Friends and Enemies
in Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift

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I

"I have been severall months writing near five hundred lines on a pleasant subject, onely to tell what my friends and enemeyes will say on me after I am dead."¹ From Swift's descriptions of Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift in these or very similar words, over and over in his letters, it is evident that (however later critics may have described the poem) when he himself thought of it as a whole, he thought of it as a poem about friendship and enmity, and as a poem about what people would say of him after he died.² Despite abundant commentary on the poem's textual history, its structure, genre, irony, vanity, politics, religious lessons, and multiplication of identities, we still have not paid enough attention to the basic question of what it is about. Some discussions, moreover, have insisted too much upon finding Swift an exemplary poet and moralist. But Ronald Paulson, Marshall Waingrow, and David M. Vieth have spoken of friendship as a topic of the Verses; and I propose, without purporting to rescue the poem from the fascinated uneasiness with which we read it, or to explain away its rhetorical flaws, that a fuller recognition of Swift's strong emphasis on friendship and enmity would correspondingly benefit our understanding of the poem's intended meaning.³ To that end, I seek to show how the poem emphasizes friendship of a particular kind; then, to illum-
nate a crucial context of the poem in the details of Swift's actual friendship and enmity with Queen Caroline and Mrs. Howard; and finally, to discuss some implications of this subject for the poem's most vexed critical problem, which is the interpretation of the concluding eulogy on Swift.

That the idea of friendship gives the Verses a loosely defined unity is suggested not only by Swift's own repeated descriptions of the poem and by its epigraph, but also by the large outlines of its structure. The first of the three main sections, the proem (1-72), states and illustrates with some comic irony La Rochefoucauld's bitter remark that "in the Adversity of our best Friends, we find something that doth not displease us." (More accurately, this section demonstrates the slightly more palatable fact that we envy their good fortune.) The second section (73-298) loosely illustrates the maxim by showing how Swift's friends will "find their private Ends" in his last illness and death, just as much as his enemies will. The final section (299-484)—the troublesome one—is a monologue, a eulogy on Swift, delivered by neither a friend nor an enemy but, we are told, a neutral—"one quite indiff'rent in the Cause" (305). Swift's point is that he cannot expect the praise he deserves from a friend: the eulogy thus wittily and ironically underscores the statement about friendship made in the first two sections.

The emphasis on friendship is further visible in the sheer number of times friend, friendship, and related words appear. The importance of the idea, not merely in this poem but in Swift's verse as a whole, is suggested by the statistic that friend and related words appear more frequently in Swift's verse than any other noun—a distinction Swift's verse shares, to some degree, with Pope's. By contrast, Josephine Miles has shown, friend is not among even the ten most recurrent nouns in the poetry of Chaucer, Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Donne, Herbert, Milton, Collins, Gray, Burns, Cowper, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Browning, Poe, Emerson, or Housman.

Not all critics have observed the natural connection between friendship and the poem's other main topic, Swift's death. Swift is drawing upon a traditional expectation that a friend will speak in one's favor when one cannot with tact and propriety do so oneself, and will
preserve one's memory when the time comes. Friendship has indeed
been seen as one of the few hedges against mutability which this life
offers. Moreover, death offers an analytical test of friendship: What
residue of genuine regard for Swift will be left when people who know
him have nothing to hope or fear from him any longer? Swift's ageing,
illness, and loneliness make him seem to himself already moribund
socially and politically; hence, probably, his interest in this mode of
analysis. Edward Said and David M. Vieth have underscored the
poem's effort to fix a certain image of Swift in the minds of posterity.
But while posterity has naturally seen the poem from this point of
view, Swift's primary intent is to express his frustration, disappoint­
ment, and anger that, as he expects, his contemporaries will fail to
show their friendship for him, when put to the test, in failing to
confirm his view of himself.

In recounting and judging various failures of friendship, Swift
applies not the exalted amicitia so much praised by ancient moral­
ists—and abused down to the present day by the greeting-card-senti­
ment mongers—although, as Paulson says, that is an unreached
ideal constantly standing behind the poem. Rather he uses an equally
ancient, more prudential notion of friendship, commonplace to
Swift's readers and abundantly available in such sources as courtesy
books. Aristotle usefully distinguishes in the Nichomachean Ethics be­
tween three kinds of friendship—an ideal and permanent kind based
on virtue and lesser kinds based on pleasure and usefulness, respec­
tively. In his poem Swift emphasizes useful friendship, and though it
was understood that a useful friendship might grow into a virtuous
one, and that a virtuous one would of course be useful, he here touches
friendship founded on virtue only through raillery (lines 207-8
perhaps excepted). For Swift, amicitia lends itself too readily to bur­
lesque, as when, in the scatological anguish of "Cassinus and Peter,"
another poem of 1731, Peter "conjures" Cassinus "by Friendship's
sacred Laws," assuring him, "Thy Friend would gladly share thy
Fate." Swift preferred to leave the subject alone rather than appear a
sentimental hypocrite, just as he avoided the appearance of piety to
avoid the appearance of pious hypocrisy. A more practical considera­
tion may have been that, as Addison said, "no subject of morality
[had] been better handled and more exhausted” than that of friendship. But Swift’s readiness to think of even the highest kinds of friendship in terms of usefulness can be seen in his references to Stella as a “useful” and “valuable” friend.

As Marshall Waingrow has noted, the idea of friendship broadens naturally in the poem to include the obligations of almost any public or private relationship not involving enmity. The world is a moral battleground of foes and friends in which one is attempting to survive. And in these verses on Swift’s death, survival is at issue. He complains that

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  "  ev'n his own familiar Friends
  "Intent upon their private Ends;
  "Like Renegadoes now he feels,
  "Against him lifting up their Heels.
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(403-6)

His choice of words is telling. Here, as in Homer and Aristotle, a friend is a person on whom one may absolutely rely, and who will help one survive hostility or competition. Actions, not sentiments of altruism, are involved: friends do services for one another. Friendship of this practical sort, like the higher sorts of friendship, ought to be based on merit, and the benefits friends mutually extend ought to be unrestrained by party or faction. Such friendship is not a contract and is thus not enforceable at law; yet civil society is based upon a general and voluntary acceptance of its obligations, and they make possible whatever is good and honorable in social intercourse. To satirize false friendship against this pragmatic standard not only enables Swift to avoid cloying platitudes, but it also permits him to attack such false friends as Queen Caroline and Mrs. Howard for failing to meet even the lowest standards of decent behavior.

