THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE MONTHLY ANTHOLOGY, AND BOSTON REVIEW TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN LETTERS

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ABSTRACT

THE CONTRIBUTION OF
THE MONTHLY ANTHOLOGY, AND BOSTON REVIEW
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by Sue Neuenswander Greene

Historians of American literature have paid too little attention to early nineteenth-century Boston, assuming that except for the development of Unitarianism nothing significant happened, despite the unlikelihood of this assumption. This study shows that there was considerable intellectual activity and that the Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review (1803-1811), along with the papers of its contributors (including Phineas Adams, Paul Allen, Joseph Buckminster, Edmund Dana, William Emerson, Alexander Everett, John Gardiner, John Kirkland, Andrews Norton, Josiah Quincy, James Savage, William Shaw, Samuel Thacher, George Ticknor, Joseph Tuckerman, William Tudor, Arthur Walter, Benjamin Welles, William Wells, and Sidney Willard), is an excellent source for its study. It offers evidence that the emergence of the Golden Age of American literature was to some extent due to the intellectual ferment represented in the Anthology; that in several respects the genius of that age had begun to emerge during the Anthology era and that the Anthology itself was instrumental in its emergence.

The Anthology contributed to the development of American literature in several respects. It was a conscious attempt of a group of literary-minded men to create a milieu out of which a literature could arise and, in the process, to contribute to that literature. Through presenting the public with a literary journal, the Anthologists hoped to turn its attention away from politics,

commerce, and religion; but, believing that literature could not grow in a vacuum but would be the product of a general awakening of intellectual activity, they fostered any area that might contribute to such an awakening. They attempted to generate interest in belles-lettres by reviewing past and contemporary works published in America; guiding the public and potential writers toward a high standard of literature; and serving as a repository for such an American literature. To a great extent they were successful.

That the Anthologists were not more successful was due to the very reasons an American literature had not already developed more fully and the very factors they were trying to combat. Boston was not yet willing to support a literary periodical, and there was no profession of men of letters to provide a constant source of material or to support such a venture. The Anthology lacked a permanent full-time editor, and all of its contributors were engaged in other professions. Although the Anthology provided a higher standard of literature than any American periodical had before, it did not publish enough pieces that could win it either immediate or future fame.

The main contribution of the Anthology towards the Golden Age was in its presentation of ideas that matured into the two main branches of that age--Romanticism and Transcendentalism. Through both the literary and theological controversies in which it engaged, the Anthology revealed an increasing negation of authoritarianism. In literature one sees the growth away from neoclassical stress upon rules, models, and imitation as a basis for creativity towards greater respect for the innate powers of the individual and his response to his immediate surroundings. In theology one sees with the rejection of Calvinism a growing insistence upon the necessity of free inquiry

and private judgment of Scriptural revelation, an insistence that helped lead to a belief in the study of man's perfection through nature. Thus, in both areas the Anthology anticipated what was perhaps the most pervasive characteristic of the Golden Age of American literature. Not only did the Transcendentalists stress the importance of the individual's seeking truth, beauty, or goodness through his immediate experiences, but the poetry of the Romanticists shows a similar tendency, and the works of other writers not so easily categorized are in themselves products of such a spirit.

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THE MONTHLY ANTHOLOGY, AND BOSTON REVIEW

TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN LETTERS

By

Sue Neuenswander Greene

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PREFACE

This dissertation had its beginnings in a seminar offered by Professor Russel B. Nye on early nineteenth-century America. Professor Claude M. Newlin had already suggested to me a study of the religious views in the Christian Examiner as a possible dissertation topic, and Professor Nye's seminar offered an opportunity for me to learn background material for such a study and, as a special project, to examine a major periodical of early nineteenth-century Boston preceding the Christian Examiner. By the end of the seminar it seemed to me that not only was less known about this earlier period, but that it was more interesting as a period of transition than the later one. Moreover, the Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review held more interest for me, inasmuch as it was primarily a literary rather than a religious periodical. For these reasons I felt I might contribute more through a study of the Monthly Anthology than through a study of the Christian Examiner.

The paper I wrote during Professor Nye's seminar treated only the theological views in the Anthology and its controversies with the Panoplist, much of this paper now making up a significant part of Chapter III of the dissertation. Besides Professor Nye, Professor Newlin and Professor Norman Grabo read and criticized the paper, and until his death Professor Newlin was my major adviser on the dissertation. It is, however, to Professor Nye, who became my major adviser, that I owe thanks for criticism of the whole dissertation, as well as for guidance during the time I was completing my graduate work. I am

also grateful to Professor Clyde Henson and Professor John Yunck, the other members of my graduate committee, for reading and criticizing the dissertation.

There are several libraries that assisted me in locating both printed works and manuscripts and in giving me permission to use and quote from the manuscripts: the Boston Athenaeum, the Boston Public Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Congregational Library, and the American Unitarian Association Historical Library, in Boston; Houghton Library, the Harvard University Archives, and the Andover-Harvard Theological Library, in Cambridge; the Essex Institute, in Salem; the American Antiquarian Society, in Worcester; and Yale University Library, in New Haven. I am especially grateful to Mr. Waldo Forbes for permission to use and quote from the William Emerson Papers and to Mr. Walter Muir Whitehill for making the journals of Arthur Maynard Walter available to me.

Miss Judith Reynolds of the Western Reserve Historical Society and Mrs. Beverley Schell procured for me various books that were not readily available, and Miss Meredyth Bacon typed the dissertation. Finally, my husband, Jack, helped and encouraged me throughout my graduate work.

