are:— a) his marriage to a daughter of George Topham, alderman and jeweler in London; b) his melting down the family plate, with his father's consent, for Charles I; c) his going into exile with Charles II and his participation in all the plots against Cromwell; and d) his performance through the reigns of Charles I, Charles II, and part of the reign of James II, of his duties as Warden of the Buttery and Groom of the King's Posset (1).

These episodes constitute that part of the family history of the Esmonds which is presented in the form of a sketch. Though invention of course enters into this family chronicle, Thackeray

1. The careers of the early Esmonds are sketched out in Bk. I., Ch. II of Esmond (Works, X, 11-15).
was not working purely from imagination. He could indeed have cited actual parallels for pretty nearly everything in the careers of Francis and George Castlewood. The Esmonds were typical of not a few families in the seventeenth century whose fortunes were involved with those of the Stuarts. Their family history has the actual history of the times as its background and context. As a matter of fact, for the general pattern of these incidents Thackeray closely follows the accounts of Hume and Wade, although for some of them he uses as originals certain events recorded by other writers.

Nothing is said about any real service by Francis or merit on his part prior to his being knighted by James I. But service or merit did not by any means account for all James's promotions, and the advancement of Francis first to a knighthood and then to a baronetcy resembles the progress of other not particularly deserving favourites of James. Both Hume and Wade refer to James's lack of restraint in conferring titles of honour. Wade, for instance, writes that at the very beginning of his reign James created 200 knights and that a large number of these knights were later made baronets on a payment of £1095 each (1). Hume also offers the following criticism of James's indiscriminate bestowing of titles:

...in six week's time after his entrance into the kingdom, he is computed to have bestowed knighthood on no less than 237 persons...Titles of all kinds became so common, that they were scarcely marks of distinction; and being distributed without choice or deliberation, to persons unknown to the prince,

1. *British History*, 166, 168, 169
were regarded more as proofs of facility and good nature, than of any determined friendship or esteem(1)

The attendance of Sir Francis on the Elector-Palatine is also consistent with Hume's account of the Austrian invasion of the Palatinate. Hume records the raising and sending over of an English army 'commanded by four young noblemen, Essex, Oxford, Southampton, and Willoughby...' (2). But there is no record of these noblemen or others being rewarded for their services in this war by James I, who was, except during the last year of his reign, content to be a neutral spectator of the misfortunes of his son-in-law. James I very often engaged his favourites as his personal attendants and in making Francis Esmond the recipient of the office of Warden of the Butteries and Groom of the King's Posset, Thackeray probably took a leaf out of the career of George Villiers, who was, as recorded by Hume, appointed by James I to be his cup-bearer (3).

The next item chronologically is the marriage of George Esmond to the daughter of Thomas Topham. By making George's father-in-law, who was a jeweller and alderman in London, take the Parliament's side, Thackeray recognised the cleavage of the nation from the two sides of which, broadly speaking, the supporters of the two parties in the Civil War came. Here again Thackeray follows Hume and Wade. Hume writes in The History of England that 'the nobility and more considerable gentry rallied to the support of Charles I' whereas the city of London and families

2. Ibid., VI, 149
3. Ibid., 76
enriched by commerce joined the Parliament (1). Wade also points out that three-fourths of the nobility joined the King and that the supporters of the Parliament were mostly the merchants and the trades people (2).

Sir Francis, according to Thackeray, was created Viscount Castlewood of Shandon in Ireland, for his own services to the crown and for those of his son George, who, with the consent of his father 'melted the whole of the family plate for his Majesty's service (3). These incidents in the careers of Henry's ancestors point to Thackeray's reading in *The Peerage of England* and in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (4). Collins records the career of one Francis, who was created Viscount of Shannon in the Irish peerage and fought against the Irish rebels for Charles I, whom he later joined at Oxford in 1643 (5). Besides the fact that Francis Esmond joins Charles I at Oxford, Thackeray's indebtedness to *The Peerage of England* in this case is limited to his choice of a Christian name for Francis Esmond and a rather similar title.

In writing about the immediate reason for the rise of Francis to the rank of Viscount, Thackeray appears to have born in mind the career of Richard Newport as it is presented by Clarendon. The relevant passage from *The History of the Rebellion*, containing an account of Newport's rise to a baronetcy following his son's offer of a sum to Charles I, is as follows:

There was a gentleman of a very good extraction, and

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1. Ibid., 494
2. *British History*, 166
3. *Works*, X, 12
of the best estate of any gentleman of that country, who lived within four or five miles of Shrewsbury, and was looked upon as a very prudent man, and had a very powerful influence upon that people, and was of undoubted affections and loyalty to the King, and to the government both in church and state; his eldest son was a young gentleman of great expectation, and of excellent parts, a member of the house of commons, who had behaved himself there very well. This gentleman intimated to a friend of his, "That, if his father might be made a baron, he did believe he might be prevailed with to present his majesty with a good sum of money"...and the gentleman was made a baron; who presented the sum of six thousand pounds to his majesty...(1).

In Esmond, Francis Esmond is created a Viscount following the presentation by George, his eldest son, of the family plate to Charles I.

Thackeray had probably two sources before him for the siege of Castlewood Hall by Ireton; one in The Peerage of England and another in Whitelocke's Memorials (2). In recording the family-history of the Earl of Chesterfield who had 'put himself and his sons in arms' for the defence of Charles I, Collins alludes to the following incident:

His house at Shelford was a garrison for the King under the government of his son Philip, who lost his life in defence thereof, 27 Oct. 1645, when the rebels took it by storm, which afterwards they burnt to the ground (3).

It will be recalled that Edward, the second son of the first Viscount Castlewood was killed in a similar manner during the siege of Castlewood Hall by Ireton. In one of his references to the siege of Castlewood Hall, Thackeray refers to it as 'garrison', and says that 'the place was taken and stormed' (4): it may

1. iii, 257-58
2. Whitelocke, Sir Bulstrode: Memorials of the English Affairs... King Charles the First, to King Charles the Second. His happy Restauration, London, 1732.
be noted that the word and a similar phrase have been used in the above excerpt from The Peerage of England.

Some doubt remains regarding Thackeray's reading in Whitelocke's Memorials, but his attention was probably directed to the book by frequent references to it in Macaulay's History of England. The following passage from Whitelocke's Memorials describes an incident during the rebellion:

Letters from Colonel Ireton's Quarters informed, that Captain Gibbons who commanded Ireton's Regiment, took four Troops of that Regiment, with a Party of Dragoons, and some of Henley Foot, and fell upon a Village called Cromash, joining to Wallingford, took divers Prisoners of the Garrison of Wallingford, beat the Enemy into the Castle and possessed the Place, being of great advantage for the Reducing of that Garrison (1).

None of the other works which Thackeray appears to have read record a similar incident in which Ireton's regiment was involved. After the siege by Ireton, Thackeray points out, Thomas, the third son of Francis the first Viscount Castlewood, joins the Parliament's side. Thomas's conversion does not have much effect upon the plot of Esmond, and it is likely that Thackeray's primary aim in introducing it was to include a not-infrequent feature in the family-divisions which were so common during the Civil War. He may have found a general basis for Thomas's change of side in the following passage from The History of England:

Besides the military operations between the two principal armies, which lay in the centre of England; each county, each town, each family almost, was divided within itself; and the most violent convulsions shook the whole kingdom (2).

1. 203
Almost certainly, however, Thackeray also had in mind the career of the Earl of Denbigh as recorded by Arthur Collins. The only recorded instance where father and son actually fought on opposite sides during the Civil War was in the case of the Earl of Denbigh, who was, as Collins points out, opposed by his son at the battle of Edgehill (1). Thomas Esmond, of course, does not actually fight against his father, but he does join the Parliament's army following the siege of Castlewood Hall.

The remaining events in George's life listed above are his flight to France with Charles II and his continuing to fulfil his duties as Warden of the Butteries and Groom of the King's Posset after the restoration. Thackeray had probably no particular originals in mind for these events. He may have been thinking of the numerous Royalist exiles like the Earls of Clarendon, Sandwich and Newcastle. All of them lost a part or the whole of their estates through sequestration, and were, after the Restoration, reinstated in their former possessions. Any of these writers, Hume, Wade and Collins could have furnished Thackeray with the details of the careers of these noblemen.

The rest of the incidents to be dealt with in this section belong to the period following the accession of James II. These are no longer presented in the form of a brief sketch but as part of the early memories of Henry himself. Consequently, instead of a succession of events directly reflecting the broad movements of the history of the period we now have a more comprehensive picture of the times, in which historical incidents are present in the midst of.

or details of a personal and social nature. Among the historical events during the reign of James II mentioned by Thackeray are:
a) the trial of the seven bishops; b) James II's presence at Salisbury and the desertion of Lord Churchill; and c) the arrival of the Prince of Orange at Salisbury. These incidents are recorded by all the historians writing about the period and Thackeray could have gone to any one of them for his knowledge about them.

Apart from these historical events, Thackeray writes about the emergence of a strong group of Catholics and Jacobites during the reign of James II, and the resentment with which they were looked upon by the majority of the people. This resentment, at times amounting to open hostility, is reflected in several incidents described in *Esmond*. The first of these is connected with the arrival of Isabel Esmond at Castlewood Hall:

> The country was then in a great No - Popery fervour; her Ladyship's known conversion, and her husband's, the priest in her train, and the service performed at the chapel of Castlewood...got her no favour at first in the county or village. By far the greater part of the Estate of Castlewood had been confiscated, and been parcelled out to Commonwealth-men. One or two of these old Cromwellian soldiers were still alive in the village, and looked grimly at first upon my Lady Viscountess, when she came to dwell there (1)

Another illustration of popular feeling is provided by the incident where Isabel Castlewood's coach is beset by the villagers and its occupants pelted with potatoes, cabbages and carrots (2).

During the later years of his reign James II's patronage of the

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1. *Works*, X, 18
2. Ibid., 36-38
followers of Roman Catholic Church had angered the people to such an extent that various crowds of people went about the country, breaking Roman Catholic chapels and churches. One such incident is described in Esmond in the following manner:

There was a great stir and commotion everywhere, even in the little quiet village of Castlewood, whither a party of people came from the town, who would have broken Castlewood Chapel windows, but the village people turned out...(1)

Once again, Burnet, Hume and Wade refer to the destruction of the Roman Catholic places of worship by the people and also to the various acts of James II favouring the Catholics. But they mostly confine themselves to a relation of actual happenings, and do not describe, at any length, the temper of the people or the character of the Roman Catholics. Macaulay's account of James II's reign, on the other hand, is far more detailed, and it is as much a social history as a history of the political life of the age. He describes minor incidents related to James II's attempts at propagating his religion, and also the various ways in which public feeling was outraged. The picture of popular resentment and reaction against the Roman Catholics contained in Esmond is similar to that drawn by Macaulay. The following excerpt from The History of England, for instance, tells of the reasons for this growing resentment:

During some months discontent had been steadily and rapidly increasing. The celebration of the Roman Catholic worship had long been prohibited by act of  

1. Ibid., 39.
During several generations no Roman Catholic clergyman had dared to exhibit himself in any public place with the badges of his office. Injudicious members of the king's church, encouraged by him, took a pride in defying statutes which were still of undoubted validity, and feelings which had a stronger hold of the national mind than at any former period. Roman Catholic chapels rose all over the country. Cowls, girdles of ropes, and strings of beads constantly appeared in the streets, and astonished a population, the oldest of whom had never seen a conventual garb except on the stage.

During the reign of James II, Father Holt is often dressed in the garb of a priest, and in the various open gatherings of Roman Catholic gentry at Castlewood Hall he moves 'amongst the very highest as quite their equal, and as commanding them all' (2).

Macaulay further describes how the people were provoked into lawless actions by the favour shown to the Roman Catholics:

Even men of peaceable and honest habits were impelled by religious animosity to join the lawless part of the population for the cry of No-Popery, a cry which has more than once endangered the existence of London, was the signal for outrage and rapine. First the rabble fell on the Roman Catholic places of worship. The buildings were demolished. Benches, pulpits, confessionals, breviaries, were heaped up and set on fire.

Another work which carries a vivid picture of the social and political life of the times is John Evelyn's Memoirs, containing his diary kept during the reign of James II (4). The Memoirs was one of the works used by Macaulay as his source-books for his History of England (5). There is no external evidence suggesting Thackeray's reading in this work, but keeping in view his fondness

1. ii, 98-99
5. Evelyn's Memoirs has indeed been used by practically every writer dealing with the age.
of memoirs and biographies, and the intimate nature of Evelyn's descriptions, Thackeray's acquaintance with the work can be assumed with reasonable certainty. Evelyn mentions several attacks on Roman Catholic chapels (1), and also gives an account of the panic that spread among the Catholic priests during the departure of James II from England:

The great favourites at Court, Priests and Jesuits, fly or abscond...The Papists in offices lay down their commissions, and fly. Universal consternation amongst them; it looks like a Revolution (2).

In Esmond a similar panic is apparent in Father Holt's midnight visit to Castlewood in order to burn some secret papers prior to his flight from the country (3).

The large number of intrigues during the reign of William III, aimed at the restoration of the Stuarts, is noted at several places in Esmond (4). Two such plots which are described in some detail by Thackeray are: a) an uprising at Newbury in June 1690; and b) the Fenwick conspiracy. The uprising at Newbury is shown as instrumental in shaping the careers of Henry and other members of his family. Thomas Esmond plays an important part in working out the details of this conspiracy which, Thackeray points out, was to take place during William's absence in Ireland.

Although there was no actual uprising at Newbury in 1690, the incident as presented by Thackeray is not without historical foundation. He had probably two incidents in mind for his

2. Ibid., 260-61
3. Works, X, 41 et seq.
4. Ibid., 126, 210-11.
presentation of the uprising. The first of these, in chronological order, was a skirmish between the troops of James II and the Prince of Orange, which took place in Reading near Newbury in 1688. The incident is alluded to by Burnet (1) and Macaulay (2) but not by Hume and Wade.

The second of these incidents that Thackeray appears to have borne in mind took place in 1689 and is described by Smollett in the following manner:

A spirit of discontent had by this time diffused itself through the army, and became so formidable to the court, that the King resolved to detain the Dutch troops in England, and send over to Holland in their room such regiments as were most tinctured with disaffection. Of these the Scottish regiment of Dumbarton, commanded by Mareschal Schomberg, mutinied on its march to Ipswich, seized the military chest, disarmed the officers who opposed their design, declared for King James, and with four pieces of cannon began their march for Scotland. William, being informed of this revolt, ordered General Ginckel to pursue them with three regiments of Dutch dragoons and the mutineers surrendered at discretion (3).

In Esmond too, the abortive rising of Scots soldiers at Newbury is suppressed by Ginckel (4). It may be noted that the revolt at Ipswich described by Smollett was the only incident of its kind in which General Ginckel took part.

There are, in all, four references to Sir John Fenwick in Esmond (5). The first of these links his name with the rising at Newbury, and is contained in the following passage:

There was a list of gentlemen of the county in Father Holt's handwriting - Mr. Freeman's (King James's) friends - a similar paper being found among those of Sir John Fenwick and Mr. Coplestone, who suffered death for this conspiracy (6).

1. History of His Own Time, iii, 332
3. History of England, i, 12
4. Works, X, 52
5. Works, X, 58, 126-27, 211, 434
6. Ibid., 58.
Mr. Coplestone is one of Thackeray’s own creations and the fate he undergoes is not unusual at a time when many active conspirators were executed. But the actual plot to assassinate William III, in which Fenwick was implicated and for which he died was contrived in 1695. Thackeray had, however, some grounds for suggesting Fenwick’s participation in a plot in 1690. Fenwick was actually arrested with some other people in June 1690 suspected of plotting an insurrection, a fact which has been noted by Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, who was himself a prisoner in the Tower at the time, in the following passage in his diary:

As I was going over the parade, I asked my Lord, who lay at that house where formerly the Duchess of Monmouth was? He told me, Sir John Fenwick; but that he had not been civil to his Lordship, and therefore he would remove him: to which I said, I hoped his Lordship would not revenge a private pique upon a gentleman who was now his prisoner...(l)

The other established or suggested source-books for Esmond do not record the fact of Fenwick’s arrest in 1690. Consequently, Thackeray’s drawing upon the above passage from the Earl of Clarendon’s Correspondence with the Diary from 1687 to 1690, is not left in doubt.

The remaining references to Sir John Fenwick in Esmond are in connection with the Fenwick conspiracy of 1695, details of which have been recorded by all the contemporary and by later historians. Thackeray’s account of the conspiracy, which is no more than a bare outline, suggests his indebtedness to Burnet’s History of His Own Time, Macaulay’s History of England and also to Howell’s State Trials.


Thackeray's reading in the last named book is self-acknowledged (1).

Thackeray points out that when Fenwick was arrested certain papers came to light which contained a list of the names of the insurgents against William, and that the latter, guided by his forgiving nature, burnt it (2). In fact the papers given to William III by Sir John Fenwick were placed before the House of Commons and were used as evidence at his trial, in which he was convicted to die. It is likely that the statement regarding the burning of the aforesaid papers was based on Thackeray's knowledge of their final destruction by fire, as pointed out by the Earl of Hardwicke in the following passage:

The King before the session had Sir J. Fenwick brought to the cabinet council, where he was present himself. But Sir John would not explain his paper; the original of it was amongst Lord Somer's manuscripts, which were burnt in the fire in Lincoln's Inn, 1752.

Hardwicke's remarks are from the 1823 edition of Burnet's History of His Time (3) which, presumably, was Thackeray's source-book in this case.

Thackeray's indebtedness to Macaulay is in the emphasis that the latter places upon William III's magnanimous behaviour towards the conspirators during his reign and his courage in facing their plots against him. In fact these are the only aspects of William's character presented in Esmond, and it only is Macaulay among the historians who gives a similar picture of his character. The following passage describes William's treatment of the conspirators:

1. Thackeray's reading in this book is examined in detail later in this thesis.
2. Works, X, 127
3. iv, 323
He was proved by every test; by war, by wounds, by painful and depressing maladies, by raging seas, by the imminent and constant risk of assassination... yet none could ever discover what that thing was which the Prince of Orange feared. His advisers could with difficulty induce him to take any precaution against the pistols and daggers of conspirators.

And again writing about William's reaction to the news of the plots against him, Macaulay writes in a footnote:

The cold magnanimity with which these intimations of danger were received is singularly characteristic.

In describing William's behaviour during the Fenwick conspiracy, Thackeray calls him 'that brave and merciful man', and also writes:

"After this my Lord ever spoke of King William as he was — as one of the wisest, the bravest, and the greatest of men."

As already pointed out, it is only in Macaulay's History of England that William's character is put in such a favourable light.

Thackeray's indebtedness to Howell's State Trials is indicated in the reference in Esmond to the arrival in England of the Duke of Berwick at about the time of the Fenwick conspiracy.

Although attempts were made by the Jacobites to keep the Duke's visit a secret, most people came to learn of it and both Burnet and Smollett refer to it. Thackeray's own description of the Duke's visit to England is as follows:

...Father Holt appeared at Castlewood, and brought a young friend with him, a gentleman whom 'twas easy to see that both my Lord and the Father treated with uncommon deference... The Father's companion went by the name of Captain James; and it was under a very different name and appearance that Harry Esmond afterwards saw him.

2. Ibid., 168  5. Ibid., 126
3. Works, X, 127
The following passage from Howell's *State Trials* contains part of the deposition of James Hunt, who was a witness in a trial of some persons for 'High Treason', and alludes to the surreptitious visit of the Duke of Berwick:

This informant says, That about the beginning of February, there came over a tall young gentleman alone, who was particularly recommended to this informant by Pigaut... and this informant, by what he has heard since, does believe the said person might be the Duke of Berwick (1)

Both these excerpts emphasise the secrecy of the Duke's visit and his important position; and it is likely that in describing the Duke as 'a young friend' and 'a gentleman', Thackeray may have had in mind James Hunt's reference to 'a tall young gentleman'(2)

Finally, Thackeray describes the openly expressed feelings of joy with which the news of the sudden death of William III was received by the Jacobites in London and in countries in Europe supporting the claims of the Old Pretender to the English throne. For this part of his narration Thackeray appears to be indebted to Smollett's *History of England*. In *Esmond* the passage describing the reaction of the supporters of the Old Pretender at William's death is as follows:

'Twas the fashion of the hostile party to assail this

1. *State Trials*, XII, 1339
2. Burnet and Smollett in writing about the Duke's visit make no attempt to describe his appearance:
   a) ... the duke of Berwick repaired privately to England, where he conferred with the conspirators, assured them that King James was ready to make a descent with a considerable number of French forces... Smollett: *History of England*, i, 276,
   b) ... the duke of Berwick came over, and had some discourse with them about the method of executing it... Burnet IV, 292.
great prince's reputation during his life; but the joy which they and all his enemies in Europe showed at his death, is a proof of the terror in which they held him. Young as Esmond was, he was wise enough... to scorn that indecency of gratulation which broke out amongst the followers of King James in London, upon the death of this illustrious prince...(1)

Commenting on the same subject Smollett writes:

The importance of William's life was evinced by the joy that diffused itself through the kingdom of France at the news of his decease... The court of Versailles could hardly restrain their transports so as to preserve common decorum; the people of Paris openly rejoiced at the event; all decency was laid aside at Rome, where this incident produced such indecent raptures, that Cardinal Grimani, the imperial minister, complained of them to the Pope...(2)

Henry's coming of age at the turn of the century is one of the indications of the greater interest that Thackeray took in that part of the novel which is set in the 18th century. As already suggested, in his presentation of the broad movements of the history of the age, Thackeray appears to have mainly drawn upon Smollett's History of England. One of the reasons for this was that neither Burnet nor Boyer write about the concluding years of Anne's reign.

In the incidents during the reign of Anne the central character is Henry himself whereas in the section of the novel depicting events before the accession of Anne, the main actors, broadly speaking, are other members of his family. Henry's transformation into an eighteenth century nobleman has considerable effect on the presentation of historical events in the book. They are no longer seen at a distance, and as primarily affecting

1. Works, X, 204
2. History of England, i, 449
other people, but as presenting a familiar aspect of the life of the times. In other words, the historical events and personages in Anne's reign are presented as seen through the eyes of a contemporary. The portrayal of historical personages and events during Anne's reign, therefore, required on Thackeray's part not only a knowledge of history but also a deep acquaintance with the literature of the age. That Thackeray had such an acquaintance is conclusively proved by his lectures on *The English Humourists* and also his letters and the observations of his associates. It may also be mentioned here that Anne's reign was remarkable for the prominent part played by the contemporary wits and writers in the political affairs.

Before taking up a detailed examination of Thackeray's source-books for this section of the novel, a survey of some of the writers acquainting him with the political scene during this period may be made. Swift has a prominent place among these writers. The work of Swift which proved most helpful to Thackeray is *The Journal to Stella*, Swift's letters written during 1707-13, when he was a close associate of Harley and Bolingbroke. In his lecture on Swift, Thackeray speaks of *The Journal* with a great deal of feeling:

...I know of nothing more manly, more tender, more exquisitely touching, than some of these brief notes, written in what Swift calls "his little language" in his journal to Stella (I)

Another work of Swift's which provided Thackeray with an insight into the political affairs of the times was *The History of

1. Works, XI, 156.
the Last Years of Anne's Reign (1). Thackeray refers to the book in his lecture on Steele:

I read Swift's history of the times in which he took a part...he...scarcely mentions, except to flout it, the great intrigue of the Queen's latter days, which was to have ended in bringing back the Pretender (2).

and also in Esmond:

If the greatest satirist the world ever hath seen had writ against Harley, and not for him, what a history had he left behind of the last years of Queen Anne's reign! (3)

Thackeray had also read the various political pamphlets of Swift, as is indicated by the allusions in Esmond to political pamphleteering (4), and to 'the malignant attacks of Swift' (5) on Marlborough.

Thackeray had reviewed the Correspondence (6) of the Duchess of Marlborough for The Times in 1838, and her letters furnished Thackeray with a great deal of information about the conflict between the different political parties in Anne's England. Besides these books, The Letters of Bolingbroke (7) and Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland (8), two books which were in Thackeray's library, also represent his reading in the history of the times. Bolingbroke's letters were part of Thackeray's readings as early

1. Swift's: Works, i, 438-490
2. Op. Cit. xi, 199
3. Ibid., X, 468
4. Ibid., 414
5. Ibid.
as his Cambridge days (1), and Dalrymple's Memoirs was almost certainly Thackeray's source-book for one of the incidents in Esmond (2). Yet another work to which Thackeray was indebted for his knowledge of the social and political affairs of the first decades of the 18th century was Spence's Anecdotes (3). The book records anecdotes and little known incidents from the lives of prominent 18th century characters, and Thackeray had found it useful for his lectures on The English Humourists (4).

In his presentation of the history of the times of Anne Thackeray's main interest was in what he called 'the great intrigue of the Queen's latter days' (5), which was aimed at the restoration of the Stuarts. Of course the arrival of the Pretender in England and the other details of the conspiracy as they are described by Thackeray are 'fabulous' (6). But the historical foundations of this conspiracy lie in Anne's dislike for the Hanoverian succession, the presence of a group of Jacobites in England and the strife among the Queen's ministers during the last days of her reign.

The state of the political parties at the accession of Anne and during the closing years of her reign are presented in some detail by Thackeray. The novel also contains allusions to Anne's liking for the Tories, her reliance during part of her reign on

1. Letters; i, 37
2. Infra. 65
4. Works, XI, 169, 183, 185 etc.
5. Ibid., 199
6. Letters, iii, 447
the Duchess of Marlborough and the belief of the people in her desire for the restoration of the Stuarts. As already suggested, Thackeray appears to have mainly drawn upon Smollett’s *History of England* in his presentation of these features. One of the passages in the novel, suggesting Thackeray’s indebtedness to Smollett’s *History of England*, contains an account of the state of the political parties at the beginning of Anne’s reign, and is as follows:

When the Princess Anne succeeded, the wearied nation was glad enough to cry a truce from all these wars, controversies, and conspiracies, and to accept in the person of a Princess of the blood royal a compromise between the parties into which the country was divided. The Tories could serve under her with easy consciences; though a Tory herself, she represented the triumph of the Whig opinion. The people of England, always liking that their Princes should be attached to their own families, were pleased to think their Princess was faithful to hers; and up to the very last day and hour of her reign, and but for that fatality which he inherited from his fathers along with their claims to the English crown, King James the Third might have worn it (1).