Gratitude is closely linked to useful friendship; thus the references in the poem (text and footnotes) to the vice of ingratitude. One of the most startling documents of Swift’s later years is the list he made of his friends, classed as Grateful, Ungrateful, Indifferent, or Doubtful. John Lyon, who tended Swift in his last years, preserved a copy and added this explanation: “He was so generous & warm in his Friend-
ships, that he had a singular pleasure in recommending or doing kindnesses to all persons in whom he saw any degree of merit. And when he met with gratitude, he got his Reward, & expected no other. Upon a Paper he wrote down ye Names of several Persons... whom he stiles Ungratfull, Gratefull, Indifferent[]. Others, according to their behaviour at different times are marked d. doubtfull, & so forth—" The list happens to include some of those mentioned in Verses on the Death: Mr. Pope—grateful; Mr. Gay—grateful; Qu[een] C[aroline]—ungrateful. The association of friendship and gratitude, clear in the list and in Lyon's comments, is not uncommon in the more pragmatic ancient and contemporary ethical writings.¹⁸

Ingratitude is the vice which comprehends all others—a truism so trite Swift includes it in his "Tritical Essay."¹⁹ The comprehensiveness is visible in the fact that we may speak of gratitude or ingratitude not only between two persons as equals but also between parent and child, host and guest, king and subject, and indeed between a person and the state or the public. Examples from ancient and Renaissance literature spring readily to mind. Gratitude, like friendship, is a public as well as a private virtue.²⁰

The catalogues of virtues and vices which occur at various points in Swift's works—as in Book IV, Chapter 12, of Gulliver's Travels—usually include generosity, friendship, benevolence, fidelity, and gratitude among the virtues, and ingratitude and envy among the vices.²¹ "Some of the blackest and basest [Vices] do often prove the surest Steps to Favour; such as Ingratitude," Swift says in his sermon "Of Conscience."²² The utopian sixth chapter of "A Voyage to Lilliput" tells us that ingratitude is a capital offense in that place, for "whoever makes ill Returns to his Benefactor, must needs be a common Enemy to the rest of Mankind, from whom he hath received no Obligation; and therefore such a Man is not fit to live." And among the Houyhnhnms, "FRIENDSHIP and Benevolence are the two principal Virtues."²³

Whenever friendship goes right, friendship and merit and power seem inseparable: the friends' interests conflict neither with each other nor with the public good. But when it does not go right, we see the selfishness of those concerned, and we find that partisan or self-
serving alliances, ingratitude, and contempt for merit (whether personal virtue, wit, or judgment) are the motives. Thus a poem about the failures of friendship, especially political friendship, becomes a poem about courts and courtiers, flattery, betrayal, unworthy loyalty, and the perpetration of stupidity and bad taste. For much the same reason, one of the principal complaints in the final section of the Verses is that "Ingratitude he often found,/And pity'd those who meant the Wound" (359–60); and the reference in the footnotes to being "remember[ed] with Gratitude" (168 n.) is central, like much else in the footnotes. The conflict between friendship properly acted and friendship corrupted or ended by death or separation is simply what happens in the "Course of Nature" (74): "the Fault is in Man-kind" (4), or as Swift explained to Mrs. Moore, "Life is a Tragedy" and "God, in his Wisdom, hath been pleased to load our declining Years with many Sufferings, with Diseases, and Decays of Nature, with the Death of many Friends, and the Ingratitude of more." Given the imagined occasion of his death, therefore, Swift has ample opportunity to satirize those who fail as friends, who are ungrateful, and who disregard true merit, while he represents himself as a friend to the public and—with more delicate implications—to a small group of Englishmen on whose friendship his own self-esteem particularly depended: Pope, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke, Pulteney, and Gay.

II

The poem draws a certain coherence from its ethical framework, but the illustrative particulars—the satiric indictments of enemies and treacherous friends—attract the reader's attention more immediately. And although Swift can illustrate the poem with details of his career in the ministry's service during Queen Anne's reign, the wrath visible in Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift was especially energized by his experiences in the period from his English visit of 1726 until he composed the poem in 1731. For him the decisive event of these years (apart from Stella's death in 1728) was the failure of Walpole's government to fall when George II came to the throne in June 1727.
The disappointment of this moment, as seeming "friends" aligned themselves with Walpole and power, is interestingly revealed in a letter Pulteney wrote in September: "I own that I am grown quite out of humour with the world, and the more I grow acquainted with it, the less I like it. There is such a thing as cunning, there is falseness and there are views of self-interest that mix themselves in almost all the friendships that are contracted between man and man. These make friendship hardly worth cultivating any where [and] I am sure no where worth being at any considerable charge to preserve it." For Swift, the event confirmed Walpole's hostility to him and brought him into the disfavor of Queen Caroline and Mrs. Howard.

In the poem, Queen Caroline and the Countess of Suffolk (formerly Mrs. Howard) suddenly appear among assorted anonymous people, as Swift's death is announced in London:

Kind Lady Suffolk in the Spleen,
Runs laughing up to tell the Queen.
The Queen, so Gracious, Mild, and Good,
Cries, "Is he gone? 'Tis time he shou'd.
"He's dead you say; why let him rot;
"I'm glad the Medals were forgot.
"I promis'd them, I own; but when?
"I only was the Princess then;
"But now as Consort of the King,
"You know 'tis quite a different Thing."
(179-88)

Not simply enemies, the Queen and Lady Suffolk are friends turned enemies. This mockery, so daring that it was, with its footnotes, a sea of blanks in Faulkner's editions of 1739, is climactically placed in the middle of the poem. The passage concerns the most important recent failure of friendship in Swift's life. It occurred at court in 1727, and in order to explain fully the intensity of Swift's anger in these lines, it is necessary to examine the way his perception of this event developed, starting the previous year.