S. N. G.

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CHAPTER I

THE DANGERS AND DUTIES OF MEN OF LETTERS

In his memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Oliver Wendell Holmes observes:

> The nest is made ready long beforehand for the bird which is to be bred in it and to fly from it. The intellectual atmosphere into which a scholar is born, and from which he draws the breath of his early mental life, must be studied if we would hope to understand him thoroughly.[1]

What Holmes says is applicable not only to Ralph Waldo Emerson, but to the whole group of intellectuals who created what has come to be regarded as the Golden Age of American literature. If we are to understand either American Romanticism or American Transcendentalism thoroughly, we must study the intellectual atmosphere out of which it grew. The early nineteenth century, Holmes says, had been "thrown into confusion" by the Revolutionary War, so that the literary life of the country had suffered.

> The active intellects of the country had found enough to keep them busy in creating and organizing a new order of political and social life. Whatever purely literary talent existed was as yet in the nebular condition, a diffused luminous spot here and there, waiting to form centres of condensation.

One of these nebular spots "had been brightening in and about Boston for a number of years," and within the first few years of

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[1]Oliver Wendell Holmes, The Writings of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Vol. II: Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Lothrop Motley (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1892), p. 19.

the nineteenth century "a small cluster of names became visible as representing a modest constellation of literary luminaries," whose "light reached the world, or a small part of it, as reflected from the pages of 'The Monthly Anthology.'"[2]

The Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review[3] was the attempt of a few literary-minded men of early nineteenth-century Boston to help create an American literature. Extremely conscious of the paucity of literary productions America had hitherto presented to the world and mindful of the difficulties that a new nation, ravaged by war and beset by the problems of establishing social, economic, and political order, faced in trying to remedy its literary life, these men were eager both to create a milieu out of which a literature could arise and, in the process, to contribute to that body of literature they hoped to foster. To a remarkable degree they succeeded in both. This success was due almost entirely to the extent to which they assumed the duties of men of letters.

Throughout the Anthology are descriptions and definitions of the literary life, statements intended as guides to those young Americans who had the inclination and ability to pursue such a life. By far the most complete of these is "The Dangers and Duties of Men of Letters," an address by Joseph Stevens Buckminster to the Harvard

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[2]Holmes, II, 19-20.

[3]For a complete collation of the Monthly Anthology, including the changes in its complete title, see M. A. DeWolfe Howe (ed.), Journal of the Proceedings of the Society Which Conducts The Monthly Anthology & Boston Review, October 3, 1805, to July 2, 1811 (Boston: The Boston Athenaeum, 1910), pp. 307-313.

College Phi Beta Kappa Society, delivered in August 1809 and published in the Anthology a month later. The Revolutionary War, Buckminster observed, had had a severely detrimental effect upon American scholarship, in particular American literature. It had left "the minds of men in an unsettled state," but more than that

> our forms of education were becoming more popular and superficial; the knowledge of antiquity began to be despised; and the hard labour of learning to be dispensed with. Soon the ancient strictness of discipline disappeared; the curriculum of studies was shortened in favour of the impatience or the necessities of candidates for literary honours; the pains of application were derided, and a pernicious notion of equality was introduced, which has not only tainted our sentiments, but impaired our vigour, and crippled our literary eminence.

The present generation had "many steps to recover." There was much to be done before "the men of letters who are to direct our taste, mould our genius, and inspire our emulation; the men, in fact, whose writings are to be the depositories of our national greatness" would make their appearance. Yet there were indications that the time was not far off when such men would appear:

> if we are not mistaken in the signs of the times, the genius of our literature begins to show symptoms of vigour, and to meditate a bolder flight; and the generation which is to succeed us will be formed on better models, and leave a brighter track.

Buckminster's listeners, youths not much younger than Buckminster himself, were, then, "destined . . . to witness the dawn of our Augustan age, and to contribute to its glory."

It was essential, if these youths were to contribute to the rise of an American literature, that they know the duties and dangers of men of letters. In America especially, where political matters had come to be of such importance, it was a temptation for a young man "to turn his literary credit to the quickest account by early

making himself of consequence to the people, or rather to some of their factions." Instead of giving his whole attention to learning and writing, he yielded "himself up to their service," just at the time when "his powers [were] yet in their bloom." Once having turned his attention to "the profligate production of demagogues" and "the minutiae of local politicks," his mind became "so much dissipated, or his passions disturbed, that the quiet speculations of the scholar can no longer detain him." Others went to the opposite extreme. "Disgusted at the grossness which belongs to the common contests and occupations of active life," they gave themselves up entirely to "the luxurious leisure of study." There they soon discovered that it was "easier to read than to think, and still easier to think that to act." In this passive isolation, these potential men of letters became no less corrupted than those who yielded to public service. But even the men who did devote themselves to "active learning" encountered still another temptation, that of losing themselves "in superficial and unconnected inquiries," of employing their time and talents "in loose and undirected studies." There were several reasons for succumbing to this temptation: the want of leisure time or "the necessity of turning our knowledge to immediate account"; our defective system of education due partly to the inadequate provision made for instructors; the isolation of individual scholars in so vast a country; the antipathy of our government to scholarly endeavors; the absence of suitable rewards for literary accomplishments. But these adverse conditions made it even more essential that men of talent discipline themselves if there was to be an American literature.