Smollett’s appraisal of the political situation following the accession of Anne is as follows:

William was succeeded as Sovereign of England by Anne Princess of Denmark, who ascended the throne in the thirty-eighth year of her age, to the general satisfaction of all parties. Even the Jacobites seemed pleased with her elevation, on the supposition, that as in all probability she would leave no heirs of her own body, the dictates of natural affection would induce her to alter the succession in favour of her own brother. She had been taught to cherish warm sentiments of the Tories, whom she considered as the friends of monarchy, and the true sons of the church...(2)

Burnet, Boyer and Wade, in writing about the accession of Anne, concern themselves with her various acts of Anne after

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1. *Works*, X, 207
2. *History of England*, 1, 445
becoming Queen of England and do not refer to the facts mentioned by Smollett and Thackeray in the above passages. Thackeray's account of the proclamation of Anne as Queen, on the other hand, bears a marked resemblance to Boyer's description of the event. The relevant passage in Annals of Anne's Reign is as follows:

In the Afternoon the Queen was proclaim'd before the Gate of St. James's, at Charing-Cross, Temple-Bar, and the Royal Exchange, with the usual solemnity, and to the loud repeated Acclamations of the People (1).

Thackeray's own description is as follows:

...the Princess Anne... was proclaimed by trumpeting heralds all over the town from Westminster to Ludgate Hill, amidst immense jubilation of the people (2).

Burnet and Wade are silent on the proclamation of the Queen, and Smollett makes the bare remark, 'the Queen was proclaimed' (3).

Thackeray's indebtedness to Smollett is also suggested by the references in Esmond to the influence exercised by the Duchess of Marlborough upon Queen Anne and the decline of this influence. Alluding to Anne's reliance on the Duchess, Isabella Esmond says:

'the Princess is but a puppet in the hands of that fury of a woman...' (4).

Although Smollett uses different words, the meaning that he conveys is in no way different:

...her conduct was wholly influenced by the Countess of Marlborough, a woman of an imperious temper...(5).

The same accord in meaning is seen in the accounts of the decline of the influence of the Duchess of Marlborough by Smollett and

1. i, 3
2. Works, X, 207
3. History of England, i, 446
4. Works, X, 207
and Thackeray. In *Esmond* there is the following description:

> ...his Duchess losing her hold on the Queen, who was transferring her royal affections to the famous Mrs. Masham (1).

And in Smollett's *History of England*:

> The Queen's private favour was now shifted to a new object. The Duchess of Marlborough was supplanted by Mrs. Masham (2).

> The ascendency of Mrs. Masham was one of the causes that hastened the fall of Marlborough. Once again Thackeray appears to follow Smollett, who makes an attempt to present a detailed analysis of the political situation towards the later half of Anne's reign. He has the following to say about Marlborough's downfall:

> Marlborough, who out a few months before had been so highly extolled and caressed by the representatives of the people, was now become the object of parliamentary hatred and censure, though no sensible alteration had happened in his conduct or success. That hero, who had retrieved the glory of the British arms, won so many battles, subdued such a number of towns and districts, humbled the pride and checked the ambition of France, secured the liberty of Europe, and, as it were, chained victory to his chariot wheels, was in a few weeks dwindled into an object of contempt and derision... Instances were everywhere repeated of his fraud, avarice, and extortion; his insolence, cruelty, ambition, and misconduct: even his courage was called in question; and this consummate General was represented as the lowest of mankind (3).

The same note of admiration for Marlborough's military successes is apparent in the following excerpt from *Esmond*:

> Think of the great Marlborough, the greatest subject in all the world, a conqueror of princes, that had marched victorious over Germany, Flanders, and France, that had given the law to sovereigns abroad, and been

worshipped as a divinity at home, forced to sneak out of England - his credit, honours, places, all taken from him; his friends in the army broke and ruined; and flying before Harley, as abject and powerless as a poor debtor before a bailiff with a writ (1).

As already suggested, the similarity between the two foregoing passages lies in their extolling of Marlborough's military prowess, something which is hardly present in the writings of Boyer, Burnet and Wade, and completely absent in Swift's works. Even in Coxe's *Memoirs of Marlborough* there are no passages bringing out the contrast between the glory of Marlborough and his downfall.

Referring to the total nature of Marlborough's downfall, Thackeray recounts the misfortunes of other members of his family and those closely associated with him. The incidents mentioned by Thackeray are Cadogan's dismissal from the post of Lieutenant of the Tower, the removal of Lord Bridgewater, Marlborough's son-in-law, from St. James's Palace, and the resignation of the Duke's two daughters from the offices of Ladies of the Bedchamber (2). Some or all of these incidents are generally mentioned by all the historians writing about the age. Thackeray merely records these facts, and he could have gone for his knowledge of them to any of the historians or to Swift's *Journal to Stella*, where these incidents related to the disgrace of Marlborough, are related in a tone of jubilation (3).

The final episode in Thackeray's account of Marlborough's downfall is his flight from England. One of the reasons which, according to Thackeray, forced Marlborough to leave the country

1. *Works*, X, 467-468
was Harley's possession of a letter proving Marlborough's association with the Stuarts. Apart from the passage quoted above, there are two allusions in Esmond to the forced flight of Marlborough from England. The first of these is in the following remark of Bolingbroke's to Henry:

We have that which will force Marlborough to keep his distance, and he goes out of London in a fortnight (1).

and, again:

A paper, of which Harley got possession, and showing beyond doubt that the Duke was engaged with the Stuart family, was the weapon with which the Treasurer drove Marlborough out of the Kingdom (2).

The incident shows Thackeray's indebtedness to Dalrymple's Memoirs where the existence of such a letter is recorded. The relevant passage is as follows:

And, in King James's Memoirs, I have seen a memorandum in his own handwriting, that Lord Churchill had, on the 4th of May, given him information of the design upon Brest. I was told by Principal Gordon, of the Scots College at Paris, that, during the hostilities between the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Oxford, who had got intelligence of the Duke's letter, and pretended, at that time, to be in the interests of the exiled family, applied for, and got an order for the original; and that his making the Duke know that his life was in his hands, was the cause of the Duke's going into a voluntary exile to Brussels in the year 1712...

It is known too from the history of the times, that there was a private meeting between the Duke and Lord Oxford, at Mr. Thomas Harley's house, to which the Duke came by a back-door, immediately after which he left England (3).

Harley and Bolingbroke reached a parting of the ways during the last year of Anne's reign. This created a rift among the

2. Ibid., 468
3. iii, part iii, 62
Tories and had also the effect of impairing Anne's health. Thackeray gives a somewhat detailed description of the political controversies of this period, in the following passage:

The quarrels of her Ministers before her face at the Council board, the pricks of conscience very likely, the importunities of her Ministers, and constant turmoil and agitation round about her, had weakened and irritated the Princess extremely; her strength was giving way under these continual trials of her temper, and from day to day it was expected she must come to a speedy end of them (1).

Smollett's account of the last days of Anne hears a marked resemblance to Thackeray's description. Indeed, there can be little room for doubt regarding Thackeray's indebtedness to the following excerpt from Smollett's History of England:

Her Majesty's constitution was now quite broken: one fit of sickness succeeded another; what completed the ruin of her health was the anxiety of her mind occasioned partly by the discontents which had been raised and fomented by the dissensions among her ministers, which were now become intolerable. The council-chamber was turned into a scene of obstinate dispute - and bitter altercation. Even in the Queen's presence the Treasurer and Secretary did not abstain from mutual obloquy and reproach (2).

In establishing Thackeray's use of this passage, it may also be remembered that neither Boyer nor Burnet write about the concluding period of Anne's reign.

During the last months of Anne's life, the Jacobites were not very reticent in expressing their desire for the accession of the Old Pretender to the English throne. But, as already pointed out, the historians writing about the age do not record the existence of an actual plot for bringing him over to England in 1714.

1. Works, X, 470
2. ii, 286.
The only allusion to a definite plot in 1714 is contained in Spence's *Anecdotes* in the following passage:

Several great vraigs were for bringing in the Pretender about the year 1714. The Duke of Marlborough was to advance thirty thousand pounds for that expedition; and my uncle, Robin Arbuthnot, actually returned ten thousand pounds of it for him (1). Thackeray describes how, in order to put his scheme for the accession of James III into practice, Henry first goes to Brussels to enlist the services of Frank Castlewood. Henry then pays a visit to Lorraine, where James III was in exile, and acquaints him with the preparations made for his coming to England in disguise (2). These circumstances of Henry's plot indicate Thackeray's indebtedness to *The Peerage of England*. Collins records a journey on a similar errand taken in 1659 by Francis, Viscount of Shannon, who had already provided Thackeray with a name and title for the first Viscount Castlewood. The purpose of this journey was the restoration of Charles II, and Collins describes it in the following words:

He adhered to the Royal interest; and in 1659, when his brother, the Lord Broghill, had made a party for the restoration of King Charles II and had secured all muster, he dispatched his brother Francis to the King, then at Brussels, to invite him to land at Cork, with assurance of his being received there; and that he had got all the army of the South, as Sir Charles Coote had that of the North, in readiness to declare for his Majesty. He embarked in Cork haven for Flanders; and, on his arrival at Brussels presented his letters of invitation to the King, who received him with great joy, and gave immediate directions to prepare for

1. 314
2. *Works*, x, 441-45
his transportation; and four days after, just as his Majesty was taking horse in disguise for Calais, in order to his going to Ireland, Monk's message for his coming to England put a stop to his journey to Calais; and soon after came on the restoration of the King (1).

Another incident connected with Henry's plot is the meeting between Anne and the Old Pretender. The meeting which has no historical foundation, takes place in the garden of the Royal Palace. The following passages describe the arrangements made for bringing about a meeting between Anne and the Old Pretender, who is disguised as Viscount Castlewood:

a) The simple and easy plan proposed by Colonel Esmond had been agreed to by all parties, which was that on some rather private day, when there were not many persons about the Court, the Prince should appear there as my Lord Castlewood, should be greeted by his sister-in-waiting, and led by that other lady into the closet of the Queen (2).

b) "In half an hour", says he, "Her Majesty and her favourite lady will take the air in the Cedar walk behind the new Banqueting-house. Her Majesty will be drawn in a garden chair, Madame Beatrix Esmond and her brother, my Lord Viscount Castlewood, will be walking in the private garden (here is Lady Masham's key), and will come unawares upon the Royal party (3).

And finally, the following extract is from Beatrix's account of the meeting between the Old Pretender and Queen Anne:

Her Majesty was in her chair in the Cedar-walk, accompanied only by Lady _____, when we entered by the private wicket from the west side of the garden, and turned towards her...(4)

All these passages indicate Thackeray's reading in The Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough (5), a book which presents the Duchess's

1. The Peerage of England, V, 267
2. Works, X, 471.
3. Ibid., 472
4. Ibid., 473
version of the conflict between herself and Mrs. Masham. The passage which Thackeray appears to have drawn upon in this instance is as follows:

Through the whole summer after Mr. Harley's dismissal, the Queen continued to have secret correspondence with him. And that this might be the better managed, she staid all the sultry season, even when the Prince was panting for breath, in that small house, she had formerly purchased at Windsor, which, though as hot as an oven, was then said to be cool, because from the park such persons, as Mrs. Masham had a mind to bring to her Majesty, would be let in privately by the garden.

And when upon the death of the Prince, one would have thought that her Majesty's real grief would have made her avoid every place and every object that might sensibly revive the remembrance of her loss, she chose for her place of retirement his closet, and for some weeks, spent many hours in it every day...But the true reason of her Majesty's choosing this closet to sit in, was, that the back-stairs belonging to it came from Mrs. Masham's lodgings, who by that means could secretly bring to her whom she pleased (1).

The description of the plan for the meeting in the Royal garden which the Pretender is to enter by using Mrs. Masham's key, and the reference to the Pretender's being 'led by that other lady into the closet of the Queen', place Thackeray's indebtedness to the foregoing passage from The Conduct of the Duchess beyond doubt. Thackeray also makes use of this passage when in describing the character of Bolingbroke he points out that St. John, to achieve his ends, could 'fawn upon the Court favourite, and creep up the backstair as silently as Oxford...(2)

1. 222-23
2. Works, X, 468-9
b) The Campaigns of Marlborough and other events of a military character.

The campaigns of Marlborough which form the historical background to Henry's exploits as a soldier in Europe are presented with a much greater historical accuracy and in greater detail than are the political events of Anne's reign. Thackeray himself once wrote that he had 'chapter and verse for every action and movement of the army' which he narrated (1). But Thackeray's closer adherence to truth in presenting the details of Marlborough's campaigns need not be taken as an indication of his greater interest in them. Thackeray was primarily interested in the social life in England during Anne's reign, and in the personal lives of the Esmonds. It is because of the demands of his story that he had to take liberties with some of the historical events in England, and the little effort made by him either to change or to improve upon the various accounts of the battles in Europe available to him suggest that, broadly speaking, Henry's exploits in Europe are in the nature of an interlude. The really important events in his career take place in England. One result of Thackeray's manner of presentation of the campaigns is the greater certainty with which the sources of information upon which Thackeray actually drew, can be established.

The letter of Thackeray's from which the excerpt in the preceding chapter is taken is the only instance of Thackeray's citing some of his authorities for Esmond. The relevant portion

1. Letters, iii, 447.
of the letter is as follows:

When I was writing "Esmond", I read the Marlborough despatches very carefully - a great deal more carefully than Alison, who blunders in numerous details - Berwick's and Colbert's memoirs, and the remarkable French Collections relative to the War of the Succession, printed in Louis Phillipe's reign...

Of course you have read in Swift's Journal to Stella what there is about the General, and know the accounts of him in the Elderly Biographical Dictionaries. Some writer abused me for my inaccuracy about Webb's regiment of Fusiliers, but I took it out of "Chamberlayne"...(l).

These books mentioned by Thackeray constitute part of his sources of information for the campaigns of Marlborough, and their full titles are as follows:

e) Jonathan Swift: Journal to Stella

The first two books noted above contain detailed accounts of the battles in Europe, as the title of the first book suggests. It is composed of letters of Marlborough written from Europe and official dispatches from the English camps. Marlborough's own account of the various military engagements is subdued and without any trace of boasting or exaggeration. Alison's is a much later work, based upon the despatches and other sources. Alison writes of the European campaigns in his own style and language, and presents a kind of summary of the events. He does not usually mention his sources and, as Thackeray points out in his letter, either commits errors or omits important details.

1. Letters, iii, 446-447.
The second and the third books noted above were written by persons who were the opponents of Marlborough in Europe. Actually the battles in Europe occupy a small section of their memoirs, and they say nothing of Marlborough's march through Holland which is described in such detail in *Esmond*.

Swift hardly speaks of Marlborough's campaigns in *Journal to Stella*. The *Journal* in fact contains references to Marlborough's disgrace and downfall in England, and these have been examined elsewhere in this thesis (1). The only instance of Thackeray's borrowing from Chamberlayne's work is that already recorded in Thackeray's letter. It may be mentioned here that Thackeray is correct in his statement, as according to Chamberlayne, General Webb was in the regiment of Fusiliers (2).

But, as already suggested, the books mentioned in the above letter form only part of Thackeray's readings for his presentation of the campaigns of Marlborough. Thackeray had read William Coxe's *Memoirs of Marlborough* (3), a voluminous work which also contains a detailed account of the war in Europe. Yet another work which contains an account of the campaigns which Thackeray appears to have read is *The Memoirs of Prince Eugene* (4). The text of *Esmond* contains some traces of Thackeray's drawing upon this book. Apart from these works, Wade, Burnet and Smollett also write about the exploits of Marlborough in Europe. Wade's book of course, because of the brief space granted to the different

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1. Supra, 64
2. *Magna Britanniae Notitia*, 555
reigns, does not deal at any length with the campaigns, and Smollett, although referring to the battles, concerns himself mainly with events at home. Boyer, on the other hand, gives one of the most detailed accounts of the European war available to Thackeray. Yet another work which Thackeray appears to have consulted in connection with his portrayal of Marlborough's campaigns was The London Gazette. The Gazette is mentioned several times in Esmond, and an issue of it, containing an account of the battle of Wynendael figures in a scene in the novel depicting the conflict between Marlborough and General Webb (1). The following note which Thackeray wrote to his secretary Eyre Crowe contains undeniable evidence of his indebtedness to The Gazette:

*Find out*

Names of 6 or 8 English and Imperial Officers present at the Siege of Lille.
The date of the first (the wrong) account of the battle of Wynendale in the London Gazette 1708.
The date of the Gazette containing the acct. of Oudenarde (2).

All the works mentioned above had their contributions to make towards Thackeray's knowledge of the wars in Europe in Anne's regin. But Thackeray's account of the campaigns bears a closer resemblance to those contained in Boyer's Annals and The London Gazette than to those in the other works he had read. An examination of the text of Esmond indicates that Thackeray was more indebted to The Annals of Anne's reign than to The London Gazette. Apart from these two main source books Thackeray drew upon the other mentioned works for some of the incidents connected with the campaigns.

1. Ibid., 321-324
2. Letters, iii, 18
The march of Marlborough across Holland in 1704, and the battles of Blenheim, Ramillies and Wynendael are described in greater detail by Thackeray than the other events of Marlborough's campaigns. The following passage in the novel records the different stages in the march of the Allies, under the command of Marlborough, through Holland:

His Grace the Captain-General went to England after Bonn, and our army fell back into Holland, where, in April 1704, his Grace again found the troops, embarking from Harwich and landing at Maesland Sluys; thence his Grace came immediately to the Hague, where he received the foreign ministers, general officers, and other people of quality. The greatest honours were paid to his Grace everywhere — at the Hague, Utrecht, Hurdemonde, and Maestricht; the civil authorities coming to meet his coaches, salvoes of cannon saluting him, canopies of state being erected for him where he stopped, and feasts prepared for the numerous gentlemen following in his suite. His Grace reviewed the troops of the States-General between Liege and Maestricht, and afterwards the English forces, under the command of General Churchill, near Bois-le-Duc...

Towards the end of May, the army reached Coblentz; and next day, his Grace, and the Generals accompanying him, went to visit the Elector of Tréves at his Castle of Ehrenbreitstein, the horse and dragoons passing the Rhine whilst the Duke was entertained at a grand feast by the Elector...

The foot and artillery, following after the horse as quick as possible, crossed the Rhine under Ehrenbreitstein, and so to Castel, over against Mayntz, in which city his Grace, his generals, and his retinue were received at the landing-place by the Elector's coaches, carried to his Highness's palace amidst the thunder of cannon, and then once more magnificently entertained. Gidlingen, in Bavaria, was appointed as the general rendezvous of the army, and thither, by different routes, the whole forces of English, Dutch, Danes and German auxiliaries took their way. The foot and artillery under General Churchill passed the Neckar, at Heidelberg(1)... The march across Holland is covered in The London Gazette in the following despatches from Europe:

a) Hague, April 22. N. S.

His Grace the Duke of Marlborough embarked at Harwich the 19th instant, with General Churchill, Lieutenant General Lumley, the Earl of Orkney, and other General Officers.... His Grace the Duke of Marlborough landed yesterday about noon at Meeeland-Sluys, and came hither in the evening: Since which he has received the Compliments of the Foreign Ministers, General Officers, and other Persons of Quality here, upon his safe Arrival (1).

b) From the Duke of Marlborough's Camp at Cassell, May 30

On the 26th instant his Grace the Duke of Marlborough went to view the Elector of Treves's Castle at Ehrenbreitstein, while the Horse and Dragoons were passing over the Rhine, His Grace dined with the Elector, and in the afternoon marched to Praubach, where he received a Visit the 27th from the Landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt. His Grace encamped that night at Nastetten, the 28th at Schwalbach; the 29th we marched from thence to this place, over against Mayence. The Duke of Marlborough, upon his Arrival here, went to visit the Elector of Mayence, with whom he dined, and after Dinner a Conference was held with the Generals about our further Motions. Tomorrow we shall pass the Main, and proceed with all Diligence towards the Neckar, so as to pass that River the 3rd of the next Month at Ladenburgh. The Foot marched the 27th from Coblentz to Braubach, and the next day to Nastetten, and have Orders to follow us as close as is consistent with the March of the Artillery and Baggage(2).

c) From the Duke of Marlborough's Camp at Cassell May 30.

Yesterday we continued our March from Schwalbach to this Place, being a Village on the Rhine over-against Mayence. The Duke of Marlborough, upon his Arrival here, went to make a Visit to the Elector of Mayence, and found at the Landing-place on the other side of the River several of the Elector's Coaches, which attended to carry his Grace and his Retinue to the Palace. In the meantime he was saluted by a Discharge of the Cannon round the City. His Grace Dined with the Elector; after which a Conference was held between the Generals

1. The London Gazette, No. 4010, from Tuesday April 13 to Monday April 17, 1704.
2. The London Gazette, No. 4023, from Monday May 29 to Thursday June 1, 1704.
about our further motions. This morning his Grace, attended by the Principal Officers of the Army, visited the Fortifications of Mayence, and was again saluted with a Discharge of the cannon. His Grace Dined again this day with the Elector, who intended to come over the River to view the Troops, but was prevented by the badness of the Weather. Tomorrow we shall pass the Main, and proceed with all Diligence towards the Neckar, so as to pass that River the 3rd of next month at Ladenbourg. (1)

d) From the Camp at Ladenbourg, June 4

Yesterday the Duke of Marlborough continued his march from Weinheim to this place, where his Grace, with the Generals, have taken their Quarters. The Troops passed the Neckar over a Bridge of Boats, and encamped on the river side, over against the Town. His Grace intends we shall halt here till the 7th instant, in order to join the Auxiliary Troops that are to serve under his Command, with whom, and the English Horse, his Grace designs to proceed to the Danube(2).

These despatches in the Gazette contain many more details than Thackeray has mentioned in the novel. At the same time, the resemblance between Thackeray's account and that contained in the Gazette is undeniable, and the following excerpts from the above quoted passages may be used to bring out this resemblance:

**Esmond**

1) Foreign ministers, general officers, and other people of quality

2) went to visit the Elector of Treves at his Castle of Ehrenbreitstein, the horse and dragoons passing the Rhine whilst the Duke was entertained at a grand feast by the Elector...

**The London Gazette**

1) Foreign Ministers, General Officers and other persons of Quality

2) went to view the Elector of Treves Castle at Ehrenbreitstein, while the Horse and Dragoons were passing over the Rhine, His Grace dined with the Elector...

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1. The London Gazette No. 4024, from Thursday June 1 to Monday June 5, 1704.

2. The London Gazette No. 4025, from Monday June 5 to Thursday June 8, 1704.
Esmond

iii). his Grace, his Generals and his retinue were received at the landing-place by the Elector's coaches, carried to his Highness's palace.

The London Gazette

iii). found at the Landing-place several of the Elector's Coaches, which attended to carry his Grace and his Retinue to the Palace.

This comparison only throws into relief the similarity that runs through the whole account in The Gazette and Esmond, of Marlborough's march through Holland. But apart from this similarity, there is an additional reason suggesting Thackeray's indebtedness to the last three excerpts from The Gazette quoted above. In the volume of The London Gazette belonging to The British Museum, these three despatches are marked on the margin with a thin line of fading, rusty ink (1). Keeping in view their remarkable similarity to the relation of the same events in Esmond, and Thackeray's habit of marking and sketching on books, it can be assumed with some justification that these marks were made by the novelist himself.

Boyer's account of Marlborough's march is as detailed as that given in The London Gazette. The following passages from The Annals of Anne's Reign emphasise the fact that Boyer follows The London Gazette in all essential details:

i) his Grace embark'd at Harwich towards the middle of April with General Churchill, his Brother, Lieutenant-General Lumley, the Earl of Orkney, and other General Officers; and two days after safely landed at Maesland-Sluys, and the same Evening came to the Hague; where he receiv'd the compliments of the Foreign Ministers, General Officers,

1. Appendix, P.xvii, xviii
and other Persons of Distinction upon his happy Arrival (1).

ii) The Duke of Marlborough...advanc'd on the 25th of May to
the Camp of Newdorf near Coblentz...The 26th whilst the
Horse and Dragoons were passing over the Rhine, his Grace
went to visit the Elector of Triers at his Castle of
Ehrenheits, where he was saluted with a Triple Discharge
of the Cannon round the Place, and having dined with the
Elector, in the Afternoon, march'd with his Forces...(2)

iii) The 29th of May the Duke continued his March from Swalbach
to Cassel, being a village on the Rhine, over against Mayence;
and immediately upon his Arrival went to make a Visit to the
Elector of that City, and found at the Landing Place, on the
other side of the River, several of the Elector's Coaches,
which attended to carry his Grace and his Retinue to the
Palace. In the meantime, he was saluted by a Discharge of
the Cannon round the City. His Grace and his Retinue were
magnificently entertain'd at Dinner by the Elector, after
which a Conference was held between the Generals about the
further Motions of the Confederate Armies in Germany (3).

The statements from Esmond and The London Gazette compared above
are present in the preceding passages from Annals of Anne's Reign
in almost the same form:

i) ..Foreign Ministers, General Officers, and other Persons of
Distinction...
ii) whilst the Horse and Dragoons were passing over the Rhine, his Grace went to visit the Elector of Trier at his Castle of Ehrenbeitstein...

iii) found at the Landing Place... several of the Elector's Coaches, which attended to carry his Grace and his Retinue to the Palace.

The second of the preceding excerpts brings out Thackeray's greater indebtedness to Boyer's Annals. It can be noticed that both Thackeray and Boyer use the words 'whilst' and 'visit', whereas in The London Gazette the equivalent words are 'while' and 'view'.

A further indication of Thackeray's drawing upon Annals of Anne's Reign is contained in his description of the first meeting between the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy. The relevant passage from the novel is as follows:

...our troops were drawn up in battalia before the Prince, who was pleased to express his admiration of this noble English army(1).

In The London Gazette the incident is described in the following words:

In the morning, the Troops being drawn out in order of Battel, his Grace accompanied Prince Eugene to the Review of them, who was surprized to find them in so good Condition...(2)

1. Works, X, 258
And in Annals of Anne's Reign:

... his Grace ordering his Army to be drawn up in Battalia before the Prince, his Highness express'd his surprize to find them in so good Condition... (1).

It can be noticed that both Thackeray and Boyer speak of the troops being 'drawn up in batallia' whereas in The London Gazette the reference is to the troops 'being drawn out in order of the Battel'. At other places in the novel too, there are traces which indicate Thackeray's greater indebtedness to Boyer. One such passage in Esmond contains a reference to Schellenberg and Donawert and is compared below with Boyer's account of the same occurrence:

**Esmond**

The Elector, judging that Donauwart would be the point of his Grace's attack, sent a strong detachment of his best troops to Count Darcos, who was posted at Schellenberg, near that place, where great entrenchments were thrown up, and thousands of pioneers employed to strengthen the position (2).

**Annals of Anne's Reign**

The E. of Bavaria judging rightly from this March, that the Prince and Duke intended to attack Donawert, sent a considerable Detachment of his best Troops to Reinforce Count d'Arco, who was posted at Schellenberg, a rising Ground near that Place where he had already cast up great Intrenchments, and employ'd some Thousands of Pioneers for several Days, to perfect those Works which cover Donawert (3).