For most readers the importance of the summer of 1726 in Swift's biography is that he was then arranging the publication of Gulliver's Travels; potentially much more significant for him, however, were his meetings with Sir Robert Walpole and Caroline, then Princess of
Wales. To both he spoke as an Irish leader who, having recently triumphed as Drapier, was to be reckoned with. His principal effort—to persuade Walpole to adopt policies more favorable to Ireland (192 n.)—quickly failed, but at least he seemed successful in clearing John Gay from the accusation of having libelled Sir Robert: Walpole admitted his conviction that Gay was not the author. Swift later concluded, however, that Walpole irrationally continued to treat Gay as guilty.27

Swift’s discussions with Caroline began formally enough, also on the subject of Ireland. Unlike Walpole, she assured Swift that she (when she became queen) would give particular attention to the Irish problems he laid before her.28 And she shared his condemnation of Walpole’s prejudice against Gay.29 During the summer they established a relationship of familiar friendship: the Princess had a high regard for Swift’s “witt & good Conversation,” Dr. Arbuthnot reported, and as an excellent conversationalist herself, she was unquestionably attractive to Swift.30 His poem “A Pastoral Dialogue between Richmond-Lodge and Marble-Hill” (1727) provides a glimpse of their easy informality, Swift paying a visit to the Princess “to Spunge a Breakfast once a Week,” and joking about the quality of the food.31

This friendship continued through letters after Swift returned to Ireland in 1726. He addressed the letters to Mrs. Howard, one of her Women of the Bedchamber, but as Swift realized, the Princess read them. To Horace Walpole’s records of his conversations with Lady Suffolk we owe the information that the Princess “often made Lady Suffolk write to Swift to see his answers, & always kept a copy of Lady Suffolk’s and the answers. . . . These and any other curious papers She could get, the Queen [then Princess] pasted into a book.”32

With Princess Caroline Swift scrupulously avoided any appearance of sycophancy. He might otherwise have been liable to the charge, since he wished to increase his influence in Irish affairs; alternatively, he hoped to gain preferment in England, which would permit escape from his Irish “exile” and residence near his friends.33 Swift waited, he tells us, for a dozen invitations (179 n.) before paying the first visit to the Princess, and preserved his integrity by speaking with great freedom to her and avoiding the usual flattery of courtiers.34 They conversed in perfect frankness, as friends do; he
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“But Princes kept a due Decorum,
“But never stood in Awe before ’em:
“And to her Majesty, God bless her,
“Would speak as free as to her dresser”

—that is, Mrs. Howard. Any favor he found with Caroline could thus reflect only his true qualities, not cringing or flattery. Though Swift would not ask, from this relationship emerged several promises of preferment or employment for Swift and Gay. Swift requested only a gift worth ten pounds—a trifle, he rightly calls it—as a mark of her friendship. The medal she promised would have symbolized his standing with her, the sincere regard for his merit out of which any recognition for him would come, if it did come. His acute disappointment that Caroline did not send the gift reveals, of course, his great desire for royal favor, but more important, his disgust that the Princess did not keep her promise about a trifle which could not have inconvenienced her. Caroline’s high position magnified the offense. Before the medals were to have arrived (at Christmas 1726), Swift sent a gift of Irish silk poplin to the Princess and refused reimbursement. The present was both an effort to gain attention for the Irish cause, by dressing the Princess of Wales and her children in an exquisite example of Irish manufacture, and a further token of Swift’s personal independence from the Princess, for his gift was more than three times the value of what she had promised him. As he wrote, “After I had made my present shame would not suffer me to remind them of theirs”—characteristically linking the Princess and Mrs. Howard as conspirators in whatever concerned him.

Because of this slight (if such it was), Swift was not entirely sure where he stood; an added complication was that his contacts with the Princess were often mediated by Mrs. Howard, and always so in correspondence. Delightful letters remain as evidence of their once-friendly acquaintance. When Swift returned to Ireland in 1726, Mrs. Howard joined Pope, Gay, Bolingbroke, and Pulteney—all of them friends later mentioned in Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift—in the “cheddar letter” to him, of which, unfortunately, only Pope’s “Receipt to Make Soup” survives. But she is one of the chief villains in the
Verses, although in early states of Faulkner’s first 1739 editions a footnote tells us, by way of contrast, that “Mrs Howard . . . professed much Favour for the Dean” in 1726; Swift soon sharpened the satire, making the note read “professed much Friendship for the Dean.”

The modern view, which has the benefit of Lord Hervey’s Memoirs, is that Swift drastically overestimated her power, but he was by no means alone in this error. Nor, given her role as mediator between him and the Princess, is it surprising that he thought Mrs. Howard’s friendship for him more accurately reflected Caroline’s than in fact it did. Not only was Mrs. Howard Prince George’s mistress, but she was in constant and apparently very cordial attendance on his wife as her dresser. This remarkable marital arrangement, whatever its true explanation, could only lead Swift to conclude that Mrs. Howard possessed extraordinary tact and discretion, and he might be excused for thinking also that a prince’s mistress had great influence, even if, unlike Swift (who had “spent all his Credit for his Friends” [332]), she refused to use it. It is too easy for modern biographers and historians, knowing the outcome of events and benefitting from evidence like Hervey’s, to deride Swift’s failure to assess the situation properly.

In his admiring but impatient “Character of Mrs. Howard,” dated June 12, 1727, Swift approves her wit and political skill as a courtier but offers skepticism about her sincerity as a friend. Against considerable praise for her, Swift weighs a doubt pregnantly summarized in one sentence: “If she had never seen a Court, it is not impossible that she might have been a friend.” The charge that she is a courtier recurs in Swift’s letters, with the implication that a courtier is one devoted to maneuvering for his own advantage, and is therefore incapable of friendship, whatever his protestations. Swift alludes in the “Character” to her “imperceptible dexterity” as a “politician,” and again says that “she is very dextrous in that point of skill which the French call tâter le pavé” (testing her footing before making a move). Swift suspects she is merely a courtier; and if she is, he must suspect his own interests are jeopardized in her hands: “She abounds in good words and expressions of good wishes, and will concert a hundred schemes for the service of those whom she would be thought to favour . . . , although, at the same time, she very well knows [these schemes] to be without
the least probability of succeeding. But, to do her justice, she never feeds or deceives any person with promises, where she does not at the same time intend a degree of sincerity. She is, upon the whole, an excellent companion for men of the best accomplishments, who have nothing to desire or expect."