Most of the difficulties that beset American men of letters, however, were common to men of letters everywhere, and most of them could be overcome. It was the duty of those who wished to devote themselves to letters to overcome them; it was incumbent upon them to "remember that, in the eye of reason and of Christianity, simple unprofitableness is always a crime." It was especially important that once a man had acquired the learning necessary to a man of letters he made that learning productive and not merely feed "his selfishness or his pride of knowledge."

> That learning, whatever it may be, which lives and dies with the possessor, is more worthless than his wealth, which descends to his posterity . . . the mere man of curious erudition may stand, indeed, as an object of popular admiration, but he stands like the occasional palaces of ice in the regions of the north, the work of vanity, lighted up with artificial lustre, yet cold, useless, and uninhabited, and soon to fall away without leaving a trace of their existence.

Buckminster's listeners, then, were obligated to "inquire what you may do for mankind. Learning is not a superfluity; and utility must, after all, be the object of your studies." Moreover, they had to remember that "literature, whether it be her pride, or her misfortune, will disdain to divide the empire of your heart." Although "genius . . . sometimes bursts through" all the "impediments" that attended a literary life, it was unlikely that men who did not possess genius could hope to produce anything noteworthy unless their devotion to a literary life was complete.[4]

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[4]For Buckminster's oration, see The Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review (cited hereafter as M.A.), VII (September, 1809), 145-58.

Buckminster's address is a fair summary of the views held by other Anthologists. All agreed that "we are yet in our literary infancy, just 'lisping in numbers,' just pressing, with faint and faultering voice, our new and doubtful claim to literature." But although "America has not yet produced (and it would be injustice to expect it from her) poets, who can in any measure stand in competition with those of England,"[5] there were "symptoms of the dawn of taste and love of learning in our country."[6] There was little doubt that America was "capable of knowing and exercising all the arts, that can possibly meliorate and adorn our condition."[7]

There were, however, numerous disadvantages to overcome. Not the least of these was the present interest of the American people in things other than literature, especially in money. "Wealth is power," seemed to be America's motto; whatever power she possessed owed much to the growth of commerce, almost none to her accomplishments in the arts. Politics and theology, likewise, had absorbed much of America's attention, so much that what written works America had contributed to the world had been mainly in these areas. Whatever talent America possessed, moreover, was not developed. Not only was there a lack of galleries and libraries, not to mention foundations and patrons, but the schools themselves were

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[5] M.A., II (April, 1805), 167-70.

[6] William Tudor, "A Discourse, Intended to Have Been Delivered Before the Society of PBK on their Anniversary, the Day after Commencement at Cambridge, August 30, 1810," M.A., IX (September, 1810), 145-61. Tudor left for Europe shortly before he was to deliver the address.

[7] David Phineas Adams, "The Loiterer. -- No. I," M.A., I (November, 1803), 3-6.

inadequate in the very "rudiments of education."[8] If a talented writer overcame these difficulties, still he was faced with the neglect and ingratitude of an unappreciative public. Of all the difficulties that a potential man of letters faced, "the gloom of neglect"[9] was the least forgivable; "national vanity may be a folly; but national ingratitude is a crime."[10]

But along with these disadvantages there were some aspects of America that might be conducive to literary production. David Phineas Adams seems to have felt these more strongly than most other Anthologists. Commerce may have absorbed our attention, he argued, but it had provided us with a comfortable life which could now be devoted to the arts. That our commerce was "universal," moreover, "opens to our attainment the literature and improvements of the whole globe." Likewise, we did have schools and colleges "interspersed throughout the country," and these were "accessible to studious youth of the humblest fortune." Now that "experience has . . . shown us the utility of learning," we could go on to discover "the rising importance of its increasing cultivation." Our independence and with it our national strength and "the blessings of peace" also contributed to conditions favorable to the advancement of literature. Above all, "the diversified scenery of nature" in America which "excites wonder, curiosity and contemplation" was surely conducive to the development of poetry. "That refined

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[8] See especially Tudor, M.A., IX (September, 1810), 145-61.

[9] Adams, M.A., I (November, 1803), 3-6.

[10] M.A., II, (April, 1805), 167-70.

sensibility of soul . . . seems here to be earnestly invited by the sweet melody of nature to awaken and admire her sublime and beautiful features."

Yet Adams, no less than the other Anthologists, saw that, even "with all these incitements to the principal glory of a nation, polite literature and the fine arts have hitherto made a very dilatory progress." The "principal cause," he felt, "is the want of zealous perseverance in the candidates for literary distinction."[11] Too many, as other Anthologists pointed out along with Buckminster, had turned their attention to such other areas as politics and "frittered away" their talents "in guiding temporary perverseness, in conciliating fleeting animosity, in opposing the errours of the passing day."[12] Too few had given "the chief of

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[11]Adams, M.A., I (November, 1803), 3-6.

[12]Tudor, M.A., IX (September, 1810), 145-61. Tudor attacks, in particular, Fisher Ames for spending his talents on politics rather than literature. See also the review by Samuel Cooper Thacher of John Quincy Adams's Lectures on Rhetorick and Oratory, M.A., VIII (April, 1810), 249-68, and the account of this review in Howe, pp. 225-26, and in Worthington C. Ford (ed.), Writings of John Quincy Adams (7 vols.; New York: Macmillan Co., 1914) III, 513-15. Thacher lamented that Adams had abandoned the literary "laurels which he might have gained without a rival, to gather a barren and withering chaplet of political renown," and described him, using Goldsmith's lines, as one

> whose genius is such
> We scarcely can praise it or blame it too much;
> Who, born for the universe, narrows his mind,
> And to party gives up what was meant for mankind.