These excerpts have a much closer resemblance to each other than either of them has to the account of the incident as it appeared in The London Gazette. The following report from the Gazette of July 6, 1704, although similar to the passages quoted above, differs from them in some important details:

1. iii, 56
2. Works, x, 258-59
3. iii,
... the Duke of Marlborough receiv'd Advice, That the Elector of Bavaria had sent a considerable part of his Troops to reinforce a Detachment he had on the Schelenberg, near Donawort, a post of great Consequence to the Enemy, as being on a rising Ground, and commanding the Town for which reason they had been for several days raising works there, the better to strengthen it by Intrenchments...(1)

It will be noted that the report does not mention Count Darcos's name neither does it allude to the 'thousands of pioneers' that were employed at Schellenberg. But Thackeray's use of the word 'strengthen' in the above passage suggests that he had read this report, although this cannot in itself be taken as conclusive proof of his having done so.

Esmond also contains a description of the battle fought at Donauvort which was won by Marlborough, and in which a large number of French soldiers and officers perished in their attempt to save themselves by swimming across the Danube. These facts and also the attempt of the French soldiers to set fire to the city before their flight are mentioned by Thackeray. Once again Thackeray closely follows the relation of Boyer and that contained in The London Gazette. But in order to finally establish Thackeray's greater indebtedness to these works, it is necessary to examine the account of all these events as it is given in the other source books of Thackeray for the campaigns of Marlborough. Such an examination proves that although they may have their contribution to make in Thackeray's knowledge of the campaigns, he did not directly draw upon them (2).

2. The relevant passages from the other source books are given in the appendix, pp. vi-viii.
In his description of the battle of Blenheim in 1704 and of the later campaigns of Marlborough, Thackeray does not give as many details. Nevertheless, the facts given by Thackeray, with two exceptions, are all to be found in Boyer's Annals or The London Gazette, and the impression persists that throughout his relation of the campaigns these two were the works on which Thackeray mainly drew.

Some of the incidents, of course, such as the encounter between General Webb and the Duke of Marlborough, are the products of Thackeray's imagination (1). But for his narration of the battle of Wynendael, which was the cause of the supposed dissension between General Webb and Marlborough, Thackeray appears to have drawn upon the former's account of it. The erroneous reports of the battle of Wynendael, which gave the credit of the victory to General Cadogan appeared in the London Gazette of Sept. 20, 1708 and Sept. 23, 1708 (2), and a correct account was published in The Gazette of Oct. 3, 1708 (3) although Webb's own detailed account appeared in The Gazette of October 11, 1708 (4). The following passage from Esmond conclusively indicates Thackeray's drawing upon Webb's account:

1. There is no evidence to support Thackeray's opinion that the wrong report of the battle of Wynendael was deliberately printed to lower General Webb's prestige. On the contrary, following the battle of Wynendael, Marlborough wrote to Lord Godolphin asking that Webb be promoted for his part in the said battle. Coxe: Memoirs of Marlborough, pp. ii, 555-56.

2. No. 4472 and No. 4473.
3. No. 4475.
4. No. 4478.
...our little body of horse being brought forward to the opening of the plain, as our General said, to amuse the enemy (1)

The phrase 'to amuse the enemy' is actually used by Webb in his description of the battle. It can, however, be noted in this connection that Webb's account was published not only in The London Gazette but also in Annals of Anne's Reign (2).

As already pointed out, for his presentation of two of the episodes in Marlborough's campaigns Thackeray drew upon other works. The first of these episodes is connected with the siege of Lille, and is described by Thackeray in the following words:

The Duke's great army lying at Helchin, and covering the siege, and it being necessary for M. de Vendosme to get news of the condition of the place, Captain du Bois performed his famous exploit: not only passing through the lines of the siege, but swimming afterwards no less than seven moats and ditches: and coming back the same way, swimming with his letters in his mouth.

By these letters Monsieur de Boufflers said that he could undertake to hold the place till October; and that if one of the convoys of the Allies could be intercepted, they must raise the siege altogether (3)

For this passage, Thackeray's source book was The Memoirs of Prince Eugene (4) where the incident is described in the following manner:

... a captain, named dubois, eluded me, and swam with a note from Boufflers to the Duke of Burgundy, informing him, that though the trenches had been open forty days, I was not yet completely master of any of the works. "Nevertheless, Monseigneur," added he, "I cannot hold out beyond the 15th or 20th of October." (5)

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1. Works, X, 318
2. vii, 124
3. Works, X, 317
5. 76.
The other works from which Thackeray appears to have acquired his information regarding the campaigns do not record the above exploit. The other episode for which Thackeray definitely went outside *Annals of Anne's Reign* and *The Gazette*, is Marlborough's congratulating Gen. Webb on his victory at Wynendael. The letter of congratulation as presented in *Esmond*, is as follows:

"SIR - Mr. Cadogan is just now come in, and has acquainted me with the success of the action you had yesterday in the afternoon against the body of troops commanded by M. de la Motte, at Wynendael, which must be attributed chiefly to your good conduct and resolution. You may be sure I shall do you justice at home, and be glad on all occasions to own the service you have done in securing this convoy. -

Yours, &c., M." (1)

The actual letter is contained in *The Letter and Despatches of Marlborough*, and is as follows:

Camp at Roncq, 29th September, 1708

Sir,

Mr. Cadogan is just now arrived, and has acquainted me with the success of the action you had yesterday in the afternoon against the body of troops commanded by M. de la Motte at Wynendael, which must be attributed chiefly to your good conduct and resolution. You may assure yourself I shall do you justice at home, and be glad on all occasions to own the service you have done in securing this convoy, upon which the success of our siege so much depends (2).

The only noticeable liberty that Thackeray takes with Marlborough's letter is in omitting the last few words referring to the effect of the victory of Wynendael upon the siege of Lille. There is little doubt that this omission was directed by Thackeray's desire to present Marlborough's character in a particular light.

2. iv, 242-3
Apart from Marlborough's campaigns, the expedition in 1702 to Cadiz and Vigo Bay is the only event of a military character described in detail in Henry Esmond. Some description of the event is given in all the books of history dealing with the age. But among Thackeray's established or suggested source-books, Boyer's Annals of Anne's Reign contains the most comprehensive account of the expedition. One of the incidents in the expedition described in the following passage in Esmond, is not mentioned by Smollett, Wade, Burnet and in The London Gazette:

...the Captain-General of Andalusia would no more listen to us than the Governor of Cadiz; and in reply to his Grace's proclamation, the Marquis of Villadarias fired off another..."That he and his council had the generous example of their ancestors to follow, who had never yet sought their elevation in the blood or in the flight of their kings..." (1)

In Boyer's Annals the incident is described in the following manner:

...the Duke of Ormond sent a Letter to the Governor of Port St. Mary's; who return'd a rude and unbecoming Answer, in a Paper unseal'd, and no Name subscrib'd, ...We Spaniards neither change our Religion nor King (2)

Another indication of Thackeray's reliance on The Annals of Anne's Reign is to be found in his description of the plunder of the Port of St. Mary. The relevant passage in Esmond is as follows:

...our people seized upon Port St. Mary's and sacked it, burning down the merchant's storehouses, getting drunk with the famous wines there, pillaging and robbing quiet houses and convents, murdering and doing worse (3).

Boyer gives the following account of the outrage:

...nor was it long before they found out Cellers plentifully stored with rich and strong Wines where they quassed and carrouz'd all the first Night.

1. Works, X, 219
2. i, 85
The next day, their licentiousness being heightened by the fumes of their liquor, the proceeded to rifle and pillage the houses in a most outrageous manner....(1).

Both Boyer and Thackeray suggest that one of the reasons for the outrageous behaviour of the soldiers was being drunk on the wives they found in the houses in St. Mary. In establishing a connection between the two foregoing excerpts it may also be mentioned that Smollett and Burnet, while referring to the plunder of St. Mary, do not describe it. They do not say anything about the soldiers getting drunk. The account of the incident in The London Gazette, on the other hand, makes an apology for the soldiers engaged in plunder:

...at Port St. Mary's, the soldiers finding that place wholly abandoned by the inhabitants, whom the Governor-General of Andalusia forced away on pain of death, leaving their houses furnished and their cellars full of wine, they could not be kept altogether in the same Order there as they had been before in other places....(2)

The above passage does not describe the atrocities committed by the soldiers in St. Mary.

In summing up it can be stated that in his account of the expedition Thackeray gives more details than are found in the works of Smollett, Burnet and Wade, or even in The London Gazette which does not describe the actual fight in Vigo Bay. Boyer's account, on the other hand, contains more facts than are mentioned in Esmond, and a perusal of the text of the novel suggests Thackeray's indebtedness to Annals of Anne's Reign. (3).

1. Annals of Anne's Reign, i, 87-88
2. Dtd. September 21-24, 1702
3.
c) Other Contemporary Events.

In Henry Esmond there are two major contemporary events not related to the political transactions of the age. These are the duels in which Francis Esmond, the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun are killed. For the first of these duels, which proves fatal to Francis Esmond, Thackeray's only source-book appears to have been Howell's State Trials. Of course, since Francis Esmond is Thackeray's own creation, he had to alter some of the facts of the duel in Esmond. But in his lecture on Steele Thackeray gives a detailed account of the actual duel and cites Howell's State Trials as his authority (1).

The passage in Howell's State Trials upon which Thackeray actually drew are from the reports of the trials of the Earl of Warwick and Lord Mohun for the murder of Richard Coote (2). In Esmond Thackeray closely follows the incidents in the actual duel and it could be said that the most important change that he makes in his account is the substitution of Richard Coote, whose place is taken by Francis. Even some insignificant and casually mentioned details in the reports of the trials are incorporated by Thackeray in his relation of the duel in the novel. The meeting at Lockits' in a private room, the quarrel at the public bar, the calling of several chairs, the journey through a dark night to Leuister Fields - the scene of the duel, and the carrying of the wounded man to Mr. Aimes, the surgeon's house, are all incidents that actually took place, and are mentioned in Esmond (3).

1. Works, XI, 202-204
2. XIII, 939 et. seq
Some idea of Thackeray's faithful adherence to the original account may be had from his description of unimportant details like 'chairmen...smoking their pipes, and leaning over the railings of the field', and his reference to Colonel Westbury asking the chairmen, at the end of the duel, to 'come into the field' (1). These facts are part of the deposition of Thomas Browne, one of the chairmen engaged by the duellists:

...I took my box and my pipe, and filled my pipe, and took the lanthorn and lighted it, and by that time I had lighted my pipe, I heard a calling out, Chair, chair, again... and so we came up to the upper end of the fields, and they called us to bring the chairs over the rails...(2).

Indeed, the Francis - Mohun duel represents the most effective interweaving of truth and fiction in the whole of the novel; Thackeray neither taking too much liberty with the characters, and the incidents of the participants nor presenting a lifeless chronology of actual events.

For his account of the Mohun-Hamilton duel Thackeray was mainly indebted to Swift. The accounts of the duels upon which Thackeray appears to have drawn are those in The Journal to Stella, certain articles in the Post Boy written by Swift and also perhaps in The Last Years of Anne's Reign. At the same time it may be noted that the duel created a great deal of stir. A number of Pamphlets were published giving different versions of it. It can be safely assumed that Thackeray was acquainted with most of these pamphlets (3), and there is a sentence in Esmond which reads curiously like the title of one of these papers:- "...the full,

1. Ibid., 172
2. State Trials, Xiii, 968.
3. The British Museum has a good collection of these pamphlets and Thackeray's reading in one of them is suggested elsewhere in this thesis.
true, and horrible account of the death of Lord Mohun and Duke Hamilton in a duel" (1).

Thackeray's indebtedness to Swift is first of all indicated by the fact that it is Swift who introduces the news of the duel and its fatal results (2). But inspite of his reliance on Swift's accounts Thackeray need not have gone beyond Howell's State Trials for his description of the event in Esmond. The relevant excerpts from The Journal to Stella and the account of the duel in the Post Boy of Nov. 13 and Nov. 20 1712, are all given in Howell's State Trials, at the beginning of the report of the trial of the murders of William Mountford, the comedian (3). Thackeray had a close acquaintance with this account of this trial (4).

In his Journal to Stella, Swift refers to Mohun as 'dog' (5), and the word is used by Swift in Esmond in referring to Macartney, who is suggested both in The Journal and Esmond to have stabbed Hamilton (6). The following passage in the novel also indicates Thackeray's indebtedness to The Journal:

...the street-criers were already out with their broadsides, shouting through the town...A fellow had got to Kensington and was crying it in the Square there at very early morning, when Mr. Esmond happened to pass by. He drove the man from under Beatrix's very window, whereof the casement had been set open (7).

The account has its source in the following passage from The Journal to Stella, relating to the Duchess of Hamilton:

1. Works, X, 428
2. Ibid., 420
3. Xii, 949
4. Works, XI, 202-4
5. Works, X, 421
6. Ibid. Swift: Works, i, 255
7. Works, X, 428
The lodging was inconvenient, and they would have removed her to another; but I would not suffer it, because it had no room backward, and she must have been tortured with the noise of the Grub-street screamers mentioning her husband's murder in her ears (1).

In suggesting a political background to the death of Hamilton also, Thackeray follows Swift. The relevant passage from the novel is as follows:

That party to which Lord Mohun belonged had the benefit of his service, and now were well rid of such a ruffian. He, and Meredith, and Macartney, were the Duke of Marlborough's men; and the two Colonels had been broke but the year before for drinking perdition to the Tories. His Grace was a Whig now and a Hanoverian, and as eager for war as Prince Eugene himself. I say not that he was privy to Duke Hamilton's death: I say that his party profited by it; and that three desperate and bloody instruments were found to effect that murder (2).

In the following excerpt from the Post Boy of Nov. 20, 1712, there is the suggestion of the existence of a political element in Duke Hamilton's killing:

It is to be remembered, that the Lord Mohun was the person who gave the affront, which the duke, observing him to be in drink, disdained to regard. But the faction, weary of him, resolved to employ him in some real service to their cause, and valued not what became of him, provided he did their drudgery....(3).

The incident about 'drinking perdition to the Tories' is from the following excerpt from The Journal:

...Mereoyth, Macartney, and colonel Honeywood, are obliged to sell their commands at half value, and leave the army, for drinking destruction to the present ministry....(3).

1. Swift: Works, i, 255
3. Swift: Works, i, 159
Almost all the major fictitious characters in Henry Esmond are members of the Castlewood family and one of the reasons for the book's success as a domestic novel is that these characters are really very similar to those in Thackeray's novels set in the nineteenth century. This is particularly true of Henry himself, who, as has been pointed out earlier, was once described by Thackeray as resembling himself. Henry lacks the buoyant vitality and freedom from inhibitions that were so much a characteristic of the heroes of Fielding. Henry also looks upon other characters in his world, especially Steele, Frank Castlewood and Tom Tusher, with a touch of moral superiority that is Victorian in essence. Francis and Frank Castlewood, on the other hand, are boisterous by comparison. They are nearer to the popular idea of an eighteenth-century nobleman given to drink and gambling. But the important aspect of their character consists of a central moral weakness illustrated by their failure to relinquish Henry's title, which, in the first instance, they adopt under the mistaken belief that they are its rightful inheritors. They are, at bottom, typically Thackerayian characters, - willing to do good but not strong enough to make sacrifices. Lady Castlewood's resemblance to Thackeray's nineteenth century heroines has already been touched upon. Beatrix's portrait is an effort of genius and notwithstanding a certain likeness to Becky Sharp she stands alone among Thackeray's creations.

The important thing about these characters, keeping in view the subject of this thesis, is that none of them are modelled on
eighteenth-century originals. It is, of course, true that in
t heir manners, speech and dress they simulate the people of that
age. Thus the careers of Francis and Frank Castlewood maybe
taken as illustrating the common occurrences in the lives of
eighteenth century country noblemen. Henry too, being a soldier
and something of a man-about-town, frequents the coffee-houses and
theatres and also fights duels, and Beatrix goes riding like the
ladies of Anne's bedchamber. But these activities are mainly
important as features of the life of the times.

The only exception to this rule is the portrait of Isabel
Castlewood for which Thackeray appears to have drawn upon the
careers of the Duchess of Cleveland and Frances Stewart, two of
Charles II's mistresses. Their lives provided Thackeray with some
of the earlier incidents in Isabel's career, before her marriage to
Thomas Esmond.

Thackeray's source-book in this case was pretty certainly
**The Diary of Samuel Pepys** which contains references to all the
incidents in the lives of the Duchess of Cleveland and Frances
Stewart which Thackeray appears to have used. Thackeray's reading
in Pepyss Diary is also indicated by one of his letters in which
he imitates Pepys's style and also signs it "S. Pips" (2).

Like her two originals, Isabel Esmond is presented as being
Charles II's mistress for some time. Thackeray writes:

He had but one daughter, who was of no great comfort

1. Pepyss diary covering the period from 1659-69 was first published
   in 1825. An enlarged edition titled **The Diary and Correspondence of Samuel Pepys**, ed. by Richard, Lord Braybrooke, in 5
   volumes was published in London in 1848-49. Thackeray pro-
   bably used this edition, from which the excerpts in this thesis
   are taken.

2. Letters, ii, 700
to her father; for misfortune had not taught those exiles sobriety of life; and it is said that the Duke of York and his brother the King both quarrelled about Isabel Esmond. She was maid of honour to the Queen Henrietta Maria; she early joined the Roman Church;...(1)

Pepys also records an impending quarrel between Charles II and James, the Duke of York, who were both attracted to Frances Stewart:

As an infinite secret, my Lord tells me the factions are high between the King and the Duke, and all the Court are in an uproar with their loose amours; the Duke of York being in love desperately with Mrs. Stewart...That his amours to Mrs. Stewart are told the King; so that all is like to be nought among them (2).

Pepys also records that Frances Stewart was maid of honour to the Queen (3), another fact which probably inspired Thackeray to include a similar situation in Isabel's life.

Isabel Esmond's conversion to the Roman Catholic religion has its parallel in the life of the Duchess of Cleveland as it is recorded by Pepys. The passage in the Diary referring to the Duchess's conversion is as follows:

I hear for certain that my Lady Castlemaine is turned Papist, which the Queene for all do not much like, thinking that she do it not for conscience sake (4).

Like the Duchess of Cleveland again, Isabel Esmond has her portrait drawn by Sir Peter Lely. In the novel there are many allusions to Isabel's portrait, the most detailed being as follows:

Specially, and in the place of honour, was Sir Peter Lely's picture of the Honourable Mistress Isebella

1. Works, x, 13
2. Diary, iii, 123-24
3. Ibid., ii, 370
4. Ibid., ii, 262
Esmond as Diana, in yellow satin, with a bow in her hand and a crescent in her forehead; and dogs frisking about her (1).

Pepys refers to the Duchess’s portrait several times but does not describe it (2). Yet the above quoted passage from *Esmond* suggests that Thackeray bore in mind the Duchess’s life while in presenting the career of Isabel Esmond, and also indicates his reading in *Pepys’s Diary*. This indication is contained in Thackeray’s use of the phrase ‘in yellow satin’; the *Diary* giving an account of the Duchess driving in Hyde Park, dressed ‘in yellow satin’. (3)

Finally, Isabel Esmond resembles the Duchess in the loss of her beauty. Thackeray’s description of an aging Isabel is as follows:

> His cousin was now of more than middle age, and had nobody’s word but her own for the beauty which she said she once possessed. She was lean, and yellow and long in the tooth; all the red and white in all the toy-shops in London could not make a beauty of her....(4)

In writing this Thackeray may have been thinking of the following allusion by Pepys to the decay of the Duchess of Cleveland’s appearance:

> My wife tells me the sad news of my Lady Castlemaine’s being now become so decayed that one would not know her; at least, far from a beauty, which I am sorry for...(5)

Father Holt, Dr. Tusher and Thomas Tusher are the only

1. *Works*, X, 199
3. Ibid., ii, 316
4. *Works*, X, 15
important fictitious characters in the novel who are not members of the Castlewood family. They seem to belong to the eighteenth century in a way in which the Esmonds do not. This is because they are drawn more as representatives of certain 17th-18th-century types than as individuals. The Tushers are types of the ordinary clergy of that age. They are not significant either for their roles in the story or for the traits of their character. The country-seat of a nobleman of that age was seldom without a household priest, and Dr. Tusher's introduction is a necessary part of Thackeray's portrayal of life at Castlewood Hall.

Father Holt is a figure of greater dimensions, still the main traits of his character and behaviour are mainly important as representing the popular idea of a Jacobite priest. His nocturnal visits to Castlewood Hall, his many disguises, his talent as a fencer, and the aura of secrecy with which he likes to surround himself, make him, in a way, the most romantic figure in the book. But these facts of his life also describe the qualities commonly attributed to the Jesuit priests. The portraits of the Tushers and Father Holt certainly required a considerable amount of study on Thackeray's part, but an examination of this study may best be held in connection with his presentation of the lives of the eighteenth century ecclesiastics.

II

The historical personages in Henry Esmond consist of people connected with the political life of the time, men of letters and soldiers. But such a classification can only be applied broadly, since, in Anne's time both the men of letters and the soldiers concerned themselves with the affairs of state. Although the
Fictitious characters in the novel are outnumbered by the historical figures, these latter, in most cases, are not drawn at any length. This difference in the methods of presentation of the two sets of characters was the result not only of Thackeray's interest in the domestic life of the Esmonds but also of his desire to paint in detail, as seen through the eyes of a contemporary, the political and social background against which the domestic drama is staged. The introduction of a large number of contemporary characters was necessary for the completion of Thackeray's design. At the same time, as Thackeray was not primarily interested in the delineation of their character, they neither play an important role in the story, nor do they, except in a very few cases, emerge as individuals.

In traditional historical novels the literary figures of the age seldom found a place. Their inclusion in Henry Esmond can certainly be taken as a proof of Thackeray's attempt at realism in the treatment of historical subjects. The fashionable society of London in Anne's days was partly constituted of these writers and wits who frequented the coffee-houses, were courted by members of the rival factions at Court, and took a lively and active interest in the interminable political controversies that were so much a feature of the age. Many of them, like Addison, Steele and Prior were at times in the pay of the government. They are presented by Thackeray as even less closely associated with the main plot than the other historical figures, and only the portraits of Steele, Addison and Swift among them are drawn at any length. Thackeray probably fixed upon these writers because they exerted considerable influence upon the political transactions of their age and were on terms of intimate friendship with a number of eminent people in
Thackeray takes the same view of the characters of Steele, Addison and Swift in *Esmond* as he had earlier done in his lectures on *The English Humourists*. In neither case was his main interest in their literary achievements; both in the lectures and in *Esmond* it is the novelist who keeps the upper hand. In drawing their portraits, Thackeray, with a novelist's justifiable liberty, fixes on such incidents in their lives as do not appear to be at variance with his idea of their personalities. In the novel these characters make but intermittent appearances and he was faced with the additional task of choosing such events from their lives as could also be assimilated into the body of the story. This is true also of the other historical characters in *Esmond*.

Steel's career is described in greater detail by Thackeray than that of any other literary figure in the novel. The reader is told of his schooling at Charterhouse, his acquaintance with Addison there, his joining the army, his being appointed a Gentleman - Usher at Court and his veneration for Addison. All these facts are referred to by Lucy Aikin in her *Life of Addison* (1) a book which Thackeray had found useful for his lecture on Addison (2). It has to be noted, however, that only brief allusions are made to the incidents in Steele's life in Lucy Aikin's book, and it is unlikely that it formed Thackeray's main source of information in this case. Only at one place in the novel, in the following comment on Steele's intemperance is there a suggestion of a direct borrowing from Aikin's book:

Joseph required scarce more pressing than Dick to that sort of amusement; but the wine never seemed at all to

fluster Mr. Addison's brains; it only unloosed his tongue: whereas Captain Steele's head and speech were quite overcome by a single bottle (1).

The influence of wine on Steele and Addison is described by Aikin in the following manner:

...he (Addison) was only warmed into the utmost brilliancy of table conversation, by the time that Steele had rendered himself nearly unfit for it (2).

The passage from *Esmond* can with justification be called an embellished version of Aikin's comment.

By far the most important of Thackeray's source books for his portrait of Steele was *The Epistolary Correspondence of Sir Richard Steele* (3). It is significant that Thackeray's lecture on Steele was copiously illustrated with excerpts from this work, a copy of which Thackeray had in his library (4).

Thackeray's indebtedness to Steele's *Correspondence* was mainly for his portrayal of the domestic life of Steele. There is the following revealing glimpse of Steele's home life in *Esmond*:

Captain and Mrs. Steele, who were the first to arrive, had driven to Kensington from their country house, the Hovel at Hampton Wick. "Not from our mansion in Bloomsbury Square," as Mrs. Steele took care to inform the ladies. Indeed Harry had ridden away from Hampton that very morning, leaving the couple by the ears; for from the chamber where he lay, in a bed that was none of the cleanest, and kept awake by the company which he had on his own bed, and the quarrel which was going on in the next room, he could hear both night and morning the curtain lecture which Mrs. Steele was in the habit of administering to poor Dick.

... Dick was fuddled, and when in that way no scolding could interrupt his benevolence. Mr.

1. Ibid., X, 261
Esmond could hear him coxing and speaking in that maudlin manner... to his beloved Prue... She went on, nevertheless, calling him a drunken wretch, and was only interrupted in her harangues by the Captain's snoring.

In the morning, the unhappy victim awoke to a headache and consciousness, and the dialogue of the night was resumed. "Why do you bring Captains home to dinner when there's not a guinea in the house? How am I to give dinners when you leave me without a shilling? How am I to go trapesing to Kensington in my yellow satin sack before all the fine company? I've nothing fit to put on; I never have:" and so the dispute went on... But Dick was charming, though his wife was odious...(1)

Steele's Correspondence contains a letter written by Steele to Lord Halifax and addressed from 'The Hovel at Hampton Wick'. (2) Thackeray's mention of this address may be taken as an indication of his indebtedness to Steele's Correspondence, although the same letter is also prefixed to the first volume of the Tatler (3). The other works from which Thackeray appears to have gained his knowledge of Steele's life do not mention 'the Hovel'.

But what really establishes Thackeray's indebtedness to Steele's Correspondence is the presentation in the above passage from Esmond of the domestic bickerings of Steele and his wife, their pecuniary difficulties and Steele's affectionate behaviour towards his wife. It can be noted in this connection that in describing the party referred to in the above passage, Thackeray gives the following further illustration of Steele's devotion to his wife:

"I drink to your eyes, my dear," says the Captain, who seemed to think his wife charming, and to receive as genuine all the satiric compliments which Mr. St. John paid her" (4).