Swift gave Mrs. Howard a copy of the "Character," presumably at the time it was dated, and it is worth noting that he subtitled this copy "Part the 1st." Whatever his purpose (he was about to depart for France), Mrs. Howard's response, then and repeatedly during the summer of 1727, was to offer stronger, more convincing protestations of her sincerity and of Caroline's intention to reward him and Gay. Only two days after the date of the "Character," news of the death of George I reached London. Mrs. Howard reacted by sending Swift a message not to leave England when the opportunity for English preferment at last lay before him. Swift, at her invitation, attended the court, on "the third day" (about June 17, George having been proclaimed June 15) and kissed Their Majesties' hands. On this occasion he made an offer of political friendship to the new King, and met with Their Majesties' "utmost Satisfaction"; he "was particularly distinguished by the queen." But as the political situation stabilized, Walpole remained in power, contrary to all expectations, and the Opposition remained in opposition. This reversal of expectations established itself slowly. By June 24, Swift was reporting a "moderating scheme" in which both Whigs and Tories would be accommodated in the new government. He had again set about to leave for France, and again "was with great Vehemence dissuaded from it by certain Persons whom I could not disobey." One such person would have been Mrs. Howard, with intelligence from the Queen.

Because George I happened to die, the issues raised in the "Character of Mrs. Howard" were given a life, both for Swift and for Mrs. Howard, that they could hardly have otherwise had. Swift believed, and had said in the "Character," that the Prince of Wales's accession would mean a great increase of power for her. Her friendship was now put to the proof. Were promises made to old friends now to be honored? Swift kept this question alive in "A Pastoral Dialogue between Richmond-Lodge and Marble-Hill," composed late in June and sent to
court. It is imagined that the King’s former house, Richmond Lodge, speaks:

The kingly Prophet well evinces,
That we should put no Trust in Princes;
My Royal Master promis’d me
To raise me to a high Degree:
But now He’s grown a King, God wot,
I fear I shall be soon forgot.
You see, when Folks have got their Ends,
How quickly they neglect their Friends;
Yet I may say ’twixt me and you,
Pray God they now may find as true.

(13–22)

By July 1 Swift had felt the new political currents, for he wrote to Sheridan, “Here are a thousand Schemes wherein they would have me engaged, which I embrace but coldly, because I like none of them. . . . I desire it may be told I never go to Court.” He concluded: “I intend to be with you at Michaelmas, barr Impossibilities.”50 The uneasy ambivalence of “embrace but coldly” and the hopeless hope of “barr Impossibilities” indicate fairly well Swift’s attitude at this time.

Any Leicester House plans to reward Swift when George I died had appeared to rest on the alliance between the Prince of Wales’s court and the Opposition. That Walpole remained as chief minister removed any political rationale for preferring Swift. Therefore, any testimonies of court favor he then or subsequently received were stronger evidence of friendship than he had previously had and must have tended to override the doubts expressed in the “Character of Mrs. Howard.” He wrote later that “a few weeks after the King’s death” (presumably mid or late July), Mrs. Howard had once more advised him not to go to France. “I wrote to her for her opinion,” Swift told Lady Betty Germain, “and particularly desired, that, since I had long done with Courts, I conjured her not to use me like a courtier; but give me her sincere advice; which she did, both in a letter and to some friends. It was by all means not to go: It would look singular, and perhaps disaffected; and to my friends, she enlarged upon the good intentions of the Court to me.”51 And as late as August 16, Mrs.
Howard continued to urge Swift to wait: “I . . . insist upon your taking no resolution to leave England till I see you,” she said, and demanded that he obey her “orders without one question why I have given them.”52 While the precise content of Mrs. Howard’s communications must remain in doubt, since most of them were oral messages, it is now evident that not just once but repeatedly during the summer of 1727, she was conveying to Swift what he read not only as promises of a settlement in England, but—as the backing for such promises—stronger assurances of Caroline’s friendship than he had received before.

Against his previous doubts about Mrs. Howard, and against the facts that Walpole was in power (in itself an indictment of the new King and Queen) and that the Queen had failed to send him the medal, he balanced two other facts: that Mrs. Howard’s power (as he, and possibly she, erroneously thought) was now stronger than ever, and that she was sending him stronger assurances of friendship than ever. The only explanation for Swift’s subsequent disappointment is that these assurances were convincing. Otherwise, the Queen’s failure to make him any offer would not have surprised him, since it was no more than his “Character” had predicted of Mrs. Howard and, implicitly, of her mistress.

His willingness at this juncture to entertain the possibility that Mrs. Howard’s friendship was genuine appears to conflict with the eulogist’s claim in Swift’s Verses that he had had faith “in David’s Lesson just, / In Princes never put thy Trust.” The conflict is significant. We may speculate that Swift’s knowledge of courts and of human nature showed him the unlikelihood that the Queen’s promises would be kept; and his dread of being disappointed led him to refuse to hope. On the other hand, he wished to believe he had finally found a friend in a prince, one so virtuous as to overcome the pressure of political expediency and selfishness. In this situation he did not so far trust Caroline that he was in any way dependent on her (the deanery of St. Patrick’s remained his); at the same time, he went so far as to wait and see, though not so far as to attend the court and actually appear to solicit. The keenness of his anger when she failed to justify his hope is a measure of the extent to which he had allowed himself, against his better judgment
perhaps, to trust her good faith. He both hoped and guarded himself against hope (and its consequent disappointment). The pressure of this doubleness of attitude lies behind many of the autobiographical simplifications of the poem, including the bald proclamation that David's lesson is just. Swift wishes at last to clarify what was never quite clear.

Swift received no offer, and before he left for Ireland in mid-September, he learned that the Queen proposed to offer Gay, who had long paid her his court, nothing more than the post of Gentleman Usher to Princess Louisa, not yet three years old. He also heard rumors that Mrs. Howard had arranged two years before that Walpole would be continued in office when the then Prince of Wales became king. This Swift would have credited, for he had already observed in his "Character" that "there is no politician who more carefully watches the motions and dispositions of things and persons at St. James's... or more early foresees what style may be proper upon any approaching juncture of affairs." Gay's friends hoped that Mrs. Howard might yet arrange something better for him, but by October 13 the miserable appointment had been officially announced. This was for Swift the denouement of the summer's conflict between his hopes and his fears. His fury against Mrs. Howard and the Queen only hardened thereafter.

In 1731 he wrote to Gay, "I always told you Mrs Howard was good for nothing but to be a rank Courtier, I care not whether She writes to me or no, She has cheated us all, and may go hang her Self, and so may her—[the Queen]."