Thacher did not "disguise our sentiments on the political career of Mr. Adams," and Adams suggested in letters to his mother and his brother, Thomas Boylston, that the reviewer had degraded "himself by . . . servile sacrifices to popular prejudices." Although there were dissenting voices among the Anthologists (William Shaw and Benjamin Welles, for instance), they were on the whole of the Federalist stamp and did not sympathize with Adams's growth away from the party.

[their] powers to [the] single object" of literature,[13] so that "what has been done, was generally performed in the intervals of professional labours."[14] Too "few have yet applied seriously to literature"[15] and assumed the "Duties of Genius and Learning to be Active and Useful."[16]

The Monthly Anthology was an attempt to help America grow out of her "literary infancy" and to realize what she was capable of in the realm of literature. It was an attempt to help assure, and if possible to accelerate, the "dawn of our Augustan age." Through presenting the public with a literary journal, the Anthologists hoped to turn its attention away from the areas of politics, commerce, and religion, in which it had for so long been immersed and to foster interest in areas that were more conducive to literary productivity. Realizing the necessity of good educational facilities and the importance of the advancement of other arts, the Anthologists paid attention to institutions and events that promoted these things, their most notable contribution along this line being the establishment of the Anthology Reading Room, which was to become the Boston Athenaeum. Above all, the Anthology tried to set a standard of literary taste for both the public and aspiring authors and to encourage authors to persevere toward this standard. In so doing, it attempted to live up to this standard itself and thereby

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[13]Francis Parkman, M.A., VI (March, 1809), 177-80.

[14]Tudor, M.A., IX (September, 1810), 145-61.

[15]Winthrop Sargent, M.A., II (February, 1805), 85-88.

[16]Arthur Walter, M.A., IV (December, 1807), 643-47.

serve as an example of what might be accomplished in the American republic of letters.

The Anthology regularly set forth its aims, as well as the extent to which it considered itself successful and the difficulties against which it was struggling, usually in the "Address of the Editors" that began each new volume. The Anthology was conducted by men "desirous of raising the reputation of American literature";[17] their aim was "to diffuse useful knowledge, and inspire a taste for literature among their fellows."[18] Their object being "exclusively literary,"[19] they had "no other cause to serve than that of truth and good learning"[20] and "to add something to the general stock of innocent gaiety; something to the improvement of the literature of our country, and something to the revival and diffusion of undefiled taste."[21] Through this endeavor they hoped that the Anthology might "be the repository of the sound literature of New England." In Joseph Buckminster's eyes, the Anthologists were

> gentle knights, who wish to guard the seats of taste and morals at home, from the incursion of the 'paynim host;' happy, if they should now and then rescue a fair captive from the giants of romance, or dissolve the spell, in which many a youthful genius is held, by the enchantments of corrupt literature.

They were "satisfied, if they in any way contribute to the mild influence of our common christianity, and to the elegant tranquillity of literary life."[22]

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[17]Samuel C. Thacher, M.A., V (March, 1808), 121-22.

[18]John S. J. Gardiner, M.A., V (January, 1808), 1-2.

[19]Samuel Thacher, M.A., II (December, 1805), 677-78.

[20]Samuel Thacher, M.A., X (June, 1811), 361-65.

[21]Samuel Thacher, M.A., II (December, 1805),677-78.

[22]Joseph Buckminster, M.A., VI (January, 1809), 3-6.

The degree to which the Anthology succeeded in its endeavors is attested to by the respect with which it has been regarded by various men of letters over the years. In its own day the Anthology received considerable praise. John Sylvester John Gardiner wrote that "the Anthology has never been a favourite with the publick at large . . . but from the ablest pens in the United States they have received praise, more than enough to satisfy reasonable vanity."[23] From time to time the Anthology published letters of approval of its policies and accomplishments, its admirers not always being residents of the United States. "A gentleman in Cambridge University (England)" wrote,

> I am glad, that you are actively employed in promoting a spirit and taste for polite literature. In encourageing and effecting this object, I am certain that in your country in particular, men of letters will conduce more to the real happiness and comforts of society, than in acrimonious disquisitions on theology or politicks. . . .

This correspondent attempted to aid the Anthology by recommending some recent works by Scott and Goethe.[24] When William Scollay was in London in 1810, he wrote Anthologist William Smith Shaw,

> I received by the Sally Anne numbers of the Anthology down to April & I have been much gratified in perusing them. Some of my literary acquaintance here to whom I have lent them have passed very high encomiums on the merits of the work which they think very far surpasses any periodical publication of this country.[25]

Two of the Anthologists who developed into distinguished men of letters later became especially aware of the importance of the Anthology

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[23] J. S. J. Gardiner, M.A., V (January, 1808), 1-2.

[24] M.A., III (April, 1806), 221.