1. Works, X, 337-38
2. 208
The importance of Steele's letter to his wife is mentioned by
Thackeray in The English Humourists:

But there are some four hundred letters of Dick Steele's
to his wife, which that thrifty woman preserved accurately,
and which could have been written but for her and her alone.
They contain details of the business, pleasures, quarrels,
reconciliations of the pair; they have all the genuineness
of conversation; they are as artless as a child's prattle,
and as confidential as a curtain-lecture. Some are written
from the printing office, where he is waiting for the proof-
sheets of his Gazette, or his Tatler; some are written
from the tavern, whence he promises to come to his wife
"within a pint of wine," and where he has given a rendezvous
to a friend or a money-lender: some are composed in a high
state of vinous excitement, when his head is flustered with
burgundy, and his heart abounds with amorous warmth for
his darling Prue: some are under the influence of the
dismal headache and repentance next morning: some, alas,
are from the lock-up house, where the lawyers have impounded
him, and where he is waiting for bail....(1).

The passage is from Thackeray's lecture on Steele which contains
the following further allusion to the letters:

In the course of a few pages, we begin to find the shoe-
maker calling for money, and some directions from the
Captain, who has not thirty pounds to spare. He sends
his wife, "the beautifullest object in the world," as he
calls her, and evidently, in reply to applications of
her own...he sends his wife now a guinea, then a half-
guinea, then a couple of guineas, then half a pound of
tea; and again no money and not tea at all, but a promise
that his darling Prue shall have some in a day or two:
or a request, perhaps, that she will send over his night-
gown and shaving-plate to the temporary lodging where
the nomadic Captain is lying, hidden from the bailiffs (2).

The features of Steele's domestic life brought out in the above
examination of his letters by Thackeray are, Steele's imprudence
regarding money, his wife's constant demand for it and his love
for her. These are, as already pointed out, emphasised in the

1. Works, XI, 218-221
2. Ibid., 221
glimpse of Steele's home life in *Esmond*. That Thackeray, in presenting this latter account was thinking of Steele's letters is also brought out in the reference to the absence of 'a guinea in the house' and to 'beloved Prue' - Steele's nickname for his wife.

As Steele's letters of the kind mentioned in *The English Humourists* are so many, it is not possible to ascertain whether Thackeray drew upon any one of them in particular for *Henry Esmond*. The following notes from Steele to his wife, however, suggest domestic altercations of a similar nature as that presented in the novel:

i) **DEAR PRUE**, June 7, 1708

I *INCLOSE* to you a guinea for your pocket. I dine with Lord Halifax.

I wish I knew how to court you into good-humour; for two or three quarrels more will dispatch me quite. If you have any love for me, believe I am always pursuing our mutual good. Pray consider that all my little fortune is to (be) settled this month, and that I have inadvertently made myself liable to impatient people, who take all advantages. If you have (not) patience, I shall transact my business rashly, and lose a very great sum to quicken the time of your being rid of all people you do not like.

Yours ever,

RICH. STEELE (1)

ii) **DEAR WIFE**, Nov. 17, 1708.

How can you add to my cares, by making so unjust complaints against me as in yours of last night? I take all the pains imaginable to bring you home to ease and satisfaction; and made a great step in it yesternight, which I could not had I spent my time elsewhere than where I did.

My dear, be cheerful, and expect a good account

---

1. Steele: *Correspondence*, i, 139
of things this evening from, dear wife,

Your most affectionate and most obliged husband,

RICH. STEELE (1).

iii) PRUE,

IT is unworthy your virtue and merit to be diffident. I'll warrant you all will be well before tomorrow night. I will come home then with cash, and every thing else that can please.

Yours faithfully,

RICH. STEELE (2).

iv) DEAR CREATURE,

I go away because you will have it so; but I have been guilty on nothing that ought to exclude me from the happiness of being yours.

You will take this for an argument how much I am, 
Dear wife, yours

RICH. STEELE (3).

V) DEAR PRUE,

It is a strange thing, because you are handsome, that you will not behave yourself with the obedience that people of worse features do - but that I must be always giving you an account of every trifle, and minute of my time.

I send this to tell you, I am waiting to be sent for again when my Lord Wharton is stirring.

RICH. STEELE (4).

vi) DEAR PRUE,

I INCLUDE to you your letter, and think it needless to make any other answer than what is a very true one to your own knowledge. I never denied you anything in my power to give or do. When I had not money, I have given promises, to keep up your spirits, and keep you in good humour.

1. Ibid., 168
2. Ibid.,* 349
3. Ibid.,* 350
4. Ibid.,* 351
I do not pretend to reply to the severe things you say to me, because I never did nor ever will mean any thing but pleasing to you; therefore, I hope you will continue to love Your affectionate and obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE (1).

Spence's Anecdotes is another work which Thackeray appears to have drawn upon for his presentation of one aspect of Steele's character. Thackeray sees Steele as a kind-hearted person; as one whose heart is full of good will for others. Some of Thackeray's comments in the novel on Steele's character are as follows:

i) ... a good nature and a friendly disposition towards all... (2)

ii) He never said a word that could anger any body...(3)

iii) ...the idlest and best-natured of men... (4)

Although Steele was generally regarded by his contemporaries and biographers as a kind, generous person, Thackeray's comments are most like those of Lady Mary Wortley Montague and Dr. Young as they are collected in Spence's Anecdotes. Lady Montague says, 'Sir Richard Steele was a very good-natured man' (5), and Dr. Young writes of him:

Sir Richard Steele was the best-natured creature in the world: even in his worst state of health, he seemed to desire nothing but to please and be pleased (6).

Apart from the general resemblance among the above passages from

1. Ibid., * 367
2. Works, X, 189
3. Ibid., 277
4. Ibid., 389
5. 232
6. 335
the two books, Thackeray's use of the phrases 'good nature' and 'best-natured' suggest his indebtedness to Spence's Anecdotes.

There are several allusions in the novel to Steele's weakness of character and to the contrast between it and the principles of an ideal character laid down by him in The Christian Hero (1). One of Thackeray's source-books for these allusions was Steele's Apology for his Writings (2). Thackeray does not mention his reading in the book but it is hardly likely that he was not familiar with anything that Steele wrote, and besides, in this case the evidence in the novel is pretty conclusive.

The following passages in the novel tell of Steele's remorse at his inability to conform to his own ideals:

i) ... Dick added with a smile, "I had a thought of wearing the black coat (but was ashamed of my life, you see, and took to this sorry red one)...(3)

ii) "I'm not what I seem, alas!" answered the trooper - and indeed, as it turned out, poor Dick told the truth - for that very night, at supper in the hall, ...Harry Esmond found Dick the Scholar in a woful state of drunkenness. He hiccuped out a sermon; and his laughing companions bade him sing a hymn, on which Dick, swearing he would run the scoundrel through the body who insulted his religion, made for his sword, which was hanging on the wall, and fell down flat on the floor under it...(4)

The foregoing passage does not contain the only reference to the ridiculing of Steele by his friends on account of the contrast between his ideals and his behaviour. For instance, Colonel Westbury when he comes to visit Henry in Newgate, introduces Steele in the following manner:

2. Richard Steele: Apology for Himself and His Writings, London 1
3. Works, X, 64
4. Ibid.
"...here's a friend come to see thee; he'll pray with thee, or he'll drink with thee; or he'll drink and pray turn about. Dick, my Christian hero, here's the little scholar of Castlewood" (1).

and again:

Many of the wags derided the poor fellow in his cups, and chose him as a butt for their satire... (2)

Steele's observations in his Apology for his Writings, to which the origin of the above excerpts may be traced, are as follows:

He first became an Author when an Ensign of the Guards, a way of Life exposed to so much Irregularity; and being thoroughly convinced of many things, of which he often repented, and which he more often repeated, he writ, for his own private Use, a little Book called the Christian Hero, with a design principally to fix upon his own Mind a strong Impression of Virtue and Religion, in opposition to a stronger Propensity towards unwarrantable Pleasures. This secret Admonition was too weak; he therefore Printed the Book with his Name, in hopes that a standing Testimony against himself, and the Eyes of the World (that is to say) of his Acquaintance upon him in a new light, might curb his Desires, and make him ashamed of understanding and seeming to feel what was Virtuous, and living so quite contrary a Life. This had no other good Effect, but that from being thought no undelightful Companion, he was soon reckoned a disagreeable Fellow. One or two of his Acquaintance thought fit to misuse him, and try their Valour upon him; and every Body he knew measured the least Lenity in his Words and Actions, with the Character of a Christian Heroe (3).

A similar self-portrait emphasising his lack of resolution, is drawn by Thackeray in the Tatler No. 27:

Thus, with all the good intentions in the world to amendment, this creature sins on against Heaven, himself, his friends, and his country, who all call for a better use of his talents. There is not a being under the sun so miserable as this: he goes on in a pursuit he himself disapproves, and has no enjoyment but what is followed by remorse; no relief from remorse, but the repetition of his crime. It is possible I may talk of this person

1. Ibid., 187-8
2. Ibid., 277
3. 80
with too much indulgence; but I must repeat it
that I think this is a character which is the
most the object of pity of any in the world.
The man in the pangs of the stone, gout, or any
acute distemper, is not in so deplorable a
condition, in the eye of right sense, as he that
errs and repents, and repents and errs on (1).

These excerpts from Apology for his Writings and The Tatler
establish that, in presenting Steele as a person whose conscience
is not strong enough to keep him from vice but which still prevents
him from enjoying it, Thackeray was following Steele's own views on
the subject. It may be stated further that for his description of
the ridiculing of Steele by his friends Thackeray was indebted to
only the first of the two foregoing excerpts. But Westbury's
remarks - 'he'll pray with thee, or he'll drink with thee; or
he'll drink and pray turn about', seem to be directly related
to the following observations in the passage from Tatler quoted
above:

...has no enjoyment but what is followed by remorse;
no relief from remorse, but the repetition of his
crime.

There is some mention of this aspect of Steele's character
in a later publication, The Memoirs of the Celebrated Persons
forming the Kit-Kat Club (2). This work also contains the passage
from The Tatler No. 27, dealing with Steele's character. As
Thackeray had undoubtedly read the issues of The Tatler conscien-
tiously, there is no reason to suppose that he relied to any extent
upon The Memoirs of Kit-Kat Club. There is certainly no evidence
of his direct borrowing from it in this case. At the same time,
it is almost certain that Thackeray had read this work and con-

1. The British Essayists, i, 210
the Kit-Kat Club, London, 1821
sequently it had its contribution to make in his knowledge of Steele's life (1).

Thackeray's use of another issue of The Tatler can be affirmed most positively. This is The Tatler No. 181, in which Steele gives an account of his feelings at the death of his father. Steele's advice to Henry after the death of Thomas Esmond is a transcript of a part of this Tatler. The relevant passage in the novel is as follows:

...his friend, Scholar Dick, who told him about his own father's death, which had happened when Dick was a child at Dublin, not quite five years of age. "That was the first sensation of grief", Dick said, "I ever knew. I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping beside it. I had my battledore in my hand, and fell a-beating the coffin, and calling Papa; on which my mother caught me in her arms and told me in a flood of tears Papa could not hear me and would play with me no more, for they were going to put him under ground, whence he could never come to us again. (2)

The following extract from The Tatler No. 181 shows with what little modification Thackeray had used its text:

The first sense of sorrow I ever knew was upon the

1. One of the reasons for assuming Thackeray's acquaintance with this work is to be found in the following passage from it:

The completion of this work (The History of the Duke of Marlborough)...seems to have been reserved for the ponderous powers of the voluminous Archdeacon Coxe, whose Biographies of great men of Queen Anne's age make up in weight of paper for what they want in solidity of argument, and compensate in principle for their evident deficiency of interest. 167.

These remarks are from the article on Steele, and in his Lecture on Steele Thackeray makes the following similar observations:

Again, I read Marlborough's Life by a copious Archdeacon, who has the command of immense papers, of sonorous language, of what is called the best information; and I get little or no insight into the secret motive, which, I believe, influenced the whole of Marlborough's career...Works, XI, 199.

While Thackeray may here be expressing his just reactions, he may also have had at the back of his mind the remarks in the article on Steele in Memoirs of Kit-Kat Club.

2. Works, X, 68
death of my father, at which time I was not quite five years of age; but was rather amazed at what all the house meant, than possessed with a real understanding why nobody was willing to play with me. I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping alone by it. I had my battledore in my hand, and fell a-beating the coffin, and calling Papa; for, I know not how, I had some slight idea that he was locked up there. My mother caught me in her arms, and, transported beyond all patience of the silent grief she was before in, she almost smothered me in her embraces; and told me in a flood of tears, "Papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more, for they were going to put him under ground, whence he could never come to us again" (1).

Unlike Steele, Addison makes only two or three appearances in the novel, but he is by no means a shadowy figure. Through his portrait he emerges as an individual possessed of a quiet dignity and as having a somewhat similar attitude towards life as that of Henry himself - revealing traces of cynicism and moral superiority. Only one incident in his life, the composition of The Campaign and the visit of Mr. Boyle during it, is described in detail by Thackeray. The writing of The Campaign is mentioned in the following works which were used by Thackeray as his sourcebooks for his lecture on Addison:

a) Lucy Aikin: *Life of Addison*
b) Tickell's preface to *The Works of Addison*
c) Dr. Johnson: *Lives of the Poets*
d) Macaulay's essay on Addison (2)

Of these writers only Tickell, while referring to the writing of

1. *The British Essayists*, iv, 188
2. The following are the full titles of these works:
The Campaign, does not mention the visit of Mr. Boyle to Addison's apartment. Thackeray's version of the incident, however, bears traces of his greater indebtedness to Tickell and Aikin. The passage in the novel which suggests this alludes to Addison's advancement as a result of the publication of The Campaign, and is as follows:

...and Mr. Addison got the appointment of Commissioner of Excise, which the famous Mr. Locke vacated (1).

Thackeray's drawing upon Aikin's Life of Addison is suggested by his reference to Addison's appointment as a Commissioner of Excise. Dr. Johnson, Tickell and Macaulay do not use the word 'excise' (2); only Aikin refers to Addison's office as that of Commissioner of appeals in the Excise (3).

Tickell describes Addison's appointment in the following manner:

...by bestowing on the Author, in a few days after, the place of Commissioner of Appeals, vacant by the removal of the famous Mr. Locke to the Council of Trade (4).

Thackeray's indebtedness to the above passage is indicated by his use of the word 'vacated' and also by his reference to 'the famous Mr. Locke'. (5).

1. Works, X, 287
2. a) ...and was immediately rewarded by succeeding Mr. Locke in the place of Commissioner of Appeals. Lives of the Poets, 160
   b) Addison was instantly appointed to a commissionership, with about two hundred pounds a year, and was assured that this appointment was only an earnest of greater favours.
3. ...his lordship, to encourage him to enter upon his subject, had already made him one of the Commissioners of Appeal in the Excise...Life of Addison, i, 169
4. The Works of Joseph Addison, i, xiii
5. Signet.
Henry Esmond also contains a reference to Addison's execution on Steele's property. The relevant excerpt is as follows:

...and yet Mr. Addison was perfectly right in getting the money which was his, and not giving up the amount of his just claim, to be spent by Dick upon champagne and fiddlers, laced clothes, fine furniture, and parasites, Jew and Christian, male and female, who clung to him (1).

In writing this Thackeray appears to have borne in mind the following similar observations of Macaulay in his essay on Addison:

...he manages to send a hundred pounds to his friend. The next day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of gentlemen and ladies assembled. The fiddles are playing. The table is groaning under Champagne, Burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats. Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused, should send sheriff's officers to reclaim what was due to him (2).

The same picture of Steele's extravagance emerges in both the above passages. Thackeray's 'male and female, who clung to him' and 'not giving up the amount of his just claim', can be traced to Macaulay's 'scores of gentlemen and ladies assembled' and 'to reclaim what is due to him'. But it is Thackeray's allusion to 'champagne' and 'fiddlers' that establishes the connection between the two passages most decisively.

Spence's Anecdotes is another work which Thackeray appears to have found useful while describing the composing of The Campaign. Two facts which are emphasised by Thackeray are Addison's willingness to consult his friends about his work and his readiness in accepting their advice. The following passage refers to the help

1. Works, X, 222-23
rendered by Henry to Addison in the writing of The Campaign: 

So Esmond, at the request of his host, told him what he knew about the famous battle, drew the river on the table aliquo mero, and with the aid of some bits of Tobacco-pipe showed the advance of the left wing, where he had been engaged.

A sheet or two of the verses lay already on the table beside our bottles and glasses, and Dick having plentifully refreshed himself from the latter, took up the pages of manuscript, writ out with scarce a blot or correction, in the author's slim, neat handwriting....(1)

The following comments by Pope, noted in Spence's Anecdotes, appear to have been Thackeray's authority in this instance:

Mr. Addison wrote very fluently: but he was sometimes very slow and scrupulous in correcting. He would show his verses to several friends; and would alter almost every thing that any of them hinted at as wrong (2).

Another passage in the novel which also indicates Thackeray's indebtedness to Spence's Anecdotes is as follows:

Addison kept himself to a few friends, and very rarely opened himself except in their company. A man more upright and conscientious than he it was not possible to find in public life, and one whose conversation was so various, easy, and delightful (3).

The original for these remarks was very likely the following account by Pope:

Addison was perfect good company with intimates; and had something more charming in his conversation than I ever knew in any other man: but with any mixture of strangers, and sometimes only with one he seemed to preserve his dignity much; with a stiff sort of silence (4).

It may be mentioned here that in his portrait of Addison Macaulay makes some reference to Pope's observations, and Johnson too had access to Spence's notes which were later published in book form.

2. 49.
4. Anecdotes, 50.
But as Thackeray, in his lectures on Addison, quotes from Spence's *Anecdotes*, it can be assumed that this was his source-book for *Esmond* also.

Swift, the last of the comparatively important literary figures in *Esmond*, was the subject of Thackeray's opening lecture on *The English Humourists*. Thackeray was not only acquainted with the writings of Swift but was also familiar with the following biographies of him:

- a) Dr. Johnson's essay in *Lives of the Poets*
- b) Thomas Sheridan's *The Life of Dr. Swift*
- c) Deane Swift's *Life of Swift*
- d) Earl of Orrery's *Remarks on the Life of Mr. Swift*
- e) *Observations upon Lord Orrery's Remarks*
- f) W.R. Wilde's *Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life*
- g) Sir W., Scott's *Life of Swift*
- h) Roscoe's *Memoir of Swift*.

Thackeray refers to all these works except the last named, in

1. The titles and the editions of these works used in this thesis are as follows:

- c) Deane Swift: *An Essay upon the Life, Writings, and Character of Dr. Jonathan Swift*, London, 1755
- e) J.R.: *Observations upon Lord Orrery's Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift.*
- f) W.R. Wilde: *The Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life*. Dublin, 1847
his lecture on Swift (1). The second edition of Swift's Works edited by Thomas Roscoe was in Thackeray's library (2).

In *Esmond*, however, Swift does not figure prominently, and although Thackeray's acquaintance with events in his life was derived from all these works, traces of his indebtedness to them cannot be distinguished in all cases. As suggested earlier, Swift as he is presented in the novel is not a likeable person. He was, like Marlborough, a controversial figure and Thackeray emphasises the unpleasant traits in this character. Thackeray draws Swift as a pompous, ill-natured and ambitious person. In doing so he follows Dr. Johnson and the Earl of Orrery more closely than the rest of the biographers of Swift mentioned above (3). It is only Dr. Johnson and the Earl of Orrery who present Swift's character in an unfavourable light, and Thackeray's portrait of him, although more critical, resembles that drawn by them.

Evidence of a more precise nature indicating Thackeray's drawing upon Dr. Johnson's essay is to be found in the following description of Swift's person in the novel:

...and he looked at the Colonel from under his

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2. *Catalogue of Thackeray's Library*, 153  
3. It is significant that in the following passage from his on Swift, Thackeray makes a defence of Dr. Johnson's observations:

Doctor Wilde of Dublin, who has written a most interesting volume on the closing years of Swift's life, calls Johnson "the most malignant of his biographers": it is not easy for an English critic to please Irishmen - perhaps to try and please them. And yet Johnson truly admires Swift: Johnson does not quarrel with Swift's change of politics, or doubt his sincerity of religion; about the famous Stella and Vanessa controversy the Doctor does not bear very hardly on Swift. But he could not give the Dean that honest hand of his; the stout old man puts it into his breast, and moves off from him. *Ibid.*, 130-31.
two bushy eyebrows with a pair of very clear blue eyes. His complexion was muddy, his figure rather fat, his chin double (1).

Dr. Johnson's allusion to Swift's appearance, which Thackeray presumably had in mind, is as follows:

He had a kind of muddy complexion, which, though he washed himself with oriental scrupulosity, did not look clear (2).

Only in Johnson's essay among Thackeray's various sources of information for Swift's life and character is the phrase 'muddy complexion' used to describe Swift's appearance. Thackeray's use of the same words, therefore, can with reasonable certainty be taken as a proof of his indebtedness to Johnson's essay.

Two other features of Swift noted by Thackeray are his 'bushy eyebrows' and his 'double chin'. It is worth noticing in this connection that only Scott refers to Swift's 'bushy eyebrows' (3), and only Roscoe speaks of his 'double chin' (4). As besides reading Scott's *Life of Swift*, Thackeray was almost undoubtedly acquainted with Roscoe's essay, it is more than likely that in describing Swift's looks he had in mind their observations. Thackeray also mentions the 'very clear blue eyes' of Swift.

That Swift's eyes were blue has been noted by Scott, Sheridan and

3. Swift was in person tall, strong, and well made, of a dark complexion, but with blue eyes, black and bushy eyebrows, nose somewhat aquiline, and features which remarkably expressed the stern, haughty, and dauntless turn of his mind. Swift: *Works*, ed. by Scott (1824) i, 457.
4. His mouth was pleasing, he had a fine regular set of teeth, a round double chin with a small dimple; his complexion, a light olive or pale brown. Swift: *Works*, i, lxxxii.
Roscoe. But it is Pope who draws particular attention to their colour in the following extract from Spence's *Anecdotes*:

Though his face has a look of dullness in it, he has very particular eyes: they are quite azure as the heavens, and there's a very uncommon archness in them (1)

A further clue to some of Thackeray's source-books is provided by the following passage in the novel describing a dinner in the course of which Swift is silenced by one of Henry's remarks:

The Doctor scowled, blushed, and was much confused, and said scarce a word during the whole of dinner. A very little stone will sometimes knock down these Goliaths of wit; and this one was often discomfited when met by a man of any spirit; he took his place sulkily, put water in his wine that the others drank plentifully, and scarce said a word (2)

Two of Swift's biographers mentioned above, Scott and Sheridan, note his inability to bear a retort. Scott's comments on the subject are as follows:

His powers of conversation and of humourous repartee were in his time regarded as unrivalled; but, like most who have assumed a despotic sway in conversation, he was sometimes silenced by unexpected resistance (3)

Sheridan too, expresses a similar opinion:

Swift, like many who jest freely on others, could not bear a retort (4).

Although Thackeray does not owe anything to Sheridan or Scott for his mode of expression in the above passage, it cannot be doubted that he drew upon their observations. It can also be noted that the above comment by Sheridan is followed by a description of a

1. 158
2. *Works*, X, 418
4. *The Life of Swift*, 370
dinner where an 'unexpected sally' by one of Swift's victims 'threw the whole company into a fit of laughter, and Swift was silent for the rest of the day' (1).

Another peculiarity of Swift noticed by Thackeray in the above passage is that of putting water in his wine. This, too, is noted by Sheridan, who says that Swift 'never drank above half a pint of wine, in every glass of which he mixed water and sugar' (2). This peculiarity of his, however, is mentioned by Swift himself in The Journal to Stella (3). There is, of course, no indication in Esmond suggesting that Thackeray relied exclusively on one of these works.

But there is little doubt that The Journal was Thackeray's source-book for some of his allusions to Swift's habits and manners and to incidents in his life. The Journal to Stella covers the period when Swift was a close associate of some of the most prominent people in England, and it is this period of his life which is presented in the novel.

One of the incidents in Swift's life, not mentioned in his biographies with which Thackeray was acquainted, is described in Esmond in the following manner:

Nay, more, this Irishman, when St. John was about to pardon a poor wretch condemned to death for rape, absolutely prevented the Secretary from exercising this act of good-nature, and boasted that he had had the man hanged...(4)

A degree of self-praise is indeed apparent in the following account of the incident in The Journal:

I was this afternoon with Mr. Secretary at his Office,

1. Ibid.
2. Life of Swift, 417
3. Swift: Works, i, 186, 249
and helped to hinder a man of his pardon who is condemned for a rape. The under-secretary was willing to save him, upon an old notion that a woman cannot be ravished; but I told the secretary he could not pardon him without a favourable report from the judge. Besides, he was a fiddler, and consequently a rogue, and deserved hanging for something else; and so he shall swing. What! I must stand up for the honour of the fair sex? 'Tis true, the fellow had lain with her a hundred times before; but what care I for that? What! must a woman be ravished because she is a whore?...(1)

Esmond also contains the following references to Swift's habit of visiting Anne's Court every Sunday:

a) ...he never missed Court of a Sunday....(2)
b) "...There's a horrid Irish wretch who never misses a Sunday at Court" (3)
c) The Doctor was at Court every Sunday assiduously enough...(4)

In his Journal to Stella Swift records his regular visits to the Court on Sundays, and at one place gives his reasons for the visits:

I went late to court, and the company was almost gone. The court serves me for a coffee house; once a-week I meet an acquaintance there that I should not otherwise see in a quarter...(5);

and again:

Lord-treasurer, the duke of Ormond, and lady Orkney, are all that I see very often. O yes, and lady Masham and Lord Bolingbroke, and one or two private friends. I make no figure but at court, where I affect to turn from a lord to the meanest of my acquaintance, and I love to go there on Sundays to see the world (6).

Another passage in the novel for which Thackeray relied upon Swift's observations in The Journal is as follows:

... and the airs and patronage Mr. Swift gave himself,

3. Ibid., 369
4. Ibid., 417
5. Swift: Works, i, 246
6. Ibid., 257
forgetting gentlemen of his country whom he knew perfectly...(1)

Thackeray in this case apparently drew upon Swift's account of his avoidance of a fellow-countryman:

I have a fellow of your town, one Tisdall, lodges in the same house with me. Patrick told me squire Tisdall and his lady lodged here. I pretended I never heard of him; but I knew his ugly face, and saw him at church in the next pew to me; and he often looked for a bow, but it would not do (2).

Thackeray's indebtedness to The Journal to Stella is also indicated in his description of the first meeting between Henry and Swift; Thackeray writes:

...Doctor Swift came in, his Irish fellow with him that used to walk before his chair, and bawled out his master's name with great dignity (3).

The 'Irish fellow' was probably Patrick, Swift's Irish servant, about whose walking in front of Swift's chair there is the following allusion in The Journal:

This morning early I went in a chair, and Patrick before it, to Mr. Harley...(4)

Finally, The Journal also contains several references to Swift's attempts at setting up Leach, who was his cousin, as a printer (5), and this appears to have provided Thackeray with a basis for the whole episode of Henry's meeting with Swift at Leach's house, where the Colonel had gone to get an article printed in The Post-Boy (6).