Swift's effort to make sense of what had happened to him, in Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift as well as in his letters, juggles two not entirely compatible interpretations. The first is that the two women never took him seriously and never intended to give him any preferment, but only considered him an amusement. Recounting the history of the medals is Swift's means of ventilating this theory, according to which the offer of medals was never seriously meant, and the supposed delays in preparing them only "an excuse." In the phrase of Swift's scathing footnote, "she forgot them, or thought them too dear" (184 n.). Thus, in the parallel couplets
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KIND Lady Suffolk in the Spleen,
Runs laughing up to tell the Queen.
The Queen, so Gracious, Mild, and Good,
Cries, "Is he gone? 'Tis time he shou'd.

malicious acts do not match the beneficence that the cant praise (queenly virtues capitalized) would indicate.60

The other theory Swift explores is that the Queen and Mrs. Howard intended to do something for him and Gay, but that Walpole, with whom the Queen worked closely to govern the King, convinced them not to do so. In his letter to Mrs. Howard of November 21, 1730, Swift states two grievances in quick succession: (1) "I am angry with the Queen for sacrificing my friend Gay to the mistaken piques of Sr R. Walpole"; and (2) "I wish her Majesty would a little remember what I largely said to her about Ireland," referring to his first interview with her in 1726.61 By bringing the second matter up in the context of the first, Swift intends to suggest that what he had said then would counter Walpole's current representations to her about Ireland (and about Swift). Despite her commitment, he implies, she has "sacrificed" him, no less than Gay, to Walpole's "mistaken piques." In his poem "To Mr. Gay," written in the same year as Verses on the Death, Swift attacks Mrs. Howard:

Fain would I think, our Female Friend sincere,
Till B——, the Poet's Foe, possess't her Ear.
Did Female Virtue e'er so high ascend,
To lose an Inch of Favour for a Friend?62

George II had been proclaimed on June 15, 1727. Within a month Sir Robert Walpole had confirmed himself in the royal family's favor by guiding through parliament an unheard-of grant of about £900,000 for the civil list plus an unprecedentedly large jointure for the Queen of £100,000.63 Swift can hardly have avoided supposing that Caroline and Mrs. Howard, too ready to escape the burden of the gratitude they owed him for his friendship, had sold him out to the narrowly partisan considerations of alliance with Sir Robert and his cash.

This theory is the more complimentary to Swift, in that it does not
entail his having been duped by Mrs. Howard all along. In the passage itself, the theory is reflected most clearly in the Queen’s lines:

“But now as Consort of a King,
“You know ’tis quite a different Thing.

But it is also implicit in Swift’s positioning the passage just before the one on Walpole (189–96); the two sections taken together emphatically suggest that the new government by Caroline and Walpole supports the “most infamous, vile Scoundrel,” Francis Charteris (189 n.), while thwarting good men.

The significance of Queen Caroline and Mrs. Howard as examples in a poem on friendship and enmity lies not simply in their choosing political and financial advantage over a proper regard for human obligations. To be sure, they thereby defined a warm and genuine friendship as having been merely a courtier’s relationship of temporary expediency, and their failure to acknowledge Swift’s merit—to preserve it in their regard—and their inconstancy in neglecting their commitments to him bespeak ingratitude for his friendship. But beyond that, the fact that they as well as he were in the public eye helps Swift to heighten the general social consequences of false friendship: it is a loss to the public when men of merit and virtue are not cherished by those in power, and similarly a loss to the public to have in power those who would sacrifice merit to interest or faction.

Yet Swift is not so much concerned to establish any general thesis as to scorch those who have betrayed his friendship. Recounting the events of 1727 in his letters, he went so far as to suggest that Mrs. Howard made him ill by urging him to stay in London when she well knew he had nothing to gain by staying. The angry insinuation is not credible, but it is psychologically of a piece with the depiction in the Verses of the Queen and Lady Suffolk as rejoicing at his death. Moreover, Swift’s grievances against Mrs. Howard seem linked to the genesis of the poem. For in a letter he accuses her of false friendship in these words: “I never knew a Lady who had so many qualityes to beget esteem, but how you act as a friend, is out of my way to judge.” The same comment appears, rephrased, in a letter to Gay in which he
announces the writing of *Verses on the Death*: “She has, Good qualityes enough to make her esteemed; but not one grain of truth or honour. I onely wish She were as great a fool as She is a knave. I have been several months writing near five hundred lines on a pleasant Subject, onely to tell what my friends and enemys will say on me after I am dead. . . I have brought in you and my other Friends, as well as enemys and Detractors.” Cause and effect—the juxtaposition is remarkable.

III

In Swift and his true friends is manifest a literary tradition that friendship’s bonds form a community of virtue, wit, and intellect. The noble friendship of Swift, Pope, Gay, Arbuthnot, and Bolingbroke contributed to the esteem of each and helped define and strengthen each against enemies. To have friends is power, as Hobbes observed. Swift, lonely and aware that at his age he would have no further opportunity for preferment, was eager to assure himself of the friendships he had. His list of “Men of distinction and my friends who are yet alive,” dated February 19, 1728/29, is alone sufficient evidence of this attitude, and it includes the friends who figure prominently in the *Verses*: Bolingbroke, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Gay. Swift was also eager to regard others in his group as sharing his own position. Those more engaged in affairs than he might not get his wholehearted approval. Bolingbroke’s activity in Opposition journalism, as much as his vaunted stoicism, is responsible for the crack that “ST. JOHN himself will scarce forbear, / To bite his Pen, and drop a Tear” (209–10); and in a *Libel on Dr. Delany* (1730) Swift had already embarrassed Pope by depicting him in too staunch an anticourt posture.

Of Swift’s friends, John Gay was the one with whom he could most readily identify. When Gay refused the post of Gentleman Usher, Swift promptly construed his posture as enmity with Walpole. Swift’s third *Intelligencer* paper was influential in 1728 and subsequently in giving *The Beggar’s Opera* a more polemical and satirical construction than, it may be argued, the text absolutely requires.
Swift preferred to read Gay's failure at court as a result of the same forces that caused his own. While Verses on the Death makes no direct reference to Gay's case, Swift considered himself instructed by it as he defined his own situation.