[25] Letter from William Scollay to William Smith Shaw, London, July 18, 1810, in W. S. Shaw Papers (Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.).

to the growth of American thought and literature. William Tudor, writing in 1821, said that "the work undoubtedly rendered service to our literature, and aided the diffusion of good taste in the community" and suggested then that the documents associated with it, if examined "in the next century," would supply considerable material on "the early state of American literature which may then be interesting."[26] George Ticknor, the youthful protégé of probably several Anthologists, among them Joseph Buckminster, J. S. J. Gardiner, and William Shaw, and secretary for the Anthology Society in its later days, wrote in 1849:

> We should be glad to think that justice will ever be done to the 'Monthly Anthology and Boston Review,' as the pioneer to that better scholarship and more generous spirit of inquiry which, we hope, may be said now to have obtained a firm foothold in New England.[27]

Two years later, in 1851, Josiah Quincy, never a member of the Society but closely associated with it and a contributor to the Anthology, published his History of the Boston Athenaeum in which he judged the Anthology as

> constituting one of the most lasting and honorable monuments of the taste and literature of the period. Its labors may be considered as a true revival of polite learning in this country, after that decay and neglect, which resulted from the distractions of the Revolutionary War, and as forming an epoch in the intellectual history of the United States.[28]

This judgment was echoed not only by Oliver Wendell Holmes, but by Henry Adams as well. In his History of the United States he said

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[26]William Tudor, Miscellanies (Boston: Wells and Lily, 1821) pp. 1-4.

[27]George Ticknor, "Review of Memoirs of the Rev. Joseph Buckminster and the Rev. Joseph Stevens Buckminster," Christian Examiner, XLVII (September, 1849), 169-95. Cited hereafter as Ticknor, "Review."

[28]Josiah Quincy, The History of the Boston Athenaeum (Cambridge, Mass.: Metcalf & Co., 1851), p. 3.

that the Anthology "marked the birth of the new literary school," "giving to Boston for the first time the lead of American literary effort." The Anthology, Adams contended, "far surpassed any literary standards then existing in the United States, and was not inferior to any in England."[29] Still later Julius H. Ward called the Anthology "the first distinctive note in our periodical literature," sustaining "from 1803 to 1811 the hopes of the first group of men in America who attempted to lay a broad foundation in the public mind for American letters."[30]

Yet the references to the Anthology are scattered and scanty, at best superficial and at worst simply incorrect, and except for M. A. Dewolfe Howe's edition of the Anthology Society's Journal and the works of Lewis P. Simpson there has been little attempt to do justice, as Ticknor put it, to the Anthology. Simpson has within the last few years not only acknowledged the significance of the Anthology but tried in several articles to place it in its proper literary perspective and, more recently, made many of its pages available to the public.[31] In one of his articles Simpson attempts to explain the reason for the long neglect of the Anthology and

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[29]Henry Adams, History of the United States of America, Vol. IX: The Second Administration of Thomas Jefferson (9 vols.; New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1889-91), 201 and 207.

[30]Julius H. Ward, "The North American Review," North American Review, 201 (January, 1915), 123-34.

[31]Simpson's work includes a dissertation on Joseph Buckminster and several articles on various aspects of the Anthology and the Anthology period. His largest and most recent undertaking is The Federalist Literary Mind (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1962). See this publication for a bibliography of Simpson's work, pp. 238-39.

early nineteenth-century Boston in general. It has been due, he suggests, to the perpetration of "the myth of New England's intellectual lapse," a myth largely initiated by Ralph Waldo Emerson's concept of his father's generation and perpetuated by such later scholars as Vernon L. Parrington.[32] But perhaps just as important is the fact that the Anthology was, in comparison to some later literary periodicals, short-lived. For its time, its existence was a "wonder and mystery."[33] That it should have lived as long as it did, faced from the beginning with almost insurmountable obstacles, is remarkable. But it did not live long enough to become a part of that literary enterprise that it had struggled to bring about and that remains as an indisputable area of study. Finally, it did not live longer and it has not been looked upon as a more significant contribution to American literary history because it did not heed its own advice. Although it numbered among its contributors some of the finest literary figures of not only Boston but the country, none of these men was devoted enough to either the Anthology or the literary life per se to perpetuate the Anthology or to give to it consistently such literary productions as live on with ease through the years. They did not give, in short, "the chief of [their] powers" either to the Anthology or to literature itself; they had disdained to divide the empire of their hearts and had not assumed completely the duties of men of letters.

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[32]Lewis P. Simpson, "Emerson and the Myth of New England's Intellectual Lapse," Emerson Society Quarterly, No. 10 (I Quarter, 1958), 28-31.

[33]William Tudor, M.A., VIII (January, 1810), 3-6.

The Monthly Anthology began as the literary venture of a young man named Phineas Adams. Information regarding Adams is confined almost entirely to the brief sketch of him in Josiah Quincy's History of the Boston Athenaeum. He was the son of an apparently unprosperous if not a poor farmer in Lexington, Massachusetts. His father being unable to provide him with more than a common education, he was early apprenticed to a paper-maker. There he attracted the attention of a Mrs. Foster of Brighton and under her patronage he left his job, prepared himself for college, and entered Harvard at the age of twenty. He graduated from Harvard in 1801. Two years later he began to edit The Monthly Anthology; or Magazine of Polite Literature under the name of Sylvanus Per-se.

Although these facts concerning Adams's life up to 1803 are few, Quincy does provide us with some further information that shows that up until then Adams had hopes of adopting "literature as a profession." He "manifested in early boyhood a passion for elegant learning," and it was this "fondness for letters" that won the attention of Mrs. Brighton, herself "a lady of literary celebrity at that time."[34] At Harvard, Sidney Willard adds to this information, Adams "was reputed . . . by his contemporaries to be much more conversant with English literature than was usually the case among his fellow-students."[35] It is apparent from such comments that Adams's creation of the Anthology in 1803 was an attempt to

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[34]Quincy, 1-2.

[35]Sidney Willard, Memories of Youth and Manhood (2 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: John Bartlett, 1855), II, 158.

adopt literature as a profession; through being the editor of a literary magazine he hoped to establish himself as one of America's first full-time men of letters.