II

Among the other historical figures of the age introduced in

1. Works; X, 417
2. Op. Cit.; i, 200
4. Op. Cit.; i, 147
5. Ibid.; 150, 169
6. Works, X, 414-16
Esmond, the portraits of the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Mohun, and the Old Pretender are drawn in greater detail than those of the rest. Of the three the Duke's figure stands out in greater relief, although the other two are more closely associated with the main story. One of the reasons for the Duke's eminence is that as a section of the novel deals with his campaigns in Europe his character is almost wholly drawn against a series of historically true incidents in which he was the central figure. Lord Mohun and the Old Pretender, on the other hand, are usually placed in situations devised by Thackeray himself in which they are almost always dominated by fictitious characters. Thackeray also, because of his family connection with the Webbs, took an added interest in Marlborough's character, which he wanted to present in an unfavourable light.

Although Thackeray was undoubtedly biased in his opinion of Marlborough's character, in presenting it he shows sufficient regard for truth. The defects of Marlborough's were the subject of criticism even during the most successful period of his life. As a matter of fact, Thackeray's portrait of Marlborough conveys the same view of his character as that held by his political opponents, and since Esmond himself belongs to this opposite party, it is not out of place for him to be critical of the Duke. It is also suggested that Esmond's dislike of Marlborough was, at least partly, the result of personal rancour (1).

Swift and Archdeacon Coxe were among the writers with whose observations on Marlborough's life and character Thackeray was familiar. But Thackeray does not credit either Swift or Coxe with

1. Ibid.,
having achieved a true insight into Marlborough's character, as is apparent in the following criticism of their writings in his lecture on Steele:

Say, for example, that I want to understand the character of the Duke of Marlborough. I read Swift's history of the times in which he took a part; the shrewdest of observers and initiated, one would think, into the politics of the age — he hints to me that Marlborough was a coward, and even of doubtful military capacity...Again, I read Marlborough's life by a copious archdeacon...I get, I say, no truth, or only a portion of it, in the narrative of either writer, and believe that Coxe's portrait, or Swift's portrait, is quite unlike the real Churchill (1).

In Esmond a similar view of Swift's observations on Marlborough's character is taken as that in the above passage:

But he disdained the abuse in which some of the Tory writers indulged; for instance, Doctor Swift, who actually chose to doubt the Duke of Marlborough courage, and was pleased to hint that his Grace's military capacity was doubtful...(2).

The passage in The Last Years of Anne against which Thackeray's criticism is directed, and in which with characteristic subtlety Swift raises doubts regarding Marlborough's courage and abilities as a general, is as follows:

I shall say nothing of his military accomplishments, which the opposite reports of his friends and enemies among the soldiers have rendered problematical; but if he be among those who delight in war, it is agreed to be not for the reasons common with other generals. Those maligners who deny him personal valour seem not to consider that this accusation is charged at a venture; since the person of a wise general is too seldom exposed to form any judgement in the matter: and that fear, which is said to have sometimes disconcerted him before an action, might probably be more for his army than for himself. (3).

1. Ibid., XI, 199
2. Ibid., X, 414.
Yet in some of its features the character of Marlborough as it is drawn by Thackeray appears to correspond with Swift's opinion of it. Both in *The Last Years of Anne* and *Esmond*, Marlborough's avarice and ambition are emphasised, and it is only in the vindication of his courage that Thackeray differs from Swift. For example, Thackeray's allusion to the opinion of some of Marlborough's contemporaries that the Duke fought the battle of Malplaquet 'so that he might figure once more in a Gazette, and hold his places and pensions a little longer' (1), appears to have its source in the following extract from *The Last Years of Anne*:

> We are not to take the height of his ambition from his soliciting to be general for life: I am persuaded his chief motive was the pay and perquisites by continuing the war; and that he had then no intention of settling the crown in his family, his only son having been dead some years before. He is noted to be master of great temper, able to govern or very well to disguise his passions, which are all melted down or extinguished in his love of wealth (2).

Yet another passage in *Esmond* which contains traces of Thackeray's drawing upon *The Last Years of Anne* contains a reference to Marlborough's victories and is as follows:

> And our army got to believe so, and the enemy learnt to think so too; for we never entered into a battle without a perfect confidence that it was to end in a victory; nor did the French, after the issue of Blenheim, and that astonishing triumph of Ramillies, ever meet us without feeling that the game was lost before it was begun to be played, and that our General's fortune was irresistible (3).

Thackeray's remarks appear to be an expansion of the following similar comment by Swift:

> Those who had least esteem for his valour and conduct

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2. Op. Cit., 1, n44
thought it not prudent to remove a general whose troops were perpetually victorious while he was at their head; because this had infused into his soldiers an opinion that they should always conquer, and into the enemy that they should always be beaten; than which nothing is to be held of greater moment, either in the progress of a war or upon the day of battle... (1).

Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough contains a comprehensive account of Marlborough's career. But Coxe is not so much concerned with the Duke's character as with the incidents in his life and his military exploits. Only at the end of the book there is a brief allusion to Marlborough's nature and character. Coxe does refer to Marlborough's faults such as his love of money and his correspondence with the Stuarts (2). But these facts are rightly mentioned as aberrations in a character largely composed of commendable qualities. Coxe's portrait of Marlborough is very unlike Thackeray's, and although it is true that the latter may have found Memoirs of Marlborough highly informative, he does not appear to draw upon it for his portrayal of the Duke's character.

The text of Henry Esmond contains some traces of Thackeray's drawing upon a notorious work, The New Atalantis (3), written by Mrs. Manley, one of Marlborough's contemporaries. Mrs. Manley's speciality was the unearthing of court scandals and their presentation in a saucy manner. Thackeray refers to Mrs. Manley as 'the delectable author of the "New Atlantis", and mentions his acquaintance with her works (4). It may also be mentioned here that Thackeray had one of Mrs. Manley's books in his library (5).

2. Memoirs of Marlborough, iii, 434
3. Mrs. Manley: Secret Memoirs and Manners of several Persons of Quality, of both sexes from the New Atalantis, an Island in the Mediterranean, 4 volumes, London 1736
4. Works, XI, 205
Thackeray's indebtedness to *The New Atalantis* is discerned in the following passage which contains the most detailed description of Marlborough's character in the novel:

Our chief... had this of the godlike in him, that he was impassable before victory, before danger, before defeat. Before the greatest obstacle or the most trivial ceremony; before a hundred thousand men drawn in battalia, or a peasant slaughtered at the door of his burning hovel; before a carouse of drunken German lords, or a monarch's court, or a cottage table where his plans were laid, or an enemy's battery, vomiting flame and death, and strewing corpses round about him; - he was always cold, calm, resolute, like fate. He performed a treason or a court-bow, he told a falsehood as black as Styx, as easily as he paid a compliment or spoke about the weather. He took a mistress, and left her; he betrayed his benefactor, and supported him, or would have murdered him, with the same calmness always....

...our Duke was as calm at the mouth of the cannon as at the door of a drawing-room. Perhaps he could not have been the great man he was, had he had a heart either for love or hatred, or pity or fear, or regret or remorse. He achieved the highest deed of daring, or deepest calculation of thought, as he performed the very meanest action of which a man is capable; told a lie, or cheated a fond woman, or robbed a poor beggar of a half-penny, with a like awful serenity and equal capacity of the highest and lowest acts of our nature (1).

Not even Swift, critical though he was of the Duke, was as harsh on him. Swift's criticism was designed to lower the prestige of Marlborough in the public eye by showing him to be a cowardly and inefficient general and by outlining his corrupt practices and his greed. It was, what might be called, a political criticism, and, as already pointed out, Thackeray follows Swift in everything except in the latter's portrait of the Duke as a coward. As a matter of fact, one of the aspects of Marlborough's character

emphasised in the above passage from *Esmond* is his imperturbable calm in the face of danger. There is a similar analysis of this aspect of the Duke's character in *The New Atlantis*, upon which Thackeray probably drew:

...that Coolness of Temper, that Allay of Fire, that passive Moderation ever uppermost, and to which he has owed his greatest Success; by this he has acquired those Appearances of Vertue, that are found in him. 'Tis his easy Phlegm, that has suffered him, when at Council, either of War or State, with the least Show of Uneasiness, even the lowest and worst favour'd Person, to deliver his Opinion at length, though never so opposite to his own. He weighs them all with, Deliberation, and yet remains fix'd to his form'd Designs. Hence it is, that even in the Heat of Fight he is not trasported beyond his usual Moderation; neither his Grievs upon a Disappointment are excessive, nor the exultings of his Joy upon a Victory. He neither cruelly punishes, nor generously forgives; 'tis all a Medium; and considering the Extent of his Power, he has both done the least Mischief and the smallest Good, of any that ever possess'd it (1).

Apart from the fact that both Thackeray and Mrs. Manley emphasise the impassivity and calmness of Marlborough under contrasting circumstances, there is also a general resemblance of style between the two passages. It can also be mentioned here that none of the other books which Thackeray had read for his portrayal of Marlborough's campaigns and character contains a passage bearing a resemblance to the two above excerpts.

As aspect of Marlborough's character to which several allusions are made in *Esmond* consists of his treatment of women. Thackeray accuses the Duke of stealing 'a kiss from a woman, and the gold chain off her neck' (2), and makes Congreve say, 'the reason why my Lord was so successful with women as a young man, was because he

1. *The New Atlantis*, i, 26-27
took money of them' (1). These accusations also, Thackeray borrowed from The New Atalantis. The incident that Thackeray appears to have in borne in mind was the infatuation which, according to Mrs. Manley, the Duchess of Cleveland had for the young Marlborough and which was the reason for his initial success at the Court. Mrs. Manley cites several instances of Marlborough's receiving money from the Duchess of Cleveland:

a) The Duchess gave six thousand Crowns for a Place in the Prince's Bed-Chamber for him (2)

b) He had lately...drawn the last, and most considerable Sum from her. 'Tis affirm'd, that besides what she did for his Sister, and the Honours and Places of profit she procur'd for him; out of her own Cash, she at times had presented him to the value of One Hundred and Forty Thousand Crowns...He had never lov'd her; 'tis however to be supposed that he well dissembled it, and in that Point the false Lover has a thousand Advantages over the true...(3)

Mrs. Manley follows the above passages with an account of the Duke of Marlborough's affairs with women at Court and describes in detail the method employed by him to break off his relations with the Duchess of Cleveland. This aspect of Marlborough's character is not dealt with by his other biographers, many of whom praise him for leading an exemplary domestic life.

Finally, once again there is evidence of Thackeray's drawing upon Spence's Anecdotes. As an example of Marlborough's extreme cupidity and his treatment of women Thackeray relates the following story:

...Marlborough...getting a present of fifty pieces, when a young man, from some foolish woman who fell in love with his good looks, showed the money to

1. Ibid., 161
2. The New Atalantis, i, 23
3. Ibid., 29
Cadogan in a drawer scores of years after, where it had lain ever since he had sold his beardless honour to procure it (1)

In the original version of the incident in Spence's Anecdotes it is not mentioned that the money was the gift of a woman, or a gift at all:

One day, as he was looking over some papers in his scrutoire with Lord Cadogan, he opened one of the little drawers, took out a green purse, and turned some broad pieces out of it. After viewing them for some time, with a satisfaction that appeared very visibly on his face; "Cadogan, (said he) observe these pieces well! they deserve to be observed; there are just forty of them: 'tis the very first sum I ever got in my life, and I have kept it always unbroken, from that time to this day" (2)

In making use of the story Thackeray has made it further illustrative of Marlborough's character.

Thackeray's reliance on Spence's Anecdotes is also seen in his relation of another incident in Marlborough's life, namely, his loan of money to the Stuarts:

...I believe, this year he parted with a portion of the most precious part of himself - his money - which he sent over to the royal exiles (3). Coxe speaks of Marlborough's 'correspondence with the exiled family' (4), but does not say that Marlborough gave money to the Stuarts. In this instance Thackeray appears to have drawn upon the following assertions of Pope and Miss Arbuthnot that Marlborough parted with his money for the Stuarts:

a) The Duke of Marlborough was long in correspondence with the Pretender. He sent him several sums,

1. Works, X, 114-15
2. 163
4. Memoirs of Marlborough, iii, 434
and particularly five thousand pounds at the time of his expedition against Scotland...(1)

b) The Duke of Marlborough was to advance thirty thousand pounds for that expedition; and my uncle, Robin Arbuthnot, actually returned ten thousand pounds of it for him (2).

Of all the historical figures in Henry Esmond, Charles Lord Mohun (Henry, as he is christianed by Thackeray), has the greatest influence on the destinies of the members of the Castlewood family. He is presented as being responsible for the deaths of Francis Esmond and the Duke of Hamilton. The latter of these incidents is historically true and in his description of the former Thackeray drew upon an authentic incident in Mohun's life. Yet Mohun does not receive a great deal of attention from Thackeray. Apart from his brief sojourn at Castlewood Hall at the beginning of the novel he makes only two other appearances. They are in connection with the fatal duel with Francis Esmond and the duel with Henry himself in Europe. The Mohun-Hamilton duel is not witnessed by Henry, who first hears of it from Swift. There are also a number of allusions by other characters to incidents in Mohun's life and to his character.

When Mohun appears in Esmond for the first time he is described as a person of 'a handsome presence'. (3) Later, after their first meeting, Lady Castlewood, referring to his conversation, says "'Tis more amusing than that of most people I know" (4). Mohun is also described as an agreeable companion and speaking 'so as to delight all his hearers' (5).

1. Spence's Anecdotes, 313
2. Ibid., 314
3. Works, X, 133
4. Ibid., 134
5. Ibid., 133
It is possible that in presenting Mohun as a likeable and attractive person Thackeray's main intention was to emphasise his role as a villain engaged in the pursuit of women. But it is significant that in The New Atalantis, the only work which puts Mohun's character in a favourable light, he is referred to as 'that handsome Baron, whose every Motion is agreeable, and whose fine sense is so distinguishing' (1), and as 'a handsome Atalantick Lord'. (2). Further, Mrs. Manley also credits Mohun with "a prodigious Share of good Sense and exalted Wit" (3). In no other work does Mohun receive such commendation. Since Thackeray had read The New Atalantis, there is ground for assuming that in introducing Mohun in Esmond he had Mrs. Manley's observations in mind.

But notwithstanding his charming exterior, Mohun's career as it is presented in Esmond is that of a rake. Unlike Mrs. Manley who represents Mohun as having forsaken his evil ways during his mature years (4), Thackeray presents him as increasing in villainy with the advancement of his age. Mohun's character in Esmond is drawn on the same lines as in the following works:

b) Memoirs of the Kit-Kat Club

There is no external evidence of a conclusive nature establishing Thackeray's reading in the first of these books. But as suggested earlier (5), Thackeray was hardly likely not to have

1. The New Atalantis, ii, 252
2. Ibid., 246
3. Ibid., 254
4. .... I forbear particularizing the sallies of his early Years, with this just Consideration, That none can regret the Memory of them so much as he does himself. Ibid.,
5. Supra., 88
read any account of the Mohun-Hamilton duel available to him. Thackeray's character of Mohun makes his indebtedness to this work more certain.

The most detailed allusion to Mohun's character is made by Colonel Westbury, during a conversation with Henry in Newgate Prison. The relevant passage is as follows:

He was familiar with dice and women at a time other boys are at school being birched; he was as wicked as the oldest rake, years ere he had done growing; and had handled a sword and a foil, and a bloody one too, before he ever used a razor (1).

Lord Mohun's youth is described in the following manner in The Whole Lives of D. Hamilton and L. Mohun:

...his roving Genius took no Delight in Learning, for he spent his Time in Raking, Dancing, Fencing and Musick, and unhappily gave himself up to all manner of Vices that the Country and Town afforded (2).

In Memoirs of the Kit-Kat Club, too, there is a similar account of Mohun's character:

...he was, at a very early age, left to follow his own inclinations without restraint. He profited by this license to such an extent, that before he was twenty years old, he had plunged into every species of vice and debauchery; and contracted intimacies with the vilest profligates of the day, with whom he constantly identified himself, in all their drunken brawls and midnight atrocities (3).

A comparison of the three foregoing excerpts shows that Thackeray's account is closer to that in The Whole Lives of D. Hamilton and Lord Mohun. In the first two excerpts there are specific references to handling a sword and to fencing, and the description of Mohun as a 'rake' corresponds to the allusion to 'Raking'.

The Duke of Hamilton is presented in the novel as a prospective bridegroom of Beatrix's. A detailed summary of his career which

1. Works, X, 189
2. 6
3. 120
adheres pretty closely to the truth is given in the novel. Thackeray's account of the Duke's life was almost certainly taken from *The Peerage of England*. Thackeray follows Collins in all the details of Hamilton's career, a fact which can be ascertained by a comparison of the following passage in the novel describing the early life of the Duke with Collins's account of it:

Duke Hamilton, then Earl of Arran, had been educated at the famous Scottish University of Glasgow, and, coming to London, became a great favourite of Charles the Second, who made him a lord of his bedchamber, and afterwards appointed him Ambassador to the French King, under whom the Earl served two campaigns as His Majesty's aide-de-camp; and he was absent on the service when King Charles died.

King James continued my Lord's promotion - made him Master of the Wardrobe and Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Horse; and his Lordship adhered firmly to King James, being of the small company that never quitted that unfortunate monarch till his departure out of England...(1)

In *The Peerage of England* there is the following description of this part of the Duke's life:

James, Duke of Hamilton, succeeded his father. After his education at the university of Glasgow, he spent some time in travel, and on his return, discovered so much good sense, agreeable humour, and pleasant wit, that he soon became distinguished by King Charles II, who appointed him one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, and continued him 'till his death. He also was appointed his Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary to the late King of France, to congratulate that Prince upon the birth of Philip, Duke of Anjou, after King of Spain. He continued sometime in France, and served two campaigns under the King as aide-de-Camp... where he gained an universal good character. During his abode in France, England was unfortunately deprived of their Prince; but King James II continued to have the same regard for the Duke (then Earl of Arran) and named him his Envoy - Extraordinary to the court of France; and after his return to England, made him Knight of the most noble and most ancient order of the Thistle, or St. Andrew, in Scotland, master of the wardrobe, and Colonel of the royal regiment of horse. He continued

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with that unfortunate Prince to the last...(1).

Thackeray continues to trace the career of the Duke of Hamilton through the reigns of William III and Anne and right up to his death at the hands of Mohun. Although Collins's account is a little more detailed, Thackeray does not leave out important incidents in the Duke's career and also does not commit errors. Some of the incidents in the Duke's life during the reign of Anne noted by Thackeray, are as follows:

When the Whigs went out of office in 1710, the Queen began to show his Grace the very greatest marks of her favour. He was created Duke of Brandon and Baron of Dutton in England; having the Thistle already originally bestowed on him by King James the Second, his Grace was now promoted to the honour of the Garter—a distinction so great and illustrious, that no subject hath ever borne them hitherto together. When this objection was made to Her Majesty, she was pleased to say, "Such a subject as the Duke of Hamilton has a pre- eminent claim to every mark of distinction which a crowned head can confer. I will henceforth wear both orders myself."

At the Chapter held at Windsor in October 1712, the Duke and other knights, including Lord-Treasurer, the new created Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, were installed; and a few days afterwards his Grace was appointed Ambassador-Extraordinary to France...(2).

Collins records these facts of the Duke's life in the following manner:

The next year he was created a Peer of Great-Britain, by the title of Duke of Brandon, in Com. Suss. and Baron of Dutton in Com. Gest. by letters patent, bearing date September 10, 1711...

On the death of the Earl of Rivers, in 1712, he was August 29, 1712, constituted master-general of ordnance, and soon after elected one of the Knights Companions of the most noble Order of the Garter, and installed at Windsor October 26, 1712. And though his Grace met with

1. i, 490
2. Op. Cit., 397-8
considerable opposition, and had a precedent against him, yet he prevailed with the Queen to allow him to keep both orders; her Majesty being so well satisfied with the reasonableness of it, that she was pleased to declare, she would wear both orders herself. In 1713, on conclusion of the treaty of peace, he was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary to the court of France...(1).

Finally, Thackeray follows Collins in stating that the Duke of Hamilton married 'Elizabeth, daughter of Digby Lord Gerard, by which marriage great estates came into the Hamilton family!' (2). But in the novel the Duke is presented as a widower, whereas, in truth, his wife was living at the time of his fatal duel with Mohun.

Among the remaining historical personages in Anne's England introduced in Esmond, the portrait of Henry St. John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke, is the most effectively drawn. Bolingbroke appears in Esmond as he was in real life - brilliant, debonair and unscrupulous. For his knowledge of St. John's life and character Thackeray could have gone to any of the historians writing about the age. He had also a more than casual acquaintance with the writings of Bolingbroke. This is indicated by the presence in his library of several volumes of Bolingbroke's letters and other writings (3), and also by the desire he once expressed, as early as 1829, of buying a set of Bolingbroke's works (4).

Although this knowledge of Bolingbroke's life and character was acquired from a variety of sources, Thackeray's indebtedness to only a few of them could be established through traces in the text of Esmond. One of the books upon which Thackeray appears to have drawn for some of his observations on Bolingbroke's habits

2. Works, X, 398; The Peerage of England, i, 493
3. Catalogue of Thackeray's Library, 138
4. Letters, i, 37
is the Earl of Chesterfield's Memoirs, a copy of which he had in his library (1). The passage in the novel which suggests Thackeray's indebtedness to this work refers to Bolingbroke's eloquence, and is as follows:

And then the Secretary would fly out in such a rich flow of eloquence as this pen cannot pretend to recall... backing his opinion with a score of pat sentences from Greek and Roman authorities (of which kind of learning he made rather an ostentatious display)...(2).

The following similar observations about Bolingbroke are collected in Chesterfield's Memoirs:

Though his learning cannot be said to have been any other than superficial, yet he possessed so much of it, and knew how to turn it to so much advantage in conversation, that the most knowing could not pronounce him to be shallow either in divinity or philosophy (3).

Thackeray's acquaintance with Bolingbroke's works was such as to enable him to form his own opinion about the latter's learning. Yet the two foregoing passages are sufficiently similar to suggest a connection between them, an assumption which is further strengthened by Thackeray's possession of Chesterfield's Memoirs.

Evidence of a more conclusive nature suggesting Thackeray's indebtedness to Coxe's Memoirs of Walpole (4) is to be found in the text of Esmond. Bolingbroke was, like most of his contemporaries, fond of drinking, and Thackeray relates how he was often indiscreet in his conversation when drunk:

Bolingbroke always spoke freely when he had

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2. Works, X, 374.
3. Chesterfield: Miscellaneous Works, iv, Appendix 29
drunk freely. His enemies could get any secret out of him in that condition; women were even employed to ply him, and take his words down. I have heard that my Lord Stair, three years after, when the Secretary fled to France and became the Pretender's Minister, got all the information he wanted by putting female spies over St. John in his cups (1).

The incident concerning the use of spies against Bolingbroke was taken by Thackeray from the following passage from Coxe's Memoirs of Walpole:

This true jacobite project has been at last discovered, and they imagine nobody would tell it but Bolingbroke, who, they have now, as they say, clearly discovered, has all along betrayed them... I believe all poor Harry's fault was, that he could not play his part with a grave enough face: he could not help laughing now and then at such kings and queens. He had a mistress here at Paris; and got drunk now and then, and he spent the money upon his mistress, that he should have bought powder with, and neglected buying and sending the powder and the arms, and never went near the queen; and, in one word, told Lord Stair all their designs, and was had out of England for that purpose (2).

Roger Sterne is another historical character in the novel, and one whose presence is purely historical. Thackeray's interest in the works of Laurence Sterne was probably the main reason for the introduction of Roger Sterne in the novel. It is certain that Laurence Sterne's Memoirs was Thackeray's source-book for his portrait of Roger. The work is mentioned by Thackeray as his source of information for the brief sketch of Captain Sterne's life with which he begins his lecture on Sterne (3). In the novel the following reference to Roger Sterne is made:

There was one comrade of Esmond's, an honest little Irish lieutenant of Handyside's, who owed so much money to a camp sutler, that he began to make love to the man's daughter, intending to pay his debt that

1. Works, X, 419
2. ii, 307-8
way; and at the battle of Malplaquet, flying away
from the debt and lady too, he rushed so desperately
on the French lines, that he got his company; and
came a captain out of the action, and had to marry
the sutler's daughter after all, who brought him his
cancelled debt to her father, as poor Roger's fortune (1).

Thackeray's account is, as is usual in a novel, embellished a
great deal. But in its essential points it follows the following
terse narration by Laurence Sterne of his father's history:

**ROGER STERNE** (grandson to Archbishop Sterne), Lieutenant
in Handasie's regiment, was married to Agnes Hebert,
widow of a Captain of a good family. Her family name was
(Ibelieve) Nuttle; though, upon recollection, that was
the name of her father-in-law, who was a noted sutler
in Flanders, in Queen Anne's wars, where my father
married his wife's daughter (N.B. he was in debt to him),
which was in September 25, 1711, old style...(2).

Another character of minor importance in the novel is
Bishop Atterbury, who is presented as actively participating
in the plot for the Pretender's restoration. Thackeray
follows truth in his presentation of Atterbury's character whose
opposition to the Hanoverian succession is noted by the historians
writing about the age. Atterbury makes only one or two very brief
appearances in the novel. At one place in the novel it is
suggested that Atterbury swore out of vexation when he discovered
that there were grave difficulties in the way of the success of
the plot for the Pretender's restoration (3). The incident
points to Thackeray's drawing upon the following extract from
Spence's **Anecdotes**:

> Upon the death of the queen (Anne), Ormond,
> Atterbury, and Lord Marshal, held a private
> consultation together, in which Atterbury desired
> the latter to go out immediately, and proclaim the
> Pretender in form. Ormond, who was more afraid of

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1. Ibid., X, 412-13
3. ...I am not sure but the Bishop swore as he spoke...Op.Cit., 512.
consequences, desired to communicate it first to
the council. — "Damn it, Sir," said Atterbury
in a great heat, (for he did not value swearing) ... (1)

In describing the campaigns of Marlborough Thackeray makes
several references to the courage and exploits of Prince Eugene
of Savoy. His visit to England, the audience with the Queen and
her presentation of a sword of honour to him are also mentioned
in the novel. These facts are mentioned by Smollett and the other
historians of the age with which Thackeray’s acquaintance is
established. There are also the following references to the
intense hatred that the Prince had for the French King:

a) The enmity of the Prince of Savoy against the
French King was a furious personal hate...
the energy of his hatred, prodigious, indefatigable —
infectious over hundreds of thousands of men. The
Emperor’s General was repaying, and with a vengeance,
the slight the French King had put upon the fiery
little Abbé of Savoy .... (2)

b) As for the Prince of Savoy ... ‘twas known that he
was animated not merely by a political hatred,
but by personal rage against the old French King:
the Imperial Generalissimo never forgot the slight
put by Lewis upon the Abbé de Savoie ... (3)

For these observations Thackeray relied upon Memoirs of Prince
Eugene of Savoy, which contains the following passages:

a) He went by the name of the Abbé de Savoye, and the
King jocosely called him the little Abbé. His
martial inclination grew stronger with his years.
The appellation of abbé had become hateful to him,
because it was an obstacle to his military ardour ...
he requested permission of the King to resign
the ecclesiastical dignities ... and to give him a
commission in his army ... Louis refused his request ... (4)

1. 73.
2. Works, x, 313-14
3. Ibid., 351
4. p. xvii.
...I was born in France, and how I left it burning with fury against Louis the Fourteenth, who had refused me a company of cavalry, because, he said, I had too weak a constitution; and an abbey,... When therefore Louvois, on hearing of my departure, said, "So much the better, he will not return to this country again," I vowed that I never would, except as a conquering enemy, and I kept my word.(1)

And finally:

c) He is also accused of too much vindictive feeling against France, and of retaining too embittered a remembrance of the neglect which he experienced from the French Court in his youth; a feeling of resentment which sometimes led him to exult somewhat too personally in the mortifications with which he repaid it (2).