Swift's other closest friends are as important to the poem as Gay, yet, strictly speaking, the poem neither verifies nor refutes La Rochefoucauld's maxim that we take pleasure in the adversity of our best friends. The dangerous possibility that Swift will impeach even his dearest friends unquestionably rivets our attention from the first, but decorously he allows the possibility to hover over the poem without ever bringing it to pass. In the proem, raillery—praise by blame—admirably evokes the paradoxical proposition of enmity in friendship, but reaches no conclusions about it. Otherwise there is only the curiously invidious praise

Poor Pope will grieve a Month; and Gay
A Week; and Arbuthnot a Day.
(207–8)

Swift treats, rather, such anonymous faint friends as the Dublin chatterers who attend him in his illness and gossip about him after he is gone. They illustrate the maxim so blatantly and comically that they contribute little to any proof of its universal truth. Only ironically can they be called "my special Friends" (75), and Lady Suffolk and the Queen offer a much more interesting instance. But having stated his case against them and against enemies such as Walpole, and having quickly alluded to the grief of his best friends, he turns again to unknowns: "The Fools, my Juniors by a Year" (219), "My female Friends" (225), and "Some Country Squire" (253)—unidentified figures who naturally and easily lead down to the most anonymous and unknown, "one quite indifferent in the Cause" between those very faint friends and enemies who "toss [Swift's] name about" during "their Chat." The "indifferent" one offers Swift at least some hope of the regard friends had failed to give.

The eulogist's character is not strongly established or clearly maintained, and while the poem might be more satisfactory if it were, it is well to concede that an effort to interpret him as a sharply defined
character is liable to fail for lack of evidence. At the same time, it appears necessary to posit at least some degree of distance between Swift in propria persona and the eulogist. Insofar as the character is established, I suggest that it is as a man-in-the-street (or in the Rose) whose knowledge of Swift is hardly complete. Where the eulogist’s character fades into the author’s own voice, as it often does, it is a sign that Swift has found his character unable to serve as his biographer (he doesn’t know enough) and inadequate to perform a friend’s office—to say for Swift what he cannot with propriety say for himself.

With the eulogist or without him, the final section is very largely, I think, praise that Swift sincerely thought he deserved. Most inaccuracies or inadequacies can, on a sympathetic reading, be explained as resulting from the generic tendency of praise, eulogy, and character-writing to be reductive and hyperbolic, or else from the eulogist’s rearing his somewhat uninformed head. Whatever else we might dispute, the eulogy is accurate in its assertion that Swift has the gratitude of the public, especially in Ireland, where “the grateful People stand his Friends” (426) and where, when he dies, he will be “remember[ed] with Gratitude” (168 n.). The eulogist, this member of the public, stresses Swift’s public service, putting the matter as clearly as possible in the penultimate line, “That Kingdom he hath left his Debtor.” Yet I daresay the eulogist’s praise cannot have been wholly satisfactory to Swift. The friendship of the public, like that of posterity, is not enough. Swift can have no personal relationship with the public, cannot dine or converse with it. The public knows Swift only through his public acts or his works, and he doesn’t know it at all. Further, it seems axiomatic for the interpretation of this poem that what we might consider undue self-praise, Swift would see as modest and restrained. For instance, the poem omits much of Swift’s early accomplishment as a churchman, much about his private friendships, and—a nice irony, in a poem—almost everything about his stature as a writer.

Many readers have observed that this concluding section of the poem is less attractive than the beginning. Weak endings are not unusual in Swift’s works, and they reflect, I think, a hardheaded and perhaps arrogant disregard for nice artistic proprieties. Swift will say
what he has to say bluntly, and let it go. The letdown of the eulogy is also in keeping with what must have been its general unsatisfactoriness to Swift as a substitute for the recognition and esteem he expected from his friends.

Still, the self-praise makes us uneasy. Doesn't Swift overestimate himself when he supposes that queens and prime ministers ought to have set greater store by him? Isn't he too self-indulgent in leveling others down to his plane? We can at least understand why he did so: his intolerance of dependence and inferiority made him improve his status through wishful thinking if not otherwise. He was lonely and needed friendship, proud and needed esteem. He needed to believe that his friendships were perfect and that he could form important alliances based purely on merit and virtue. If this seems too pathetic a view of Swift, it is balanced by our knowledge of Swift the fiery pamphleteer and confident wit, at ease in the highest political and social circles.

We have ourselves been drawn into an attitude of friendship and sympathy toward Swift earlier in the poem. Now his unattractive self-presentation has the effect of opening us to the force of La Rochefoucauld's maxim. This parallel between the events narrated in the poem and the reader's experience of the poem must intensify and complicate our fascination or displeasure. It is possible to complain that the poem, particularly because of the eulogy, is artistically inferior, rhetorically ineffective, or even (Irvin Ehrenpreis has said) disgusting. Yet one might venture the opinion that it is very largely these same inartistic qualities which compel our attention with their truth, and allow us to confront what Maurice Johnson has called "the biographical presence" in the poem. Finally what interests us is the tension between the man and his rhetoric, and the emotional pressures on the rectitude, sternness, and discipline of the satirist. The direct autobiography in Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift calls our attention to the satirist himself and makes us notice any flaws in his pose as vir bonus, though we would perhaps distrust the pose as artifice were it more consistently maintained. Swift's poem faces unresolved dilemmas and leaves them exposed to view: private friendship and public friendship conflict; two friends disagree on the value of their friend-
ship; friendship creates both liberation and dependence; in friendship there is enmity.

N O T E S

I am grateful to Richard E. Brantley, Maurice Johnson, Philip Pinkus, and David Woolley for their friendly and useful comments on the present essay.


The comparison between *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift* and *An Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, which many critics and teachers have found serviceable, is facilitated for the points raised in the present essay by P. Dixon, “The Theme of Friendship in the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*,” *English Studies*, 44 (1963), 191–97, and Lawrence Lee Davidow, “Pope’s Verse Epistles: Friendship and the Private Sphere of Life,” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 40 (1977), 151–70.

4 Swift’s translation of the maxim “Dans l’adversité de nos meilleurs amis nous trouvons quelque chose, qui ne nous déplaist pas,” which he uses as the poem’s epigraph (*The Poems of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Harold Williams, 2nd ed. [Oxford: Clarendon, 1958], II, 551; hereafter cited as Poems). All references to Swift’s poems are to the texts in this edition; line numbers of *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift* (II, 551–72) are cited in the body of this essay.

5 See the Appendix of Michael Shinagel’s *Concordance to the Poems of Jonathan Swift* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972); and Miles, “Some Major Poetic Words,” in *Essays and Studies by Members of the Department of English, University of California*, University of California Publications in English, 14 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1943), pp. 233–39. Shinagel finds (p. ix) that wit is the most recurrent noun in Swift’s poems, but he does not group related forms of a word together.