Possibly Adams was patterning his career after that of Joseph Dennie, who had been successfully editing the Port Folio in Philadelphia since 1800. But in trying out his literary venture in the city of Boston, Adams was attempting to succeed where Dennie himself had earlier failed. In May 1795 Dennie had begun editing the Tablet, a weekly paper devoted mainly to literature, in Boston. This enterprise had been short-lived, lasting only through August 11, 1795, and Dennie had left Boston for the more literary-minded city of Philadelphia.[36] Adams's project met a similar fate. In April 1804, just six months after he had issued the first number of the Anthology, Adams was forced to abandon his first attempt to be a professional man of letters. Apparently this attempt was also his last.

The causes of Adams's failure point to some of the reasons for the later success, as well as the final discontinuation, of the Anthology. Writing almost half a century later, Sidney Willard, who was himself to become an Anthologist a few years after Adams's failure, commented on literary periodicals in general:

> There are but two things by means of which such a book can grow and live long, and these are money and sympathy, and, in the case of individuals, both.

The Anthology, while it was edited by Adams, had neither. Willard observed that

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[36]Frank L. Mott, A History of American Magazines 1741-1850 (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1930), p. 225.

> if the projector who furnishes the literary materials has not money enough to pay the printer and publisher, and these are not able to take the risk of gaining friends, by the merits of the work, numerous enough to pay the price, it must surely die, and that very soon. This was the precarious condition of the Monthly Anthology from its birth until it had lived, through its poverty and struggles, the first half-year. . . .

The Anthology during Adams's editorship "was sustained by the sympathy of a few individuals, separately. The bond was not strong enough" to overcome the financial difficulties that beset it.[37]

The Anthology, even during its successful years after Adams's failure, was never free from financial difficulties and these, more than any other one factor, ultimately caused its demise. As Willard said, "this working for the public for nothing, and paying one's own expenses, is a poor business." But with the formation of the Anthology Society in 1805 the "sympathy" for the Anthology was "united in social compact"[38] and the Anthology prospered, despite its financial worries, for six years. It seems to have been, then, the lack of a group of dedicated contributors that most severely hurt the Anthology under Adams.

Many of the men who contributed to the Anthology while Adams was editing it were later to be members of the society that was formed to take over the editorship. Yet Adams's Anthology seems to have been a lonely enterprise. Perhaps this was out of choice. Adams did, after all, want to make his mark as an editor, and to do so he had to carry the bulk of the responsibility for the magazine. But very likely, despite his being a Harvard graduate of high literary repute, he was somewhat estranged from Boston society and

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[37]Willard, II, 224-25.

[38]Willard, II, 225.

with it the literary circles of the city. Other than his being a poor farmer's son with no family connections in the city and nothing in his background, other than his tie to Harvard, to recommend him, he appears to have had a rather unusual character which did not probably help matters. According to Quincy, his "invincible diffidence and an excitable temperament were the occasion of great eccentricity of manners."[39] Whatever the cause, this estrangement seems certain because the only two of his contemporaries whose writings describe him in any detail, both of whom were to become closely associated with the Anthology, actually knew very little about him and because, strange as it may seem, once Adams gave up his enterprise he never again had anything to do with the Anthology. Sidney Willard remarked that "I learned more particularly than I had before known or remembered the history of Adams . . . from a note in the Hon. Josiah Quincy's History of the Boston Athenaeum,"[40] and the description by Quincy, also Adams's contemporary, as we have already seen, is scanty.

After his failure with the Anthology Adams "taught school in different places, till, in 1811, he entered the Navy as chaplain and teacher of Mathematics." Quincy suggests that Adams now entertained hopes of distinguishing himself in the field of science, combining his knowledge of mathematics and "nautical affairs." During the War of 1812 he sailed with Commodore David Porter on the frigate Essex over the Pacific and later rejoined Porter in his expedition to the West Indies. There he died in 1823. Although Quincy attests to Adams's "love of intellectual pursuits" accompanying

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[39]Quincy, 2.

[40]Willard, II, 157.

him "in every clime," the only evidence that Adams retained any hope at all of becoming a man of letters after his failure with the Anthology is a journal which he published of the Pacific cruise with Commodore Porter.[41]

Despite the fact that Adams completely severed his connection with the Anthology, the periodical was always in a sense his. The essential characteristics of the Anthology under Adams remained with the magazine to the end. The first pages of the first issue were devoted to an essay on the appropriateness of America to polite literature and the fine arts. This essay was to have been the first of several in a series called "The Loiterer," Adams's design being "to present to my readers lucubrations on manners and literature, on the improvement of taste and the encouragement of genius" which he hoped would afford as much pleasure as the Spectator, Rambler, Adventurer, and "American Lounger" essays had.[42] One sees in this piece alone the scope that the Anthology was to assume under Adams and from which it was never to turn.

The Anthology was always what Adams called a "Magazine of Polite Literature," seeking both to disseminate and to create literature, and in the process, more broadly, culture itself. The first six issues exhibited the liberal combination of literature with pieces on the arts, history, biography, science, religion, and so on that the remaining issues showed. Even within the realm of belles-lettres, there was breadth, original essays, poems, and letters

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[41]Quincy, 1-2. According to Quincy, Adams prefixed David to his name "out of regard to Commodore David Porter."