IV

Historical events which for the greater part of Henry Esmond form a background to the main story are brought into prominence with the arrival of the Old Pretender in England. In the closing chapters of the novel the story of the Esmond family also becomes the story of the efforts for the restoration of the Old Pretender to the throne of England. In interweaving the historical and the fictitious strands of his novel Thackeray not only took liberties with historical truth but also with the Pretender's character.

Thackeray's portrait of the Old Pretender is convincing but it does not resemble the original. The Old Pretender possessed a serious nature and was not given to many of the faults common to the other Stuarts. In writing about his fondness for wine and pursuit of women, Thackeray was probably thinking of the Young Pretender. It can even be argued that much of the effectiveness

1. p.xxix-xxi.
2. 140
of the Pretender's portrait is due to the fact that his qualities are supplied by Thackeray himself without regard to truth. Thackeray's unwillingness to present Henry as being responsible for the failure of his plot for the Pretender's restoration may be the reason for the unfair treatment of the latter's character. It is possible that Thackeray bore in mind Pope's remark in Spence's *Anecdotes* that 'Lord Bolingbroke quitted the Pretender because he found him incapable of making a good prince' (1). But this observation can hardly be taken as being responsible for unfair nature of the Pretender's portrait.

And yet, some of the actions of the Old Pretender vaguely echo incidents described in an earlier novel. The Pretender's chasing of Beatrix, his inability to suffer any kind of restraint, his angry rejection of Henry's advice and indeed, the final failure of the plot for his restoration, appear to have been inspired by the career of the Young Pretender as it is presented by Scott in *Redgauntlet*. *Redgauntlet* tells the story of the Young Pretender's association with Mrs. Walkinshaw and the refusal of his supporters to fight for him because of this attachment. The final scenes in both these novels depict the loss of a kingdom because of the attraction of a woman.

Among the monarchs of England it is William rather than Anne whose character stands out in greater relief. William does not make an appearance in the novel but there are a number of allusions to his courage and benevolence. As already pointed out, Thackeray follows Macaulay in his portrayal of William's character (2).

1. 300-1

2. Supra., 54-55
Finally, there is Thackeray's characterization of Queen Anne. She too, like William, always remains in the background, although a fictitious meeting between herself and the Pretender is described towards the end of the novel. Her portrait is true to history and conforms to the account of her life by the historians whose works Thackeray was familiar. The factious at her court and the detrimental effect on her health brought about by the quarrel of her ministers have already been touched upon (1). But one of Thackeray's observations concerning her suggests his borrowing from Swift's *Journal to Stella*. The relevant passage in the novel is as follows:

I saw Queen Anne at the latter place tearing down the Park slopes, after her staghounds, and driving her one-horse chaise—a hot, red-faced woman...(2)

In *The Journal to Stella* Swift makes the following references to the Queen's hunting of the stags:

a) ... but the Queen was hunting the stag till four this afternoon, and she drove in her chaise above forty miles...(3).

b) The Queen was abroad to-day in order to hunt, but finding it disposed to rain, she kept in her coach; she hunts in a chaise with one horse, which she drives herself, and drives furiously, like Jehu, and is a mighty hunter like Nimrod (4).

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1. Supra., 66
2. *Works*, x, 2
3. Swift: *Works*, i,
4. *Tbid.*,
CHAPTER IV.

Social Life.

Esmond's qualities as an historical novel lie more in the faithful representation of life in a past age than either in the presentation of historical events and personages or in the kind of historical sense which is so much in evidence in the novels of Scott. Not all the strata of society, however, have received Thackeray's equal attention. There are few detached passages descriptive of social life in the novel and the contemporary social scene is reflected through the characters and the circumstances in which they are placed. The characters simulate the manners, speech and dress of the period and their predicament and the actions in which they are involved shed light on the habits, customs and the general social life of the times.

Consequently, only the sections of contemporary society represented by the characters has been portrayed by Thackeray. These sections are as follows:

a) The country gentry
b) The country Clergy
c) The Jesuit Priests

The writers, wits and pamphleteers do not represent a contemporary section of society as such, and only that aspect of their social life is described in Esmond which they share with other members of the fashionable society in London.

Thackeray's main source-book about all these sections of society was Macaulay's History of England. Macaulay's History was not written on conventional lines and the first two volumes not only describe the political events of the last quarter of the 17th century but are equally concerned with the social conditions during
the period. The book was eminently suitable for Thackeray's purpose, and in his presentation of the different sections of society in *Esmond* he follows Macaulay in practically every detail (1).

As a matter of fact there is hardly any indication of Thackeray's having drawn upon any other source-book in describing these sections. A few of the points regarding their characteristics which Macaulay notes, have, of course, been mentioned by certain other writers whom Thackeray had read. But these later references are in most cases casual and brief and it is unlikely that Thackeray relied upon them to any great extent.

a) The Country Gentry.

In their mode of living, predicament and various other characteristics the Esmonds can be said to be typical of the late seventeenth century country noblemen. Only Henry with his classical education, his moody temperament and restrained habits differs from the other members of his family and is also not truly representative of the class to which they belong. But he too shares one of the most strongly marked characteristics of the country-gentlemen of his time, namely, their devotion to the cause of the Stuarts. Indeed, the careers of Henry and his ancestors illustrate this loyalty in no uncertain way, the siege of Castlewood Hall, George Esmond's exile, Thomas's share in the rising at Newbury and in the battle of Boyne, and Henry's plot for the restoration of the Old Pretender all being examples of it. Speaking of her devotion to the House of Stuart, Isabel Castlewood says:

"The blood of the Esmonds will always flow freely for their kings. We are not like the Churchills -

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1. Thackeray's acquaintance with Macaulay's writings is discussed earlier in this thesis. Supra., 36-38.
the Judases, who kiss their master and betray him. We know how to suffer, how even to forgive in the royal cause" (no doubt it was that fatal business of losing the place of Groom of the Posset to which her ladyship alluded, as she did half-a-dozen times in the day) (1).

Another passage in the novel referring to Thomas Esmond's loyalty is as follows:

My Lord Viscount had shown both loyalty and spirit, when these were rare qualities in the dispirited party about the King...(2)

These excerpts and indeed the entire picture of the loyalty of the Esmonds suggest Thackeray's reliance on Macaulay's History of England. The relevant passage in it which Thackeray appears to have borne in mind is in writing the passages quoted above, is as follows:

Being himself generally an old Cavalier, or the son of an old Cavalier, he reflected with bitter resentment on the ingratitude with which the Stuarts had requited their best friends. Those who heard him grumble at the neglect with which he was treated, and at the profusion with which wealth was lavished on the bastards of Nell Gwynn and Madam Carwell, would have supposed him ripe for rebellion. But all this ill humour lasted only till the throne was really in danger. It was precisely when those whom the sovereign had loaded with wealth and honours shrank from his side that the country gentlemen, so surly and mutinous in the season of his prosperity, rallied round him in a body (3).

It can be noted that the post of Warden of the Butteries and Groom of the King's Posset was awarded to 'a hanger-on of that odious Dorchester creature, my Lord Bergamot ...(4).

Lady Dorchester, formerly Catherine Sealey, was one of the mistresses of James II, and apart from the excerpt from the novel quoted above, there are several references to Isabel Castlewood's grumbling at the injustice and ingratitude shown by James II.

1. Works, X, 47
2. Ibid, 48
3. I, 323–324
4. Works, X, 17
The Esmonds are not a rich family and as a result of their comparative poverty are obliged to stay in their country seat most of the time. Thackeray mentions how Castlewood Hall was almost deserted during their occasional visits to London:

When the family was at London the whole of the establishment travelled thither with the exception of the porter - who was, moreover, brewer, gardener, and woodman...(1)

During the viscountency of Francis, the Castlewood family was a little more impoverished and it was not possible for the entire family to visit London:

My Lord went to London every year for six weeks, and the family being too poor to appear at Court with any figure, he went alone (2).

This was the predicament of a very large number of country noblemen who had lost a great part of their estates through sequestration. Macaulay's picture of their lack of means is similar to that suggested by the above excerpts from Esmond:

A country gentleman who witnessed the Revolution was probably in receipt of about a fourth part of the rent which his acres now yield to his posterity. He was, therefore, as compared with his posterity, a poor man, and was generally under the necessity of residing, with little interruption, on his estate. To travel on the Continent, to maintain an establishment in London, or even to visit London frequently, were pleasures in which only the great proprietors could indulge (3).

In their unsophisticated manners and lack of education too, the Esmonds resemble the 17th and early 18th century country noblemen as they are drawn by Macaulay. Henry, of course, because of the influence of Father Holt and his own moody temperament, enjoys reading books. But in this he clearly

1. Ibid, 34
2. Ibid, 72
3. History of England 1, 319
differs from the other members of his family, a fact which is emphasised by Thackeray in the following passage:

He read more books than they cared to study with him; was alone in the midst of them many a time, and passed nights over labours, futile perhaps, but in which they could not join him (1).

Rachel Esmond, whose father is a dean, is also out of place in the Esmond household. Alluding to her efforts at educating her children, Thackeray writes:

She made herself a good scholar of French, Italian, and Latin, having been grounded in these by her father in her youth; hiding these gifts from her husband out of fear, perhaps, that they should offend him, for my Lord was no bookman - pish'd and at the notion of learned ladies, and would have been angry that his wife could construe out of a Latin book of which he could scarce understand two words. Young Esmond was usher, or house tutor, under her or over her, as it might happen... As for the little lord, it must be owned that he took after his father in the matter of learning - liked marbles and play, and the great horse and the little one which his father brought him, and on which he took him out a-hunting, a great deal better than Corderius and Lily; marshalled the village boys, and had a little court of them, already flogging them, and domineering over them with a fine imperious spirit, that made his father laugh when he beheld it, and his mother fondly warn him. The cook had a son, the woodman had two, the big lad at the porter's lodge took his cuffs and his orders (2).

Frank's lack of schooling is also brought out in a letter which he writes to Esmond informing him about his marriage. In this letter there are various errors of spelling, e.g. 'raik' for 'rake', 'Vir-le-Roy' for 'Vive le Roy', 'enuf of soldering' for 'enough of soldiering', etc. (3) At another place in the novel he refers to the book 'Eikon Basilike' as 'Eikum Basilikum' (4)

Frank is not

1. Works, X, 74
2. Ibid, 97
3. Ibid, 360-61
4. Ibid, 499
presented as actually coarse in his manners, but there are several passages in the novel referring to the boisterous and even vulgar speech and behaviour of his father Francis Esmond. One of these is as follows:

To do him justice, my Lord never exacted this subservience: he laughed and joked and drank his bottle, and swore when he was angry, much too familiarly for anyone pretending to sublimity; and did his best to destroy the ceremonial with which his wife chose to surround him. And it required no great conceit on young Esmond's part to see that his own brains were better than his patron's, who, indeed, never assumed any airs of superiority over the lad, or over any dependant of his, save when he was displeased, in which case he would express his mind in oaths very freely...(1)

There are several other references to Francis Esmond's habit of swearing (2). A more revealing picture of Francis Esmond's daily life is contained in the following passage:

My Lord was hunting all day when the season admitted; he frequented all the cock-fights and fairs in the country, and would ride twenty miles to see a main fought, or two clowns break their heads at a cudgelling-match; and he liked better to sit in his parlour drinking ale and punch with Jack and Tom, than in his wife's drawing-room: whither, if he came, he brought only too often blood-shot eyes, a hiccuping voice, and a reeling gait (3)

Although the main purpose of the three foregoing passages from the novel appears to be the creation of a picture of domestic misadjustment, the total impression of the character of Francis and of Frank Esmond which they convey is almost exactly similar to Macaulay's description of 17th century country gentry.

1. Ibid., 75
2. 'My lord broke out into an oath' Ibid., 87
   "D---- it!' said he, with one of his usual oaths.' Ibid., 94
   'My Lord swore one of his large oaths...' Ibid., 105
3. Ibid., 82
A perusal of the following excerpt from *The History of England* brings out the closeness with which Thackeray follows Macaulay:

Many lords of manors had received an education differing little from that of their menial servants. The heir of an estate often passed his boyhood and youth at the seat of his family with no better tutors than grooms and gamekeepers, and scarce attained learning enough to sign his name to a mittimus. If he went to school and to college, he generally returned before he was twenty to the seclusion of the old hall, and there, unless his mind were very happily constituted by nature, soon forgot his academical pursuits in rural business and pleasures... His chief pleasures were commonly derived from field sports and from an unrefined sensuality. His language and pronunciation were such as we should now expect to hear only from the most ignorant clowns. His oaths, coarse jests, and scurrilous terms of abuse, were uttered with the broadest accent of his province(1).

It will be recalled that Frank's stay at Cambridge was a short one during which he was far more remarkable for his disorderly ways than for his academic pursuits (2).

The above excerpts from the novel also hint at Francis Esmond's fondness for wine. Apart from these instances, the following passage vividly brings out Francis's behaviour when in his cups:

Lord Castlewood's stories rose by degrees, and became stronger after the ale at dinner and the bottle afterwards; my Lady always taking flight after the very first glass to Church and King, and leaving the gentlemen to drink the rest of the toasts by themselves (3).

Indeed, *Esmond* creates the impression that drunkenness was a common vice during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Not only the fictitious characters but also characters such as Steele, Addison, Bolingbroke and the members of the Stuart family are shown to be excessively fond of wine. Thackeray was right

1. i, 319-20
3. Ibid., 77
about the drinking habits of these historical characters - as can be ascertained from their biographies. He was also right in writing about the fondness of wine displayed by most members of the Esmond family. If Henry himself is presented as not fond of drinking he is considered too sober for an Esmond (1). Francis Esmond is seldom presented but with a glass in his hand and Frank too, when Henry comes to Walcot after the Vigo expedition, goes on drinking late into the night (2) Once again, Thackeray appears to have used as his basis the following comments by Macaulay about the drinking habits of the seventeenth-eighteenth century noblemen:

But, as the habit of drinking to excess was general in the class to which he belonged, and as his fortune did not enable him to intoxicate large assemblies daily with claret or canary, strong beer was the ordinary beverage. The quantity of beer consumed in those days was indeed enormous. For beer then was to the middle and lower classes, not only all that beer now is, but all that wine, tea, and ardent spirits now are. It was only at great houses, or on great occasions, that foreign drink was placed on the board. The ladies of the house, whose business it had commonly been to cook the repast, retired as soon as the dishes had been devoured, and left the gentlemen to their ale and tobacco. The coarse jollity of the afternoon was often prolonged till the revellers were laid under the table (3).

Thackeray appears to have borne in mind the last to sentences of this passage while writing the preceding excerpt from *Esmond*.

Yet in spite of their lack of sophistication, fondness for drink and lack of academic achievements, the Esmonds - Thomas, Francis and Frank, are endowed with a certain dignity of character. This is partly a matter of their unswerving loyalty and devotion

1. Ibid., 246
2. Ibid., 245-46
3. History of England, i, 320-21
to the cause of the Stuarts, for which they are willing to sacrifice property position and even their lives. They are also presented as jealous of their honour. Francis Esmond's duel with Churchill (1), his fatal fight with Mohun, and Frank's meeting with the Marquis of Blandford (2), are examples of it. All the Esmonds, including Henry, are proud of their family and its traditions. Henry is conscious of the fact that though he has a bar sinister to his name it is still a noble one (3) and his anger and remorse at the news that Tom Rusher is going to marry Rachel Castlewood (4) are partly born out of family pride. A deep sense of pride in the family traditions is also evident from the following words spoken by Frank:

...we are of the oldest blood in England; we came in with the Conqueror; we were only baronets, - but what then? We were forced into that. James the first forced our great-grandfather. We are above titles; we old English gentry don't want 'em; the Queen can make a duke any day. Look at Blandford's father, Duke Churchill, and Duchess Jennings, what were they, Harry? Damn it, Sir, what are they, to turn up their noses at us? Where were they, when our ancestor rode with King Henry at Agincourt, and filled up the French King's cup after Poictiers? (5)

Again, a few paragraphs later:

"I know my place, Harry," he said. "I'm not proud - the boys at Winchester College say I'm proud: but I'm not proud. I am simply Francis James Viscount Castlewood in the peerage of Ireland. I might have been (do you know that?) Francis James Marquis and Earl of Esmond in that of England. The late lord refused the title which was offered to him by my godfather, his late Majesty... and you belong to one of the best families in England... (6)

2. Ibid. 249-51.
3. Ibid., 69
4. Ibid., 225-26
5. Ibid., 246
6. Ibid., 248
I mean to say that an Esmond is as good as a Churchill; and when the King comes back, the Marquis of Esmond's sister may be a match for any nobleman's daughter in the kingdom. There are but two Marquises in all England, William Herbert Marquis of Powis, and Francis James Marquis of Esmond... (1)

This presence of a deep awareness of their social prestige and an inborn pride in family tradition together with an absence of refinement of manners and speech was declared by Macaulay to be one of the chief characteristics of the country gentlemen. Macaulay's observations, given below, are equally applicable to the Esmonds:

Unlettered as he was and unpolished, he was still in some most important points a gentleman. He was a member of a proud and powerful aristocracy, and was distinguished by many both of the good and of the bad qualities which belong to aristocrats. His family pride was beyond that of a Talbot or a Howard. He knew the genealogies and coats of arms of all his neighbours, and could tell which of them had assumed supporters without any right, and which of them were so unfortunate as to be great-grandsons of aldermen. He was a magistrate, and, as such, administered gratuitously to those who dwelt around him a rude patriarchal justice, which, in spite of innumerable blunders and of occasional acts of tyranny, was yet better than no justice at all... Thus the character of the English esquire of the seventeenth century was compounded of two elements which we are not accustomed to find united. His ignorance and uncouthness, his low tastes and gross phrases, would, in our time, be considered as indicating a nature and a breeding thoroughly plebeian. Yet he was essentially a patrician, and had, in large measure, both the virtues and the vices which flourish among men set from their birth in high place, and accustomed to authority, to observance, and to self-respect... a man with the deportment, the vocabulary, and the accent of a carter, yet punctilious on matters of genealogy and precedence, and ready to risk his life rather than see a stain cast on the honour of his house... a rustic aristocracy which constituted the main strength of the armies of Charles the First, and which long supported, with strange fidelity, the interest of his descendants (2)

Had the above passage been written a few years later it would be

1. Ibid., 249
possible to argue that the writer had the Esmonds in mind, so well does the description fit them. Thackeray even follows Macaulay in making Thomas Esmond a magistrate (1). The great risk run by Henry, Frank and Beatrix in bringing over the Pretender to England, harbouring him, and in arranging a meeting between him and Queen Anne— and Henry's dramatic denunciation of and duel with the Pretender, because he had dared to make an attempt to tarnish the honour of the Esmonds, are all of a piece and conform with Macaulay's opinion of the country gentry.

1. Works, x, 38
The clergy of the age are represented in *Esmond* in the persons of Dr. and Thomas Tusher. Thomas Tusher in his behaviour and character resembles his father, and of the two is the less fully drawn. Dr. Tusher is presented as a clergy-man of low type. But there are indications in the novel that Thackeray considered him to be representative of the vast majority of household priests of the age. Like most country-noblemen of the age the Esmonds have their own household priest and Dr. Tusher is always flattering and trying to please his temporal masters, although he does not hesitate to betray them upon the arrival in England of the Prince of Orange (1). He does not consider it necessary to be present at the bed-side of a villager dying of small-pox and he has no aversion to joining my Lord in sampling a bottle of wine or in sharing his jokes (2). The baseness of his character is also revealed in his advances to Nancy, the blacksmith's daughter (3).

Macaulay's *History of England* appears once again to have been Thackeray's main source of information. Dr. Tusher is endowed with all the characteristics attributed to the country-clergy of the age by Macaulay. It may be pointed out that Macaulay's view of the clergy was disputed in many quarters, and in 1849,—the same year in which the first two volumes of *The History of England* appeared,—

1. Works, X, 25, 45; 57-58
2. Ibid., 9
3. Ibid., 86
Churchill Babington published a book criticising it (1). There is no evidence of Thackeray's having read this book, but he could not have been unaware of the various criticisms of Macaulay, whose view of the clergy is disapproving in the extreme. The wide prevalence of an opposite view of the clergy emphasises Thackeray's faithful following of Macaulay.

One of the facts in Dr. Tusher's life for which Thackeray drew upon Macaulay is his marriage to Isabel Castlewood's waiting-woman. Thackeray's view that such marriages were not uncommon is brought out when Father Holt maliciously points out:

Madam Tusher is attached to my Lady, having been her waiting-woman before she was married, in the old lord's time. She married Dr. Tusher the chaplain. The English household divines often marry the waiting-women (2).

At another place in the novel, Francis Esmond, lamenting the absence of pretty servants in Castlewood Hall, jokingly tells Dr. Tusher that he would probably no longer take a bride from among the servants (3).

According to Macaulay, every parson was supposed to take a wife after getting a living, and he describes the social position of the brides in the following excerpt:

With his cure he was expected to take a wife. The wife had ordinarily been in the patron's service; and it was well if she was not suspected of standing too high in the patron's favour. A waiting woman was generally considered as the most suitable helpmate for a parson (4).

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2. Works, X, 28-29
3. Ibid., 86
4. History of England, i, 328-29
A similar opinion about the wives of clergymen is also taken in Swift's Directions to Servants and John Eachard's Contempt of Clergy (1). Both these books are referred to by Macaulay as his sources of information.

Thackeray's familiarity with Swift's Direction to Servants need not be stressed. Himself patronised by a nobleman once, Swift reveals a low opinion of house-hold priests in the following advice to waiting-maids:

In such a family, if you are handsome, you will have the choice of three lovers, the chaplain, the steward, and my lord's gentleman (2).

By implication Swift places the clergymen in the same social class as the domestic servants. Eachard also makes the following reference to the commonly accepted equality of status of the waiting-women and the clergy:

And that my Cousin Abigail and he sit not too near one another at meals: Nor be presented together to the little Vicarage (3).

There is no conclusive evidence proving that Thackeray had read Eachard's book. Eachard's account, however, covering as it does the various reasons for the predicament of the clergy, should have interested Thackeray.

One of the customs which clarify the position held by Dr. Tusher in the Esmond family, and to which several references are made, is his departure from the table before the sweetmeats are

2. Swift: Works, ii, 366
3. Contempt of Clergy, 26
served. According to Thackeray the country-parson took this
treatment as a matter of course, and only stayed if specially
asked to do so. This view is suggested by the following excerpt
from the novel:

He would not hear of Dr. Tusher...going away when the
sweetmeats were brought: he had not had a chaplain
long enough, he said, to be tired of him...(1)

There is a very lively discussion between Beatrix and Henry about
the position of clergymen and the former sees nothing wrong in the
treatment meted out to them:

At this Mistress Beatrix flung up her head, and said
it became those of low origin to respect their betters;
that the parsons made themselves a great deal too proud,
she thought; and that she liked the way at Lady Sark's
best, where the chaplain, though he loved pudding, as
all parsons do, always went away before the custard (2).

Macaulay is unequivocal on the subject:

If he was permitted to dine with the family, he was
expected to content himself with the plainest fare.
He might fill himself with the corned beef and the
carrots: but, as soon as the tarts and cheesecakes
made their appearance, he quitted his seat, and stood
aloof till he was summoned to return thanks for the
repast, from a great part of which he had been excluded (3).

And making a brief for the young clergyman, Eachara writes:

And that he may not be sent away from Table, picking
his teeth, and sighing with his hat under his arm, whilst
the Knight and my Lady eat up the tarts and chickens ..(4).

This peculiar custom is also mentioned in The Tatler (No. 255),
in the following passage:

I would rain ask these stiff-necked patrons, whether they
would not take it ill of a chaplain, that in his grace
after meat should return thanks for the whole entertainment,

1. Works, X, 9
2. Ibid., 144
3. History of England, i, 328
4. Contempt of Clergy, 26
with an exception to the dessert? And yet I cannot but think, that in such a proceeding he would but deal with them as they deserved. What would a Roman Catholic priest think, who is always helped first, and placed next to the ladies, should he see a clergyman giving his company the slip at the first appearance of the tarts and sweet-meats? (1)

A later issue of The Tatler contains a letter from a chaplain, describing how he was treated more respectfully in his patron's house after The Tatler's appeal on behalf of clergymen. The letter, among other things, refers to the respectful treatment now offered to him by the young lady in the house, in the following words which contain an odd coincidence:

"Mrs. Beatrice dropped me a courtesy as she went by" (2)

1. The British Essayists, V, 207
2. Ibid., 224.
Apart from Father Holt there are no Jesuits in Esmond. But, as already pointed out, in portraying his character Thackeray endows him with all the characteristics generally attributed to the Jesuits of the age. As in the case of the country gentry, Thackeray appears to have drawn solely upon Macaulay's History of England for his portrait of Father Holt. All the aspects of Father Holt's character are mentioned by Macaulay in his description of the Jesuits.

One of the most definite indications of Thackeray's drawing upon Macaulay's observations on the character of the Jesuits is contained in the following excerpt from the novel:

"I may have been in Pekin," says he, "or I may have been in Paraguay - who knows where? I am now Captain von Holtz, in the service of his Electoral Highness, come to negotiate exchange of prisoners with his Highness of Savoy" (1).