7 This idea of friendship provides an ironic context for Ronald Paulson’s view (in *The Fictions of Satire*, pp. 192–93) that the poem dissociates friendship and permanence.


9 Connections between friendship and death occur elsewhere in Swift’s writing; a notable instance among the poems is the earlier, more pathetic “In Sickness” (1714), where Swift complains that he has “no obliging, tender Friend/To help at my approaching End” (*Poems*, I, 204).

10 1156 a 6–1157 b 4.

11 Poems, II, 596.


15 Geoffrey Percival, *Introduction, Aristotle on Friendship: Being an Expanded Transla-

16 This practical view of friendship is discussed, for instance, in Xenophon, Memorabilia, II, 4–6; Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, VIII–IX; and Seneca, De beneficiis, passim.

17 This list is found in Lyon’s annotated copy of John Hawkesworth, The Life of the Revd. Jonathan Swift, D.D. (Dublin: Cotter, 1755), now in the Victoria & Albert Museum Library (Forster 579), and quoted by courtesy of the Victoria & Albert Museum. As printed in Corresp., V, 270, the list derives from a transcript of Lyon’s transcript first published in John Nichols’s 1808 edition of Swift’s Works.


19 Prose, I, 248; see further Spectator, Bond ed., II, 449 n.


21 Gulliver’s Travels, II, 6; IV, 4, 12; Intelligencer, no. 1, Prose, XII, 30; “Advertisement for the Honour of the Kingdom of Ireland,” Prose, V, 346–47.

22 Prose, IX, 155.


25 Sir Harold Williams’s statement as to the date of composition (Poems, II, 553) may be accepted with little reservation. Since the poem was not published until 1739, it could have been revised after its completion in early 1732. However, there is very little evidence to that effect, and none which would alter my conclusions. Concerning evidence of post-1732 revision, see my unpublished dissertation, “Swift’s Later Poems: Studies in Circumstances and Texts,” Chicago, 1972, pp. 40–44.

26 William Pulteney to Francis Colman, Sept. 21, 1727, in Posthumous Letters from Various Celebrated Men, Addressed to Francis Colman and George Colman the Elder (London: Cadell & Davies, 1820), p. 11.

27 Swift to the Earl of Peterborough, April 28, 1726, Corresp., III, 131–35; Intelligencer, no. 3, Prose, XII, 32–37; Swift to Lady Elizabeth Germain, Jan. 8, 1732/33, Corresp., IV, 98.

28 Swift to Lady Suffolk, July 27, 1731, Corresp., III, 484. For further information on Queen Caroline, see William Coxe, Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir

29 Swift to Lady Elizabeth Germain, Jan. 8, 1732/33, Corresp., IV, 98.


31 Poems, II, 409.


33 Though Swift denies in his letters seeking "Promotion" to a bishopric, he did not rule out the possibility of "a change"—English preferment to a lesser benefice, which could be managed without capitulating to Walpole: see Paul V. Thompson, "An Unpublished Letter from Swift," Library, 5th ser., 22 (1967), 59; Corresp., III, 423, IV, 99.

34 The precise number of invitations varies in Swift's retellings of the story: nine (Corresp., IV, 98) and eleven (Corresp., III, 422) both occur. For other possible motives for his delay in answering the Princess's commands, see Corresp., IV, 98; for his freedom of speech with her, see Corresp., III, 208, 238.

35 Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift, lines 339–40 and two lines inserted in MS in some early copies; see Poems, II, 566 n.

36 Corresp., III, 392, 418, 423–24. "He taxed her with a Present worth Ten Pounds" (179 n.) is ironic: such a small amount could not have taxed her.


38 Swift to Gay, Nov. 10, 1730, Corresp., III, 418; see also Swift to Pope, March 6, 1728/29, Corresp., III, 315.

39 Etiquette probably discouraged direct correspondence with the Princess. See further Swift to Lady Suffolk, July 27, 1731, Corresp., III, 483–84.


41 Hervey, Memoirs, I, 41–44.


43 The date occurs in the copy Mrs. Howard actually received, now British Library Add. MS 22,625, fol. 4. It is printed in Letters to and from Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk, 1, xxxviii. Herbert Davis, apparently unaware of this text, prints (and I

44 Bolingbroke to Swift, June 17, 1727, Corresp., III, 215–16. It is likely that Bolingbroke was relaying a message from Mrs. Howard. Lady Suffolk’s later claim that she did not know Bolingbroke at this time is dubious (Walpole, Reminiscences, pp. 19–20 n., 117).

45 Swift to Lady Elizabeth Germain, Jan. 8, 1732/33, Corresp., IV, 99; Swift to Sheridan, June 24, 1727, Corresp., III, 218–19.

46 The report of Swift’s address has been generally unnoticed and is therefore worth quoting: Swift “express’d the utmost Loyalty and Affection for their Majesties Persons and Government, with an Address peculiar to himself, representing at the same Time the strict Adherence of his Majesty’s faithful Subjects of Ireland to His Royal Person and Family, with their most grateful Acknowledgments for Favours granted to that Kingdom; the Continuation whereby they will endeavor to preserve by a distinguish’d Loyalty, as they have hitherto been remarkable for in the worst of Times, hoping the Participation of the benign Influence of his Majesty’s shining Vertues &c: Which Declaration, their Majesties received with the utmost Satisfaction, shewing a particular Regard to the Welfare of the Kingdom of Ireland, as well as to the Merit of that truly great Man, and He had the Honour to kiss their Majesties Hand.” (Faulkner’s Dublin Journal, July 4–8, 1727). See also Swift to Lady Elizabeth Germain, Jan. 8, 1732/33, Corresp., IV, 99.

47 Walpole’s reestablishment began to be publicly visible by June 20 (J. H. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole: The King’s Minister [London: Cresset, 1960], p. 167 n.). Hervey (Memoirs, I, 35) says the matter was finally settled when Walpole and Compton competed in writing the King’s speech dissolving parliament after the civil list bill was passed; the King’s speech was July 17 (Political State of Great Britain, 34 [1727], 58).

48 Swift to Sheridan, Corresp., III, 219.

49 Poems, II, 409. I conjecture the date from lines 37–38, in which Richmond-Lodge says, “My Master scarce a Fortnight since,/Was grown as wealthy as a Prince.” Line 22 is perhaps Swift’s veiled offer of friendship; for a similar rhetorical ploy, see the benediction in Swift’s letter to Mrs. Howard, July 9, 1727, Corresp., III, 224.