[42]M.A., I (November, 1803), 3-6.

being interspersed with translations, reviews, and, here and there, pieces gleaned from already published works. How the Anthology changed was mainly in its fulfillment of the aims it had begun with, a change that only the experience of an able group of writers could bring about. The short-lived "Literary Wanderer," "Guest," "Evening Entertainments," "Loiterer," "Collectanea," "Amusement," "Sans Souci"--all attempts to establish series that would run through all the issues of the Anthology--gradually settled down into the stable "Remarker," "Botanist," "Silva," "Retrospective Notices," "Levity," "Remarks on the English Translations of the Roman Poets," and so on that the reader learned to anticipate in each new issue. Even the essential theological views of the Anthology, which for many readers came to be its distinguishing mark, found expression in the first issues. That the Anthology retained the character with which it began, however, is not surprising, since many of the contributors to Adams's Anthology were the same men who contributed to its pages up to the end.

Immediately after Adams and his publisher, E. Lincoln, abandoned the Anthology, another firm, Munroe and Francis, took it over, and without skipping an issue the Anthology reappeared under a new editor.[43] Munroe and Francis knew that if they were to succeed where Lincoln had failed, it was essential that they secure an able editor. Such a man they found in William Emerson. Emerson had several advantages that made him a good choice: he was personally suited to the job of editing, he was devoted to the development of American literature, and he numbered among his friends and acquaintances all of the most able literary-minded Bostonians of the day.

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[43]Howe, 4, 305-309.

Very much aware that he was "to originate nothing"[44] and "that his name is never to be splendid," William Emerson had developed those qualities that nonetheless assure a certain amount of success in life and win for one the esteem of the public. "The honest and noiseless man is the man, whose honours I most highly prize," he once wrote his sister, Mary,[45] whose ambition for her family he knew he could never fulfill, and it is such stable and inoffensive qualities as these that seem best to characterize him. Quincy described him as having been "diligent and zealous," "assiduous and exact" in his pastoral duties, and these characteristics he carried over into his activities in literary and charitable institutions.

> In most of these, Mr. Emerson was intrusted with some important office. His methodical strictness in the distribution of his time, his exemplary punctuality in all his engagements, and the fidelity with which he executed every trust, made his talents and services the subject of frequent requisition, which his love of labor and usefulness seldom permitted him to decline.

As editor of the Anthology, Quincy observed, he devoted "himself with zeal and laborious fidelity to the advancement of its character and interests."[46] Charles Lowell simply called Emerson "a man of good sense." Like Quincy, Lowell emphasized the degree to which Emerson was able to discipline his life: "He had the organ of order very fully developed--he was one of those who have 'a place

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[44]Letter from William Emerson to Phebe Ripley, Boston, October 16, 1803, Emerson Papers (Houghton Library, Cambridge, Mass.) Hereafter cited as Emerson Papers.

[45]Letter from William Emerson to Mary Moody Emerson, Boston, November 11, 1807, Emerson Papers.

[46]Quincy, 11-12.

for every thing, and every thing in its place.'" Moreover, Lowell attributed to Emerson one of the qualities Emerson himself so valued: "He was an honest man, and expressed himself decidedly and emphatically, but never bluntly or vulgarly."[47] That Emerson was diligent, exact, methodical, generous, sensible, and honest made him likely to be a successful editor. These qualities had already won for him the esteem of his fellowmen, and undoubtedly the financial asset of an editor of a literary magazine's having universal respect did not escape the business sense of Munroe and Francis.

That the Anthology was primarily a literary magazine made the choice of Emerson even more appropriate. Emerson was by no means a professional man of letters--no one in Boston at the time was--but he was deeply interested in literature, especially American literature. As early as 1784 Emerson had revealed his concern over the weak state of American letters when he delivered an essay entitled "On Taste" to the Phi Beta Kappa Society upon his graduation from Harvard. In the Anthology he must have seen an opportunity to help remedy "the effects of a bad taste" which, he had said, were the cause of "the prejudices which are frequently formed against literature." Moreover, because taste, to Emerson, was not confined to the realm purely of literature or even the arts in general, but "like air, pervades the regions of universal knowledge,"[48] he must have found the broad scope of the Anthology

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[47]Letter from Lowell to William Sprague, November 8, 1859, quoted in William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, Vol. VIII: Annals of the American Unitarian Pulpit (New York: Robert Carter & Bros., 1865), 244.

[48]William Emerson, "On Taste," Emerson Papers.

especially inviting. That he hoped the Anthology would continue to treat the several areas it already had, and even others, is evident in the "Preface" he wrote for the first volume of the Anthology after it was bound.[49]

It is possible that one reason Emerson was more successful than Adams had been was that Emerson seems not to have considered the Anthology a means to make himself a professional man of letters and so leave his mark on the history of American literature, as Adams seems to have done. Emerson was always foremost a clergyman, being pastor of First Church in Boston. But, whatever his literary ambitions, the Anthology could never have borne his mark alone and survived. It was fortunate, therefore, that Emerson could count on the willing help of a group of able men, many of whom had contributed already to the Anthology but who under Emerson's editorship became devoted to its success.

One reason for this apparent intensification of interest among contributors may have been the simultaneous intensification of the religious controversy between the liberal and orthodox Congregationalists. Although this controversy had been going on for several decades, it reached a peak with the oncoming election of a new Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard. Emerson himself was a strong liberal Christian. His orthodoxy had been questioned several times already, even upon his call to First Church in 1799.[50] His son, Ralph Waldo, was to describe his father's beliefs as

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[49]William Emerson, "Preface" to M.A., I (written January 1, 1805), i-iv.