These remarks are made by Father Holt and it is the reference to Pekin and Paraguay that establishes Thackeray's indebtedness to Macaulay. The relevant passage from The History of England is as follows:

They wandered to countries which neither mercantile avidity nor liberal curiosity had even impelled any stranger to explore. They were to be found in the garb of Mandarins, superintending the observatory at Pekin. They were to be found, spade in hand, teaching the rudiments of agriculture to the savages of Paraguay (2).

The above excerpt from Esmond contains only one of the several references to Father Holt's travels. He is presented as a restless

1. Works, X, 298
2. ii, 55
indefatigable spirit always moving from one country to another. Indeed, the very last allusion to him in the novel is about his presence in America:

I saw him in Flanders after this, whence he went to Rome to the headquarters of his Order; and actually reappeared among us in America, very old, and busy, and hopeful. I am not sure that he did not assume the hatchet and mocassins there; and, attired in a blanket and war-paint, skulk about a missionary amongst the Indians. (1)

Apart from the passage quoted earlier, Macaulay makes the following further allusion to the travels of the Jesuits:

Whether the Jesuit should live under the Artic circle or under the equator, whether he should pass his life in arranging gems and collating manuscripts at the Vatican or in persuading naked barbarians in the southern hemisphere not to eat each other, were matters which he left with profound submission to the decision of others. If he was wanted at Lima he was on the Atlantic in the next fleet. If he was wanted at Bagdad he was toiling through the desert with the next caravan. (2)

In the first of the passages quoted here from *Esmond* there is an allusion to Father Holt's disguise as Captain von Holtz of the Elector's army. There are several other references to the various disguises adopted by Father Holt. One of these is as follows:

Harry had been accustomed to see Father Holt in more dresses than one; it not being safe, or with the danger, for Popish ecclesiastics to wear their proper dress; and he was, in consequence, in no wise astonished that the priest should now appear before him in a riding dress, with large buff leather boots, and a feather to his hat, plain, but such as gentlemen wore. (3)

Father Holt's habit of disguising himself on occasions was

1. Works, X, 513
3. Works, X, 42
shared by Jesuits in general, as Macaulay points out in the following passage:

They glided from one Protestant country to another under innumerable disguises, as gay Cavaliers, as simple rustics, as Puritan preachers (1).

Even in writing about the influence of Father Holt on Henry during the years of his childhood and boyhood, Thackeray appears to draw upon Macaulay. Henry is first brought to Castlewood Hall by Father Holt, to whose care he is then entrusted. Thackeray gives the following description of the influence of Father Holt's teaching on young Henry:

At first they read much and regularly, both in Latin and French; the Father not neglecting in anything to impress his faith upon his pupil, but not forcing him violently, and treating him with a delicacy and kindness which surprised and attached the child, always more easily won by these methods than by any severe exercise of authority. And his delight in their walks was to tell Harry of the glories of his order, of its martyrs and heroes, of its brethren converting the heathen by myriads, traversing the desert, facing the stake, ruling the courts and councils, or braving the tortures of kings; so that Harry Esmond thought that to belong to the Jesuits was the greatest prize of life and bravest end of ambition; the greatest career here and in heaven the surest reward; and began to long for the day when he might join that wonderful brotherhood, which was present throughout all the world, and which numbered the wisest, the bravest, the highest born, the most eloquent of men among its members. (2)

The main references in this passage are to the great achievements of the Jesuits and also to the delicate way in which Father Holt tries to indoctrinate young Henry and gains an ascendancy over

1. History of England II, 52
2. Works, X, 31-32
his mind. Macaulay, too, in the following passage, remarks upon the glories claimed by the Jesuits and their ability to influence the mind of the young people:

Before the order had existed a hundred years, it had filled the whole world with memorials of great things done and suffered for the faith. No religious community could produce a list of men so variously distinguished: none had extended its operations over so vast a space; yet in none had there ever been such perfect unity of feeling and action. There was no region of the globe, no walk of speculative or of active life, in which Jesuits were not to be found. They guided the counsels of kings. They deciphered Latin inscriptions... The liberal education of youth passed almost entirely into their hands, and was conducted by them with conspicuous ability. They appear to have discovered the precise point to which intellectual culture can be carried without risk of intellectual emancipation. Enmity itself was compelled to own that, in the art of managing and forming the tender mind, they had no equals. Meanwhile they assiduously and successfully cultivated the eloquence of the pulpit. (1)

Father Holt's method of teaching is exactly similar to that described by Macaulay. It may be recalled that he not only tells Henry of the great achievements of the Jesuits, but also instructs him not to talk of them except under direction (2).

Father Holt's participation in a large number of intrigues reflects yet another aspect of the life of the Jesuits. He is presented as taking part in the proposed uprising at Newbury, in the Fenwick conspiracy (for which he is jailed) (3), a proposed landing in Scotland by the Pretender (4), and various

2. Works, X, 32.
3. Ibid., 211
4. Ibid., 309
other plots. The low nature of some of these conspiracies is emphasised by Thackeray in the following passage:

On one of these many coward's errands then (for, as I view them now, I can call them no less), Mr. Holt had come to my Lord at Castlewood, proposing some infallible plan for the Prince of Orange's destruction, in which my Lord Viscount, loyalist as he was, had indignantly refused to join. As far as Mr. Esmond could gather from his dying words, Holt came to my Lord with a plan of insurrection, and offer of the renewal, in his person, of that marquis's title which King James had conferred on the preceding viscount; and on refusal of this bribe, a threat was made, on Holt's part, to upset my Lord Viscount's claim to his estate and title of Castlewood altogether (1).

Father Holt's lack of scruples regarding the fairness of the means adopted to bring about the restoration of the Stuarts and the establishment of his faith was, according to Macaulay, a characteristic shared by all Jesuits:

It was alleged, and not without foundation, that the ardent public spirit which made the Jesuit regardless of his ease, of his liberty, and of his life, made him also regardless of truth and of mercy; that no means which could promote the interest of his religion seemed to him unlawful, and that by the interest of his religion he too often meant the interest of his society. It was alleged that, in the most atrocious plots recorded in history, his agency could be distinctly traced; that, constant only in attachment to the fraternity to which he belonged, he was in some countries the most dangerous enemy of freedom, and in others the most dangerous enemy of order. (2).

It will be recalled that meeting Henry in Europe, Father Holt, disguised as Captain Von Holtz, tells him that all disguises are fair 'in the cause of religion and loyalty' (3).

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1. Ibid., 210-11
Finally, Macaulay speaks at great length of the manners in which the Jesuits twisted truth in order to satisfy a particular person of situation. Macaulay points out that in the books of casuistry which had been written by his brethren and printed with the approbation of his superiors were to be found doctrines consolating to transgressors of every class (1). This and other similar observations of Macaulay, seem to be the origin of the passage in Esmond where, Father Holt points out to Henry the circumstances under which one is justified in telling a lie (2).

The following passage also tells how Father Holt advised the Dowager Viscountess not to reveal the secret of Henry's birth:

..my director counselled me to be silent; and that it was for the good of the King's service that the title of our family should continue with your husband the late Viscount, whereby his fidelity would be always secured to the King.(3).

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2. Works, X, 44-45.
3. Ibid., 364.
CHAPTER V

The London of Thackeray.

The early part of Henry Esmond is set in Castlewood and it is only when Henry accompanies Francis Esmond on his fatal journey to meet Mohun that the scene is shifted to London. There are, of course, some allusions to London prior to this visit, just as a number of events in the latter part of the novel take place in Castlewood, Walcote and also in Europe. But, generally speaking, the topography of London, its places of amusement, and the fashionable life of the city are described in that part of the novel which tells of Henry's exploits as a young nobleman.

As in the case of Thackeray's presentation of the social life in Anne's England, the topographical details of London are usually introduced through the various activities and conversation of the characters. It is noticeable that in the whole of the novel there are no detached descriptions of the city. The following passages may be taken as illustrating Thackeray's method of introducing the names and description of places:

He bade his man give no hint to my Lady Dowager's household of the expedition on which he was going: and as Chelsey was distant from London, the roads bad, and infested by footpads, and Esmond often in the habit, when engaged in a party of pleasure, of lying at a friend's lodging in town, there was no need that his old aunt should be disturbed at his absence....(1).

The sun was shining though 'twas November: he had seen the market-carts rolling into London, the guard relieved at the palace, the labourers trudging to their work in the gardens between Kensington and the City - the wandering merchants and hawkers filling the air with their cries (2);

1. Works, X, 226
2. Ibid., 428.
Even when, as in the above passages, places are referred to in the course of the narration of an event, these seldom carry many details. Since the city is seen through the eyes of a contemporary, the absence of descriptive passages is not unusual. But it is also likely that Thackeray made a deliberate attempt not to overburden his narrative with detailed descriptions of the topography of London. It is significant that Isabel and Rachel Castlewood have their houses respectively in Chelsea and Kensington - where many of the incidents during Henry's stay in London take place.

In those days neither Chelsea nor Kensington were part of the City of London, both being described in contemporary writings as villages two or three miles from London. Consequently, they were not surrounded by a labyrinth of streets but by fields and gardens. Thus, on his way from Beatrix's place, Henry walks across fields and meadows and sees 'the labourers trudging to their work in the garden between Kensington and the City' (1), and the back windows of Lady Castlewood's house command a view of Chelsea from where Isabel Esmond's chairmen bring her 'to Kensington across the fields' (2).

As a matter of fact, only at two places in *Esmond* we get a detailed description of a part of the city. But although not many places in London are described in the novel, a large number of them are mentioned, and in introducing them Thackeray does not commit topographical errors. He had a clear picture in his mind of the different places where the incidents in the novel take place (3).

For his knowledge of the topography of London in the eighteenth century Thackeray appears to have been indebted to the following two

1. Ibid.,
2. Ibid., 335
3.
works:


ii) London and its Environs Described. Containing an account of Whatever is most remarkable for Grandeur, Elegance, Curiosity or Use, in the City and in the Country twenty Miles round it. 6 vols., London 1761.

The first of these books was used by Thackeray in his lectures on The English Humourists (1). A copy of the second book, London and its Environs was in Thackeray's personal library (2).

Peter Cunningham's book is intended to be a guide-book for a visitor to the city. It lists and describes not only famous streets and places of historical importance but also the jaunts of amusement like taverns and coffee-houses, and also relates their past histories and gives extracts containing references to them in books and pamphlets. London and its Environs, on the other hand, is written in the manner of an orthodox geography-book, its main intention being to provide an idea of the topography of London and places lying near it. When Thackeray refers to any part of London or to places near it, like the Bloomsbury Square, Chelsea and Kensington, he appears to be indebted to London and its Environs. But in his allusions to the taverns and other public meeting places, and to individual buildings, his main source-book seems to be Handbook of London (3)

1. Works, XI, 260, 295. The book was first published in 1849, but Thackeray used the 1850 edition. This is proved by the second reference to it in his Lectures (Works, XI, 295).

2. Catalogue of Thackeray's Library, 146

3. This view is substantiated by the manner in which Thackeray draws upon the Handbook of London, in his Lectures: 'Will's Coffee-house was on the west side of Bow Street, and "corner of Russell Street"' (Works, XI, 26).
The most detailed description of London in *Esmond* is as follows:

The fellow in orange-tawny livery with blue lace and facings was in waiting when Esmond came out of prison, and, taking the young gentleman's slender baggage, led the way out of that odious Newgate, and by Fleet Conduit, down to the Thames, where a pair of oars was called, and they went up the river to Chelsey. Esmond thought the sun had never shone so bright; nor the air felt so fresh and exhilarating. Temple Garden, as they rowed by, looked like the garden of Eden to him, and the aspect of the quays, wharves, and buildings by the river, Somerset House, and Westminster (where the splendid new bridge was just beginning), Lambeth tower and palace, and that busy shining scene of the Thames swarming with boats and barges... They rowed up at length to the pretty village of Chelsey, where the nobility have many handsome country houses; and so came to my Lady Viscountess's house, a cheerful new house in the row facing the river, with a handsome garden behind it, and a pleasant look-out both towards Surrey and Kensing-ton, where stands the noble ancient palace of the Lord Warwick, Harry's reconciled adversary (1).

For his description of Henry's journey up the river Thackeray need not have gone much beyond a study of the map of the city of London prefixed to the fourth volume of *London and its Environs* (2). The course of the river Thames is prominently sketched in the map, and Fleet Conduit, the Temple, Somerset House, Westminster Bridge and Lambeth Palace - the objects mentioned by Thackeray in the above passage are clearly marked upon it. Lambeth Tower is not recorded on the map, but it was only a part of the Palace, which is described elsewhere in *London and its Environs* in the following manner:

The Palace, with the rows of trees before it, and the church of Lambeth adjoining, when viewed from Thames, makes a pretty picturesque appearance, and this is the view given here (3)

The picture referred to in the preceding passage shows the river

1. Works, X, 198
2. There are more than one copys of this book in the British Museum.
3. iii, 291.
Thames in the foreground, with boats sailing on it, and Lambeth Palace and Tower standing on the opposite bank (1).

Thackeray was wrong in mentioning 'the splendid new bridge' at Westminster, which was not started till 1738. The map, drawn at a later date, shows Westminster Bridge, which is also described at length elsewhere in London and its Environ (2). Fleet Conduit along which Henry comes down to the Thames, was a canal with sidewalks, coming from Newgate and Ludgate Hill down to the river. It had ceased to exist by the middle of the 18th century, and is not described in London and its Environ. In this case Thackeray's source-book appears to have been Cunningham's Handbook of London (3).

Chelsea is described in London and its Environ as 'a very large and populous village, two miles from London, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Thames almost opposite to Battersea' (4). The account also contains a reference to Robert Walpole's house at Chelsea 'adorned with a noble collection of pictures', and further mentions, 'there are several other private buildings worthy of the observation of the curious' (5). In speaking of the 'many handsome country houses of the nobility,' Thackeray had probably these observations in mind. The description of Isabel Esmond's house with its beautiful garden and 'a pleasant look-out towards Surrey and Kensington' resembles that of Chelsea Hospital as it is given in London and its Environ:

The front toward the north opens into a piece of

1. Ibid., facing page 291
2. Ibid., ii, 305, et. seq.
3. 183
4. London and its Environ, ii, 101
5. Ibid.
ground laid out in walks for the pensioners; and that facing the south, into a garden which extends to the Thames, and is kept in good order. This side affords not only a view of that fine river, but of the county of Surrey beyond it. (1)

The second volume of this book contains a map of 'The Environs and countries twenty miles round London' (2) which also may have been helpful to Thackeray in this instance. The map shows Chelsea and Kensington lying away from London, and on different sides of Knightsbridge, 'between London and Kensington' where Esmond had taken lodgings' (3).

The second important reference in the novel to the topography in London is as follows:

Our rooms were the three in the gate over Newgate – on the second story looking up Newgate Street towards Cheapside and Paul's church. And we had leave to walk on the roof, and could see thence Smithfield and the Blue Coat Boys' School, Gardens, and the Chartreux, where, as Harry Esmond remembered, Dick the Scholar, and his friend Tom Tusher, had had their schooling (4).

In this description Thackeray mentions the names of certain places lying in the vicinity of the Newgate Prison, without furnishing any other details. The information conveyed in the above passage could have been collected by him from Cunningham's Handbook of London. But Thackeray was also himself a pupil at Charterhouse and was well aware of the historical significance of the buildings and places around the school (5).

There is one more detailed reference to London's topography in Esmond. This is contained in the following remarks made by

1. ii, 103.
2. Frontispiece.
3. Works, X, 379
4. Ibid., 195
5. Supra., 10-11
Bolingbroke during a party at Kensington:

"Do I know the Mall? Do I know the Opera? Do I know the reigning toast? Why, Bloomsbury is the very height of the mode... You have gardens all the way to Hampstead, and palaces round about you - Southampton House and Montague House" (1).

Bolingbroke's remarks are made in reply to Mrs. Steele's invitation to him to come to her house in Bloomsbury Square. The following similar description of Bloomsbury Square is given in London and its Environs:

This square has been lately embellished with many good houses, and the grass plots in the middle surrounded with neat iron rails. The north side is entirely taken up with Bedford House, which is elegant, and was the design of Inigo Jones...Behind the house are extensive gardens which command a view of the country, and particularly of Highgate and Hampstead (2).

It will be noted that the passage from Esmond implies that Bloomsbury was just emerging as a fashionable residential locality, and that it also refers to the extensive gardens about it which continue up to Hampstead. The proximity of Bloomsbury Square to Southampton House and Montague House is not mentioned in London and its Environs, but they are described in The Handbook of London.

In describing Southampton House Cunningham quotes the following passage:

"Southampton House, a large building with a spacious court before it for the reception of coaches, and a curious garden behind, which lieth open to the fields, enjoying a wholesome and pleasant air" - Strype, B. iv, p.84 (3)

And Montague House is described by Cunningham through the following excerpt from Evelyn's Diary:

3. Handbook of London, 461
"To see Mr. Montague's New palace neere Bloomsbery, built by our curator, Mr. Hooke, somewhat after the French; it was most nobly furnish'd, and a fine, but too much exposed garden." (1)

II

Although Thackeray's picture of London is wanting in purely topographical details, it does, nevertheless, provide a remarkable glimpse of the life in the city. Perhaps no aspect of Anne's England held a greater attraction for Thackeray than the world of the coffee-houses, theatres and other resorts of the fashionable society in London. Most of the well known places frequented by the wits, noblemen, soldiers, and, in some cases, by the ladies of fashion, have been mentioned in Esmond. As already suggested, Thackeray does not usually describe the locale or environs of these places, but succeeds in recapturing their spirit.

The Tatler and The Spectator were among the works through which Thackeray became acquainted with the London of the early eighteenth century. As already pointed out, The Tatler was used by Thackeray in his portrait of Steele, and there are several references to both these publications in Esmond. But a correct idea of Thackeray's reliance upon them for his knowledge of life in London can be had from the following passage from his lecture on Steele:

As we read in those delightful volumes of the Tatler and Spectator the past age returns, the England of our ancestors is revivified. The Maypole rises in

I. Ibid., 342
the Strand again in London; the churches are thronged with daily worshippers; the beaux are gathering in the coffee-houses; the gentry are going to the Drawing-room; the ladies are thronging to the toy-shops; the chairmen are jostling in the streets; the footmen are running with links before the chariots, or fighting round the theatre doors (1).

The Spectator and The Tatler were only two of the periodical publications of the age that Thackeray had read and which were useful to him in writing Esmond. The eighteenth century was prominent for such publications, some of them political and others dealing with the social life of the times. Thackeray's acquaintance with such publications and even with works of a less respectable nature, is brought out in the following passage from the same lecture:

I have looked over many of the comic books with which our ancestors amused themselves, from the novels of Swift's coadjutrix, Mrs. Manley, the delectable author of the 'New Atlantis', to the facetious productions of Tom Durfey, and Tom Brown, and Ned Ward, writer of the "London Spy" and several other volumes of ribaldry. The slang of the taverns and ordinaries, the wit of the bagnios, form the strongest part of the farrago of which these libels are composed. In the excellent newspaper collection at the British Museum, you may see, besides the Craftsmen and Postboy specimens - and queer specimens they are - of the higher literature of Queen Anne's time (2)

The phrase 'higher literature' is, of course, used satirically. The above passage is followed by Thackeray's comments on a particular number of the British Apolo, a lesser known eighteenth century periodical publication. As a matter of fact, a considerable part of this lecture is directed to a criticism and appreciation of contemporary publications. Indeed, from Thackeray's letters and other writings including Esmond, it may be gathered that he had

1. Works, Xi, 200.
2. Ibid., 205
some acquaintance with most of the popular publications of the age. Thackeray's reading in a wide variety of popular works containing allusions to the life in London is also indicated by the manner in which this life is depicted in *Esmond*. As in the case of the topography of London, there are few detached and detailed descriptions of city life. Most of the references to the taverns and coffee-houses and the behaviour of the city-people are casual, as if the narrator is speaking about familiar facts of life. That Thackeray was able to achieve this impression is a commentary on his affinity with the eighteenth century world and also on his acquaintance with eighteenth century publications of a popular and topical nature.

In Anne's time, London had a large number of coffee-houses and these were the most popular meeting places of the wits, noblemen and other members of the fashionable society. The most well known among the coffee houses, Button's, Will's and the Cocoa-Tree have been mentioned in *Esmond* (1).

For his knowledge of the names of these resorts, Thackeray need not have gone beyond Cunningham's *Handbook of London* (2). But although Thackeray does not describe these coffee-houses, they are presented as part of the fashionable life of the city where wits and soldiers and politicians discussed the affairs of the nation and contemporary events.

2. pp. 92-93; 554-556; 133-134
The casual manner of Thackeray's referring to the coffee-houses and other places of public resort is reminiscent of the observations regarding such places in the journals of the 18th century. The following passage from The Spectator No. 1, for instance, refers to a number of public places in London mentioned by Thackeray:

There is no place of general resort wherein I do not often make my appearance; sometimes I am seen thrusting my head into a round of politicians at Will's, and listening with great attention to the narratives that are made in those little circular audiences. Sometimes I smoke a pipe at Child's, and, while I seem attentive to nothing but the Postman, overhear the conversation of every table in the room. I appear on Sunday nights at St. James's coffee house, and sometimes join the little committee of politics in the inner room, as one who comes there to hear and improve. My face is likewise very well known at the Grecian, the Cocoa-tree, and in the theatres both of Drury Lane and the Haymarket. I have been taken for a merchant upon the exchange for above these ten years, and sometimes pass for a Jew in the assembly of stock-jobbers at Jonathan's.(1).

Most of these popular places, and others, have also been mentioned in The Tatler. Will's coffee house, for instance, was one of the places where The Tatler was supposedly written.

Not only are the leading resorts of the fashionable society mentioned in Esmond, but there are also several references to London haunts of a less respectable nature. Thomas Esmond, for instance, is presented as spending much of his time in the shady lairs in the city. Moreover, he is not the only member of his family pictured as leading a wild life. Frances and Frank during their stay in London visit the gaming houses and taverns and mix with doubtful company. As a matter of fact, just as on the one hand they represent the country-noblemen of the age, on the other, they, in their search for amusement, resemble the people who
actually frequented the bagnios, ale-houses and gaming dens in the London of those days. It should, however, be remembered that this aspect of their lives is not enlarged upon by Thackeray.

The transactions in the notorious London places in seventeenth and eighteenth century London have been admirably described by Edward Ward, Thackeray's familiarity with whose works is self-acknowledged (1). Among Ward's works *The London Spy* (2) contains the most comprehensive account of the occurrences in these abodes. Thackeray had also certainly read *The Midnight Spy* (3), another book of a similar nature that he had in his library. But Thackeray's knowledge of the life in the vulgar liars of London was not exclusively drawn from these works. The novels of Mrs. Manley, the plays and miscellaneous other works of Tom Durfey and Tom Brown, all shed light on the bare actions perpetrated in these haunts. Macaulay, too, in his *History of England*, describes the lawlessness in these places and in the streets of London after midnight. By comparison, Thackeray's portrayal of this aspect of London is far less detailed, but it is neither vague nor misleading.

And yet, notwithstanding this absence of details, Thackeray appears to have borne in mind particular passages in *The London Spy* and *The Midnight Spy*. One of the reasons for assuming his greater reliance on these works is that Mrs. Manley, Tom Durfey and Tom Brown are, in their writings, usually concerned with telling a

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1. Supra., 170
story. Consequently, in their works the contemporary, fashionable and foppish society of London is presented through implication rather than through descriptive passages. In the earlier mentioned books, on the other hand, the reader is taken on a tour of the different taverns, coffee-houses and other meeting places, and the happenings in these resorts are related with a great deal of detail. The careers of some of the characters frequenting these haunts are also described, and these appear to have been particularly helpful to Thackeray.

Thomas Esmond, Henry's father, is portrayed by Thackeray as the wildest member of his family and as living a life of dissipation during his younger days:

He had dissipated his small paternal inheritance of a younger brother's portion, and, as truth must be told, was no better than a hanger-on of ordinaries, and a brawler about Alsatia and the Friars....(1)

Two paragraphs later Thackeray makes a further reference to Thomas Esmond's way of life:

...his Lordship going in state to his place at Court, while his nephew slunk by with his battered hat and feather, and the point of his rapier sticking out of the scabbard - to his two-penny ordinary in Bell Yard (2)

Thackeray's reference to 'Alsatia and the Friars' is in keeping with his portrayal of Thomas Esmond's character. Alsatia is described in The Handbook of London, in the following manner:

ALSATIA. A cant name given before 1623 to the precinct of White friars, then and long after a notorious place of refuge and retirement for persons wishing to avoid bailiffs and creditors (3)

1. Works, X, 14-15
2. Ibid., 15
3. 11
The following passage quoted in Handbook of London contains some traces of Thackeray's drawing upon the book in this instance:

"Courtine. 'Tis a fine equipage I am like to be reduced to; I shall be ere long as greasy as an Alsatian bully; this flopping hat, pinned up on one side, with a sandy weather-beaten peruke, dirty linen, and to complete the figure, a long scandalous iron sword jarring at my heels"...

There is a marked resemblance between the manner of dressing described here and that of Thomas Esmond's with 'his battered hat and feather, and the point of his rapier sticking out of his scabbard'.

'Bell Yard', the tavern where Thomas Esmond is shown as going for his 'twopenny ordinary' had an unsavoury reputation. Cunningham quotes a passage from one of Pope's letters, where there is a reference to 'that filthy old place Bell Yard' (2).

In The London Spy and The Midnight Spy, characters like Thomas Esmond, excelling in deceit and lacking in decency, dissipating their estates in riotous living, are presented as the type of people most addicted to the low haunts of London. The following passage from The London Spy contains a reference to such persons:

Those you must know, says my Friend, are Gentlemen in Distress; some coming to their Estates so Early, before they had sense enough to preserve 'em, have been Bubbled by the Town Parasites, Taverns, Whores, and Sharpers, till reduced to Misery, and made the sad Examples of their own Extravagance; and are now waiting with a hungry Belly, to fasten upon some Old Acquaintance for a Dinner...(3).

In The Midnight Spy, too, a similar character is pictured:

...I could scarce keep my eyes from that meagre figure, whose very countenance seems to indicate his necessitous condition. -- That, replied the Spy, is the once gay

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., 47
3. 164
and gallant Hippolito, the pride of the Park and the Playhouse.

Having lavished a large fortune in riotous living, he is reduced to the disagreeable necessity of accepting a weekly pittance, from the very men who shared the spoils of his ruined estate (1).

In *Esmond* there are references to Thomas's 'lean and shabby' look, his rigorous fasting twice a week, his 'last coat but one' being 'in pawn', and to his device of acquiring Lord Castlewood's wealth (2). Again, like Hippolito in the above excerpt from *The Midnight Spy*, Thomas Esmond is shown as a regular visitor to the playhouses 'as long as he had money to spend among the actresses' (3).