50 Corresp., III, 221–22.

51 Whether the Queen—or Mrs. Howard—actually promised Swift a settlement in England is flatly denied by Murry, Jonathan Swift, p. 410. In fact it is an open question. Because Swift never saw Caroline after the third day of the new reign, he got word (usually orally) through Mrs. Howard or her intermediary. There are degrees of strength in a verbal commitment: to express the intent to do something may not be a contractual obligation to do it, but Swift’s argument is that his former friends expressed their intention to place him in England, had the power to do so, and had no reasons except base ones for not doing so. In the absence of direct contact with the Queen and without anything put in writing, Swift speaks of assurances “they” offered or, in the passive, of assurances he was offered; sometimes he refers to “hints,” but he puts the matter more strongly on at least two
occasions besides his Verses footnote. To Gay and the Duchess of Queensberry, he wrote, "The——, told me 5 years ago [1727] they would make me easy amongst you" (Aug. 12, 1732, Corresp., IV, 58); and writing to Lady Betty Germain, he refers to "the promises made me" of a settlement in England (Jan. 8, 1732/33, Corresp., IV, 99). Swift always thought Mrs. Howard had the power to offer him these assurances and could not believe her defense to him of September 25, 1731 (during the composition of the Verses): "If I cannot justify the advice I gave you from the success of it; yet you know I gave you my reasons for it; and it was y r business to have judg'd of my Capacity by the Solidity of my Arguments; if the Principle was false you ought not to have acted upon it; so you have only been the Dupe of your own ill Judgment and not to my falsehood" (Corresp., III, 499).

What Swift called promises, Lady Suffolk now called reasons, implicitly shifting the blame to the Queen. Her statement is eloquent, but it may be doubted whether it accurately represents her communications to Swift in 1727, both because of Swift's own rejection of it and because she would naturally have been tempted to behave as though she had more influence than she did. Possibly, indeed, it was through her very effort to gain rewards for Swift and Gay that she first realized her impotence in the new court—though if this is so, Swift was not made aware of it. She may simply have been weak enough to tell Swift what he wanted to hear.

52 Corresp., III, 231.

53 The chronology can be inferred from Swift to Gay and the Duchess of Queensberry, Aug. 12, 1732, Corresp., IV, 59.


55 Prose, V, 213.


57 Corresp., III, 471.


59 Swift varies the details: at times "a Medal" (Corresp., III, 392, 423), at other times "Medals" (Corresp., IV, 58). Swift probably thought it unlikely that a single medal would be a "Present worth Ten Pounds" (179 n.; the usual value of a gold medal was about five guineas). If so, he was mistaken. The medal the Princess intended for Swift can be identified with considerable certainty as a large one commemorating the reestablishment of the Order of the Bath in 1725 (see Medallic Illustrations of the History of Great Britain and Ireland to the Death of George II, comp. Edward Hawkins and ed. Augustus W. Franks and Herbert A. Grueber [London: British Museum, 1885], II, 463). Because this medal bears the date 1725, numismatic historians have assumed it was issued that year. But Sir Isaac Newton, as Master of the Royal Mint, did not authorize the engraving of the medal until December 6, 1726, as the papers of the Mint's then Chief Engraver, John Croker, reveal (British Library Add. MS 18,757, fol. 20). The same papers contain a printed broadside evidently issued by Croker, A List of Medals, Struck Since the Latter End of the Reign of His Majesty King William the Third [London, mid-1730's], showing the
price of the Bath medal (gold version) as £10 (fol. 2). Caroline's interest lay in the fact that a full-length portrait of her favorite son, Prince William, Duke of Cumberland, appears on the reverse—he having been, at age four, installed by his grandfather as Principal Companion of the Order of the Bath: see further Statutes of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (London, 1725), pp. 5, 55. To give Caroline her due, this medal matches exactly what she promised Swift as to value, and the delay in its production was genuine. Speculation about why she subsequently failed to send Swift his copy should await discovery of the date the medal was issued.

60 To attribute running and laughter to a woman languishing in the spleen seems contradictory, and happens to mirror the ambiguity Swift saw in Mrs. Howard's character, but the best explanation of these lines is probably that they imperfectly compress an idea of sequence: though Lady Suffolk had been in the spleen, the news of Swift's death set her gleefully running and laughing. Elsewhere in his poems Swift sometimes imagines women "in the spleen" for the sake of telling what would bring them out of it.

61 Corresp., III, 424.
62 Poems, II, 531; see also Corresp., III, 260, IV, 99.
65 On the history of this tradition, see David Jay Latt, "The Progress of Friendship: The Topoi for Society and the Ideal Experience in the Poetry and Prose of Seventeenth-Century England," Diss. California, Los Angeles, 1971. The community of friendship is a constant theme of the correspondence between Swift and Pope; and about the Dunciad Pope writes, "It was my principal aim in the entire work to perpetuate the friendship between us, and to shew that the friends or the enemies of one were the friends or enemies of the other" (Swift, Corresp., III, 351).

66 Leviathan, p. 150. Bertrand Goldgar notes, however, that the Scriblerians' friendships were not directly concerned with politics (Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722–1742 [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1976], p. 42).
67 At this time Swift's view of himself as virtually friendless is expressed in letters to a few trusted friends (e.g., Corresp., III, 199); it is also known and repeated by his young admirer William Dunkin, who, in his "A Satyr Inscribed to S——", says (with doubtful tact) that people Swift earlier befriended and patronized now spurn him; Dunkin concludes that friendship is "fickle," "a painted show," etc. See Poetical Works of the Late William Dunkin, D.D., II (Dublin: Powell, 1770), 244.
70 "I am perfectly confident you have a firm Enemy in the Ministry" (Swift to Gay and Pope, Nov. 23, 1727, Corresp., III, 250; see also Corresp., III, 267).

72 See also Swift's A Libel on D——D—— (1730), 53–60, Poems, II, 481–82, and "To Mr. Gay" (1731), Poems, II, 530–36.

73 Peter J. Schakel's interesting article ("The Politics of Opposition," Modern Language Quarterly, 35 [1974], 246–56), with which I do not entirely agree, should be consulted here. I doubt that the eulogist is meant to represent the Opposition; Swift would probably claim that he is nonpartisan. The Opposition doctrine was that Walpole represented a narrow faction and was not running a popularly based government; and the Opposition maintained that the majority would side with them if given the chance. See Isaac Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 25.