Perhaps no other vice was as wide-spread in the London of those days as that of gambling. Certainly no other vice was responsible for the ruin of more young noblemen, merchants, and other people with money. The taverns of London were infested with card-sharpers who preyed upon the unsuspecting visitors. Francis Esmond proves an easy victim to these dishonest gamblers:

...he was often tricked about horses, which he pretended to know better than any jockey; was made to play at ball and billiards by sharers who took his money, and came back from London woefully poorer each time than he went... (4).

At another place in the novel, Francis confesses to Henry:

I left Beatrix with her relations, and went to London; and I fell among thieves, Harry, and I got back to confounded cards and dice... (5).

In *The Midnight Spy* there are several references to the methods adopted by the gamblers to seduce the new arrivals to the city.

The following passage, for instance, describes the activities of

1. 49-50
2. Works, X, 14-15
3. Ibid., 15
4. Ibid., 76
5. Ibid., 149-50
city gamesters and their associates:

...That man and woman, gay and polite as they appear to be, are the very dregs of mankind. The one a common prostitute, the other an arrant gambler, who in conjunction, lay in wait to seduce the unwary. — If they had prevailed on you to accompany them, they would either have drawn you into play, or wheedled you into amorous embraces, or if neither of those arts succeeded, would have ill-treated you 'under some false and scandalous pretence; it is almost impossible for any person that is cajoled into their trammels, to escape without much detriment both in person and property...(1).

The following reference to the dishonesty of the gamblers is also from The Midnight Spy:

The gamblers will persuade you 'tis the fairest of all kinds of play, depending absolutely on chance, wholly irrespective of judgement, but they have a method of changing the dice, and introducing such as they can manage to their advantage. You may observe with what eagerness each takes up the cup, impatiently waiting a throw in his favour. But do not these persons of eminence think it derogatory to their honour to rank with others so much their inferiors, cried the countryman? Not on these occasions, said Urbanus, for death and the dice level all distinctions (2).

It is likely that Thackeray relied upon the foregoing passages among others, in writing about Francis's mixing with the low company at taverns and his being cheated at cards and dice.

Unlike Thomas, Francis, notwithstanding his visits to London, remains a country-nobleman. In fact his very adventures in the metropolis emphasize this; he is both swindled by gamblers and falls a prey to tawdry women. Thackeray also makes is clear that Francis is recognizable as a visitor from a rural area. Before his fatal duel with Mohun, Francis goes to see a play and is accosted there by Mrs. Bracegirdle:

She was disguised as a page, and came and stood before

1. 9
2. 51
the gentlemen as they sat on the stage, and looked over her shoulder with a pair of arch black eyes, and laughed at my Lord, and asked what ailed the gentleman from the country, and had he had bad news from Bullock fair? (1).

Another reference to Francis Esmond's residence in the country is made in the following dialogue between him and Lord Mohun:

"Damned awkward is a damned awkward expression, my Lord," says the other. "Town gentlemen don't use such words - or ask pardon if they do!"

"I'm a country gentleman," says my Lord Viscount.

"I see it by your manner," says my Lord Mohun. (2)

Thackeray does not exaggerate the derision with which country-noblemen were looked upon by the city-dwellers. All the books mentioned in this section contain stories regarding the treatment meted out to country-squires on their visits to London. But it is only Macaulay who examines the phenomenon closely. In his History of England, he writes:

...when the lord of a Lincolnshire or Shropshire manor appeared in Fleet Street, he was as easily distinguished from the resident population as a Turk or a Lascar. His dress, his gait, his accent, the manner in which he stared at the shops, stumbled into the gutters, ran against the porters, and stood under the waterspouts, marked him out as an excellent subject for the operations of swindlers and banterers (3).

There is little doubt that Thackeray was familiar with this passage. Francis Esmond is not presented as totally unaware of the transactions in London. It is mentioned that during his youth he was familiar with the haunts of London (4). Perhaps the recording of this incident in his career is intended as an explanation for the mildness of the banter aimed at him.

1. Works, X, 168
2. Ibid., 170
3. i, 370-71
Like many noblemen of the times, Francis Esmond is shown as keeping a mistress for some time. Thackeray describes her as 'a Princess of a noble house in Drury Lane somewhere, who was installed and visited by my Lord at the town eight miles off...' (1). Actually she hardly enters the story, although there are a few other references to her. In some of Thackeray's source-books a number of similar occurrences are described. In *The Midnight Spy*, for instance, the following story is related about a young man visiting an ale-house:

Affecting the fashionable taste, he hired lodgings in Berkeley Square, and took into keeping a celebrated courtesan, whom he maintained in the utmost splendour. He then set up his chariot, and being Phaetontically inclined, would frequently drive his mistress to some neighbouring villages, on parties of pleasure (2).

Mohun's description of Francis's mistress as 'the vulgar trapesing orange-girl' (3), however, suggests Thackeray's possible drawing upon a particular episode in *The Midnight Spy*, the relevant passage being as follows:

...her last resort for a livelihood was to sell oranges at the playhouses.

In this low ebb of fortune, she took possession of the heart of Sir John Manly, who took her into keeping, and allowed her a very genteel maintenance (4).

Finally, Frank Castlewood's exploits in London are described in the following manner:

...the young rogue spent more than half his time in London, not appearing at Court or in public under his own name and title, but frequenting plays, bagnios,

2. 74
3. *Works*, X, 149
4. 137
and the very worst company...(1).

The passage does not reveal anything new about the life in London. But it bears a certain resemblance to the following observations in *The Midnight Spy*:

> Observe that table thronged with gamesters, and blush that England's interest is thus neglected, while her senators squander their time in company with sharpers and villains (2).

It will be noted that Frank does not appear at Court but spends his time in bagnios and plays.

2. 84.
APPENDIX

Direct Reference to Books and Journals in Esmond.

It is only natural that in a novel featuring several contemporary writers there should be occasional references to some of their works. Besides, Henry himself is presented as an assiduous reader and as possessing considerable literary ability. In the course of the story he helps Addison in writing The Campaign, writes a play (1), contributes to the political journals (2), and composes a false number of The Spectator(3). It is in keeping with his character, therefore, that in narrating his story he makes a number of allusions to contemporary works. Some of the other characters also refer to books and journals of the age.

Only three books, however, are given a place of importance in the novel. These are as follows:

i) The Campaign
ii) The Christian Hero
iii) Eikon Basilike’ (4)

The Campaign, as already seen, is featured in Esmond in connection with the portrayal of Addison's character (5). The most detailed allusion to The Christian Hero is as follows:

...Dick the Scholar...had wrote a book called the "Christian Hero", and had all the Guards to laugh at

1. Works, X, 379
2. Ibid., 414
3. Ibid., 380-385
4. ii) The Christian Hero; an argument proving that no principles but those of religion are sufficient to make a great man. London, 1701 (by Richard Steele).
   iii) Eikon Basilike; the pourtraicture of his Sacred Majestie in his solitudes and sufferings; together with his private prayers, used in the time of his restraint, and delivered to D. Juxon, Bishop of London, immediately before his death. London 1649 (purported to be written by Charles I.)
him for his pains, for the Christian Hero was always breaking the commandments constantly, Westbury said, and had fought one or two duels already (1).

The novel contains one more instance of Westbury referring to Steele as the 'Christian Hero' (2), and Steele himself tells Henry of his dedication of the book to Lord Cutts (3).

When the Pretender arrives in England, a volume of Eikon Basilike, purported to be written by Charles I, is 'laid on the writing-table' (4). Later in the novel Beatrix uses the book to conceal in it a note for the Pretender (5). Another book to which reference is made in Esmond is John Gay's The Beggar's Opera (6). Thackeray calls the book the 'Rogue's Opera' and mentions two of its characters, Lockit and Peachum (7). Thackeray also, at the beginning of the novel, refers to Addison's Cato (8), calling it 'the noble piece of Cato' (9), and later mentions its simultaneous publication with Henry's own play as one of the reasons for the latter's failure on the stage (10). The following works, on the other hand, are merely alluded to by Thackeray:

i) The Mourning Bride by William Congreve

ii) Love in a Wood by William Wycherley (11)

1. Works, X, 169
2. Ibid., 188
3. Ibid., 192
4. Ibid., 453
5. Ibid., 499, 511
6. The Beggar's Opera (in three acts)...London, 1728 (by John Gay)
7. Op. Cit. 467
8. Cato; a tragedy (in five acts and in verse) London, 1713 (by Joseph Addison.)
10. Ibid., 379
    ii) Love in a Wood, or, St. James's Park. A comedy, etc. (in five acts and in prose) London, 1694.
iii) The Funeral by Richard Steele

iv) Trivia by John Gay

v) The Grand Cyrus by Madelène De Scudéry

The first three of these works are plays and were popular in the fashionable society of the eighteenth century. The remaining two works also created a furore at the time of their publication.

Among the contemporary journals The Spectator, The Tatler and The London Gazette are frequently referred to by Thackeray. His reliance on these publications has been touched upon in the preceding chapters of this thesis. Esmond also contains a reference to The Observator (2) and two references to The Postboy (3).

Thackeray's drawing upon The Tatler for his portrait of Steele has already been pointed out. At another place in Esmond, Bolingbroke quotes from The Tatler, No. 49:

How charming the 'Tatler' is! We all recognised your portrait in the 49th number, and I have been dying to know you ever since I read it. 'Aspasia must be allowed to be the first of the beauteous order of love'. Doth not the passage run so? 'In this accomplished lady love is the constant effect, though it is never the design; yet though her mien carries much more invitation

1. iii) The Funeral: or Grief a-la-mode. A comedy (in five acts and in prose) London, 1702

iv) Trivia; or the Art of Walking the Streets of London. London 1716.

v) Artamenes, or the Grand Cyrus, an excellent new romance. Written by Monsieur de Scudéri. ... Englished by F.G. 5 vols. London 1653-55.

Works, x, 202; 168; 195; 411; 36. In Esmond, there is the following reference to The Funeral: 'When does your new comedy appear, Mr. Steele?' Works, x, 195
than command, to behold her is an immediate check to loose behaviour, and to love her is a liberal education' (1).

The original passage in The Tatler is as follows:

Aspasia must, therefore, be allowed to be the first of the beauteous order of Love, whose unaffected freedom, and conscious innocence, give her the attendance of the Graces in all her actions....In this accomplished lady, love is the constant effect, because it is never the design. Yet, though her mien carries much more invitation than command, to behold her is an immediate check to loose behaviour (2).

In a few cases Thackeray either introduces an excerpt from a contemporary work or alludes to a character in it, without mentioning the book itself. For instance, he writes in the prologue to Esmond:

So Queen Medea slew her children to a slow music: and King Agamemnon perished in a dying fall (to use Mr. Dryden's words)...(3)

Thackeray is wrong in speaking of Dryden here. He appears to have had in mind Pope's line in St. Cecilia's Day:

Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes,  
In broken air, trembling, the wild music floats;  
Till, by degrees, remote and small,  
The strains decay,  
And melt away,  
In a dying, dying fall (4).

L. Works, x, 338
2. The British Essayists, ii, 84
3. Op. Cit., 1
Thackeray also makes a reference to Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*. This is contained in the scene describing Henry's present of a diamond necklace to Beatrix:

... and the next minute the necklace was where Belinda's cross is in Mr. Pope's admirable poem, and glittering on the whitest and most perfectly-shaped neck in all England (1).

Thackeray's allusion is to the following couplet;

On her white breast a sparkling Cross she wore, Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore (2).

The novel also contains a reference to *Gulliver* (3), and one to *Rosamund* (4). The full titles of the works from which these names are taken are as follows:


1. *Works*, x, 403
4. Ibid., 99
THE CAMPAIGNS OF MARLBOROUGH

i) Alison's account of the march of Marlborough through Holland in 1704 and of the battle of Schellenberg:

...Continuing his march up the Rhine by Coblentz and Cassel, opposite Mayence, he crossed the Neckar near Ladenbourg on the 3rd June. From thence he pursued his march without intermission by Mundelsheine, where he had, on the 10th June, his first interview with Prince Eugene, who had been called from Italy to command the Imperial forces, in the hope he might succeed in stemming the torrent of disaster in Germany. From thence he advanced by great Heppach to Langenau, and first came in contact with the enemy on the 2nd July, on the Schullenberg, near Donawert. Marlborough, at the head of the advanced guard of nine thousand men, there attacked the French and Bavarians, 12,000 strong, in their intrenched camp, which was extremely strong, and after a desperate resistance, aided by an opportune attack by the Prince of Baden, who commanded the Emperor's forces, carried the intrenchments, with the whole artillery which they mounted, and the loss of 7,000 men and thirteen standards to the vanquished. He was inclined to venture upon this hazardous attempt by having received intelligence on the same day from Prince Eugene, that Marshal Tallard, at the head of fifty battalions and sixty squadrons of the best French troops, had arrived at Strasburg, and was using the utmost diligence to reach the Bavarian forces through the defiles of the Black Forest. But this advantage was not purchased without a severe loss; the Allies lost 1500 killed and 4000 wounded; and Marlborough himself, who headed the decisive attack, and was among the first to enter the trenches, was in the greatest danger (1).

ii) Coxe's account:

a) At Coblentz his army traversed the Moselle and the Rhine on the 26th of May, while he paid a visit to the Elector of Treves at Elrenbreitsten. Here, as elsewhere, he was received with respect and admiration; every class, from the subject to the sovereign, vied in expressions of gratitude and joy, and his march resembled rather a triumphal procession, than the movement of an army to the conflict. From Coblentz he sent his baggage and artillery up the Rhine to Mentz, and again led the advance with his cavalry. His arrangements were equally adapted to gain time and spare his troops. He moved at the first dawn of morning, and reached his intended camp before the heat became oppressive, so that the men were as much refreshed by a rest of several hours as by the halt of a day (2).

1. Military Life of Marlborough, 72-73
2. Memoirs of Marlborough, i, 242
b) Such being the preparatory arrangements of the evening, the detachment moved at three in the morning on the 2nd of July, under the direction of the duke himself, and at five was followed by the army, which filed by the left in two columns along the main road, leading through Roerbach towards a height between Obermorgen and Weinstein...(1)

c) The Schellenberg is a height overhanging Donawerth and the left bank of the Danube...Along the front was an intrenchment, which ran from the covert way of Donawerth, was connected with an old fort on the brow of the hill above, and embracing the summit descended on the opposite flank to the very bank of the river. Of this work the central part alone was in a state of defence, but the remainder was in a rapid progress of advancement (2).

d) Marlborough, who had greatly exposed his person in the conflict, and given his orders with his usual calmness, entered the works at the head of the first squadron... The route and carnage which ensued may be more easily conceived than described. Many were intercepted in their way to Donawerth, while many hurrying to the bridge, broke it down by their weight, and were lost in the Danube. Others dispersing on every side, came in as deserters to the victorious army. D'Arco himself escaped with difficulty, and his son was among those who perished in the river (3).

iii) The account in Marlborough's Dispatches:

Bulletin. Camp at Obermergen,

3rd July, 1704.

On Tuesday we continued our march within sight of the Elector of Bavaria's army, and encamped with the right at Amerdingen and the left at Onder Ringen, where upon our arrival, my Lord Duke of Marlborough having advice that the Elector had sent good part of his troops to reinforce those on the Schellenberg near Donawert, being a post of great consequence to the enemy and where they had been for several days intrenching themselves, his Grace resolved to attack them, and accordingly yesterday, about three in the morning, put himself at the head of six thousand detached foot and thirty squadrons of the left wing, besides three regiments of Imperial grenadiers, and advanced to the river Wermitz, while the rest of the army followed...the attack began about six in the afternoon, and the enemy being strongly retrenched maintained the fight with great obstinacy for an hour and a

1. Ibid., 259
2. Ibid., 260
3. Ibid., 265
half, during which there was a great fire on both sides without the least intermission: at last they were forced to yield to the bravery of our troops, who made a great slaughter of them (1).

1. i. 340-41
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Published by Authority.

From Thursday June 1. to Monday June 5. 1704.

Lettuce, May 23. N.S.

The last Letters from our Camp at Cresseniers advise, That the Duke of Vendome was preparing to decamp, intending to repel the Swiss, and to leave about 8000 Men well intrenched at Prat, under the Command of Monseigneur Langlade. The Enemy have taken 2 Places of Canzon, with some 800 Men, which the Duke took by force, and returned upon them, with Ammunition and Stores necessary for such an Enterprise. His Royal Highness keeps a watchful Eye upon the Enemy's Motions, and is so contentious Policy, that he is not to be forced. He expects to attack the Castle of Cernay, by the Bridge over the Po, whereby there is a free Communication between his Camp and that Town; and the Place it self is already well provided with all the necessary for a Siege, but if the Enemy attempt that Siege, it will cost them very dear. They write from Douaine and Savoy, That the Forces which the Enemy had lately sent towards Provence, in order, as they gave out, to attempt the Siege of Nice, were marched back again; and that the Duke de la Platière is drawing together those Forces, and some others, to the number of 8000 Foot, with some Horse, with intent to besiege Savoy, and have provided two Pieces of Ordnance to draw his Cannon. He is also informed in this Expedition by a Lieutenant-General, and by Mons. Boff, Intendant General of Dignemps. His Royal Highness, upon these Advices, has sent his Forces from Feraya, with the Command of Monseigneur D'Harlay, to the Garson of Safes, and to secure such Posts about that Place, as might be of any Advantage to the Enemy. Two English Frigates, which had been cruising in the Mediterranean, are turned back, and two other English Frigates, and four French Ships arrived last week at Genoa, with Recruits and Horses from Toulon to the French Army in Italy. We hear that 6 Prussian Men of War, which had been ready for some time at Anzio, and which had been cruizing off Altamone, and were put into Barcelos, are failed from that Port, upon the receipt of an Express, from Alandia, which was found in the English Ship, and that they did not day to take it, and that they have not attempted to attack it. The Prince is favoured with an Intelligence, That the Diamond Cutters are working at the Island of Monte Carlo, and that the French have a different Treatment, and have had the Spanish Ambassador here. The French have shipped several Muses in Savoy, that were going with Merchandise from hence to Lyons, which landed, as they expected, at all the Mouths of Savoy, and that one of the Prince's Commands, which had been done in the Middle, Prince Eugene's Equipage is gone from Oignia to meet him on the Borders of Englands. We have an Account from Oignia, that the Prince, who lay near Genova having received a Reinforcement, Count Konigseck had been obliged to retire from hence to his Garson at Alessandria; The French attacked him in his March, and he lost about 30 Men in the Action, but he killed several of the Enemy, which was taken at Alessandria, and several Subalter Officers, and other Prisoners.

Darmstadt, May 28. General Steinbach came hither yesterday, and demanded of our Magistrates, That they would sign certain Articles he has lately proposed to them, (whereby, among other things, they would oblige themselves to enter into the Conferences against the King of Poland, and to send two of his Subjects (thus declaring) That if they do not sign them by the 1st, the King his Master will take other Measures. They write from Rigia, That an Army of 10000 Muses is come into the Neighbourhood of Genoa.

Venice, May 24. The Elector Palatine is on his Departure from hence for Dresden. Our last Letters from Hungary say, That Prince Eugene was at Kastilin, and that Count de Stoffl had ordered the Cannon at Corunna, and was encamped near Ahe Regis.

Zurich, May 28. The French Ambassador has at last delivered a Memorial to the General Diet of the Swit. Cantoners, at Basle, concerning the Neutrality of Savoy. The Conjunction of all he promises is, That his Master will give Assurances to the Canton, even to write if they desire it. That whenever a Peace is concluded, he will not unite Savoy to his Crowns; but he does not say that he will not keep in his Possession. This Amendment gives the Canton a great fad, and the Ambassador's Behaviour left for he is very in his Behaviour of the Deputies. Several Mules are arrived at Schaffhauen, with Money to pay the French Army in Savoy, and a Guard of 2000 Men to march in that Place to convey them. Lieutenant-General d'Uff in came with this Guard, and is arrived at Schaffhauen, intending to go to Perterberg. It is said he writes very lately. Letters from Schaffhaussen say, the French and Bavarian Army have marched to Athens, and are endeavouring to march back to Ulm, and that Prince Lewis's Army follows them very closely.

From the Duke of Marlborough's Camp at Schaffhauen, May 28. N.S. On the 24th Instant the Duke of Marlborough went to view the Elector of Trier's Castle at Bonnstein, while the Horse and Dragoons under his Command were paling the River. His Grace was joined with a Triple Discharge of the Cannon of that Place, Dinner with the Elector, and marched in the afternoon to Bredenbach, a Town belonging to the Landgrave of Hesse Darmasth, where his Grace was also joined with a Triple Discharge of the Cannon from that Place. Yesterday the Landgrave made a Visit to his Grace at Bredenbach. His Grace marched thence that day, and as he passed by the Castle was again saluted with a Triple Discharge of the Cannon. We understand there is a reconciliation between the King and the Elector of Hesse, and are come this day to Schaffhauen. The French marched yesterday from Coventry to Bredenbach, and this day to Neuburg, having Orders to follow with all possible Diligence. The Count of Warthausen has arrived with word of the arrival of Her Majesty of Great Britain; Monseigneur d'Almeis, Envoy Extraordinary from the States General; and Mr. Davault, Her Majesty's Muller at Frankfort, came to wait upon his Grace at Coburgh, to whom they have promised us, and will attend his Grace as their own, and return to the States General, to acquaint them, That they have given Orders for a Reinforcement of 8 Battalions and 30 Squadrions to be sent from the Army on the Rhine. The Duke of Marlborough's Camp at Cafel, May 30. Yesterday we continued our March from Schaffhauen to this Place, being a Village on the Rhine, being-against Mayence. The Duke of Marlborough, upon his Arrival here, made a Visit to the Elector of Mayence, and found at the Landing-place on the other side of the River several of the Elector's Coaches, which attended to carry his Grace and his Return to the Palace. To the mean the he was saluted by a Discharge of the Cannon round the City. His Grace Dined with the Elector; after which a Conference was held between the Generals about our further Moviments. This morning his Grace, attended by the principal Officers of the Army, visited the Fortifications of Mayence, and was again saluted with a Discharge of the Cannon. His Grace Dined again this day with the Elector, who had intended to come over the Rhine, and to view the Rivers, but was prevented by the badness of the Weather. To narrow we shall pass the Main, and proceed with all Diligence towards the Neckar to 20 to pass that River the 3d next Month at Landenburg.

Nuremberg, May 30. Prince Eugene arrived here this evening, being come from Piemonte, and will continue his Journey to-morrow towards Swabia, in order, as it is said, to put himself at the head of the Imperial Army there, Prince Lewis being to command upon the Rhine.

Frankfort, June 1. Our last Letter from the Confederate Army commanded by Prince Lewis of Baden are of the 15th of last; but we have had no News from the Enemy. These Letters contain, That Prince Lewis having on the 2d last Detachment to secure that Port, they met with one of the Enemy, whom they engaged, and being taken in with the Enemy's Baggage, took several Bales

Mules
From the Diamond Merchant of this Port, Geo. Bayly
Maitre, in 5 weeks and odd days from Lisbon.

July 26th. On the 27th Instant Maj. Gen. Hey's Ship from the Island of Southward. This morning there passed into our Roads 15 Sfff of laden Colliers to the Southward, under Conduct of His Majesty's Ship the Greyhound and Kinsale. There was in all Roads Her Majesty's Ship the Brittish, with Several Merchant Ships bound for Holland, waiting a last

Wind.

St. James, May 31st. Her Majesty and his Royal Highnesses went from hence this day in Whipple.

Whipstreet, May 31st. A Mail came in this evening from Whipple, with the following Advertisements.

Thursday, May 21st. The two Armies continued in the same Post. We hear the Duke of York is going to repair the Po in order, as it is believed, to engage us; but the Duke of Marlborough has reached his Place, with a Bridge of Communication over the Po, to dispute it, that the French may, in all probability, find this a very difficult Enterprize. We have Advice from Dussaing, that the Duke of York stopped a Merchandize of 2,000 Casks, and some Troops, as it is reported, to beeliege Pavia.

From the Duke of Marlborough's Camp at Caffa, May 30th. On the 28th Instant the Duke of Marlborough went to view the Elector of Tressau's Castle at Heidelberg, while the Horse and Dragoon were passing over the Rhine.

Friday, May 22nd. The Elector of Tressau, together with the Elector of Brandenburgh, came to this Place, over again to Mayence. The Duke of Marlborough, upon his Arrival here, went to visit the Elector of Mayence, with whom he dined, after Dussaing a Conference was held with the Generals about the mutiny of the Horse, and to take the ends of the Army, and proceed with all Diligence towards the Nassau, so as to pass that River the 3d of the next Month at Leidenburgh. 

Saturday, June 6th. Prince Lewis of Baden is now enclosed in Stettin, having several times endeavored to elude the Elector of Bavaria to a Battle, which he has still avoided. The Elector's Army lies near from Stettin. Prince Lewis is now in a Manner to be rendered useful to his Allies, in order to take upon him the Command of that Army, Prince Lewis being to command upon the Universe. The mare de l'Etat is now marching towards the Port of Riga.

Hague, June 6th, N.S. The Spanish Army commanded by Monmouth having quitted began to march towards the Eddyba, and the Dutch came up with the Army across the Netherlands, but the Army, desiring to avoid coming out to the Enemy, returned towards their Lines; Montmorency, more especially advancing a nearer way towards these Lines, did not take any steps for the advantage of the Dutch or Dutchmen, but the Army returned towards their Lines of Wellingtot, there being but too much sea regard since up that side, and having posted itself in the Lines, ten to twenty thousand of Bersaglieri, by the Orders of the Duke of Marlborough, was directed to assist the Dutch, in order to remain any longer there, left the Army, the whole Army coming upon him before our Army could advance further to support him, and another Army was left to return, and our Army encamped near Hamhury. The Enemy got into their Lines, where they remain very quiet. It is thought the Spanish Army will now march towards the Dutch, if the Dutch enterprise, and some other French troops.

The Rt. Honorable the Lord High Treasurer of England having directed the Payment of the Out-Pensions belonging to the Royal Hospital at Nantes have an Allowance of 8d. 1.4. 4.

The four hands hereby Granted or Demanded for the said Out-Pensions, for Covenants or otherwise, are desired to bring their Covenants to Mr. George Deane, at the 32 Green Bush in Southwark, on which the said Hands shall be delivered, in entire Volums, at the Saturday ensuing to reserve the same, before the 1st of July, 1704. After which no such Claims will be allowed.

To the Officers for Taking, Stating and Determining, the

Orders of this Army, or having under their examination the Account of the Office of Major-General Winch's Regiment for Horses for their Service in Ireland, we hereby give Notice hereby, that all Officers, Enrolled, or otherwise, shall be requested to take their Orders from this Office, and to bring their Accounts to Mr. George Deane, at the 32 Green Bush, in Southwark, on which the said Hands shall be delivered, in entire Volumes, at the Saturday ensuing to reserve the same, before the 1st of July, 1704. After which no such Claims will be allowed.

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