[50]Letter from William Emerson to Ruth Emerson, October 15 and 16, 1799, Emerson Papers.

inclining "to what is ethical and universal in Christianity,"[51] a view that Charles Lowell was to put more bluntly as "to say the least, far from having any sympathy with Calvinism."[52] About the same time that he took over the Anthology, Emerson founded the Christian Monitor Society,[53] which issued works slanted towards the liberal Christian view, and he was not averse to presenting such a view through the Anthology as well. Several of the contributors were of his stamp and may have been drawn toward supporting the Anthology partly because they saw it as a vehicle for the expression of their views. This possibility, however, should not be over emphasized, for religion continued to be only one aspect of the general scope of the Anthology and there were several among this group of devoted contributors who had no interest in this controversy.

It is indicative of the literary ferment going on in Boston during the early nineteenth century that the year after Emerson took over the Anthology another literary magazine, the Literary Miscellany, appeared. Moreover, that it was a rather small circle of ambitious young men who brought about this ferment is evident in the fact that many of the men who contributed to both Adams's and Emerson's Anthology were among those who also contributed to the Literary Miscellany and who later created the Anthology Society to take over the job of editing the

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[51]Letter from R. W. Emerson to Sprague, October 5, 1849, in Sprague, VIII, 245.

[52]Lowell to Sprague, in Sprague, VIII, 246.

[53]Letter from John Pierce to Sprague, May 8, 1849, in Sprague, VIII, 242.

Anthology. The Miscellany was first issued in July 1805, but its inception dates back to the annual meetings of the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa Society in 1802, 1803, and 1804.[54] At the first meeting it was proposed that the Society publish a periodical that would promote the cause of literature in America. Appointed to assume the responsibility for the new publication at the last meeting was a committee composed of Sidney Willard; the Reverend Thaddeus M. Harris of Dorchester; William Jenks, a teacher of classics and reader in the Episcopal Church, Cambridge; Levi Hedge, a tutor of metaphysics at Harvard; and Parker Cleaveland, another tutor at Harvard. But the Society's plans were temporarily thwarted by an opposition led by the same man who was later to command the forces against the theological views of the Anthology, Jedidiah Morse. What Morse and his associates feared in the projected periodical was essentially the same as what they later feared in the Anthology: a threat to orthodox religion.

The reason Morse, Professor Eliphalet Pearson, and others thought the periodical would be subversive in its religious, as well as its political, views was that it would be the product of a secret society.[55] Secret societies had become suspect mainly because of the activities of the Illuminati in Germany and the Jacobins in France, which had become known to New Englanders through the circulation of John Robinson's Proofs of a Conspiracy

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[54]Aside from my own reading of the Miscellany, the following information concerning its history including that on the secret societies is gathered from Willard, II, 133-57, 322.

[55]There is no proof that the Anthology was ever suspect for the same reason, but possibly it was, for it too was later conducted by an organization to which members were elected and by which no business was conducted in the presence of guests.

against all the Religions and Governments of Europe carried on in the Secret Meetings of the Free-Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies, collected from good Authorities . . . and Abbe Barruel's Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism . . ., both published in the United States in 1799. These works tried to show that these societies fostered the ideals of a universal equality that sought to subvert the existing religious and political institutions, and they propagated the fear among some New Englanders that their agents were at work in the United States, particularly through the higher degrees of Masonry. In the excitement, all secret societies, to some degree, became suspect. The Phi Beta Kappa Society was believed not only to be an offshoot of Masonry, but also a relative of the Jacobins because of its first letter, the initial of the Greek word philosophia. Professor Pearson was especially fearful that the proposed publication would endanger the religious stability of Harvard, but despite his and Morse's strong objections the Miscellany finally materialized, with the support of the president and other less fearful friends of the college.

Although the members of the Phi Beta Kappa Society who founded the Literary Miscellany felt these fears were unfounded, they did ultimately contribute to their realization. During its short life the Miscellany was primarily a literary magazine, indulging in neither political nor religious radicalism. But before long the Miscellany was absorbed by the Anthology and many of its writers were the same men who led the movement of liberal Christianity through the pages of the Anthology, a movement that did eventually undermine the established religious order that Morse and Pearson were trying to protect. The observation of

Leonard Woods that the liberal Christians would disseminate their religious views by first establishing themselves as men of letters may not have been based upon the intention of the contributors to the Miscellany, but such was eventually to be the case.[56]

In the "Prospectus" of its first issue the Literary Miscellany was careful to define its purpose. Its intention was to stimulate learning, rather than to proselytize for either political or religious radicalism. It was

> projected by a few friends, who agreed to contribute such reflections and remarks, as were the result of their studies, with a wish to rouse a mutual emulation in literary pursuits, and to excite in others a taste for scientific investigations.

Its idea of the realm of literature was, like the Anthology's, broad. Among the topics it hoped to treat were ancient and modern history; the mythology, customs, manners, and antiquities of other nations; Hebrew and oriental literature; Greek and Roman classics; and the lives of eminent men. There were to be essays on morality, ethics, jurisprudence, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, natural history, natural philosophy, and both natural and revealed religion, as well as sections devoted to poetry and reviews of ancient and modern works. All in all, the Miscellany was to be "a repository for the lucubrations of the scholar, the speculations of the Philosopher, and the lectures of the Divine." But more particularly it hoped to aid the cause of American literature: its biographies were to be mainly on "those who were born, or flourished in our own Country," and its attention to the classics was intended "to

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[56]Letter from Leonard Woods to Jedidiah Morse, Newbury, January 17, 1809, Morse Family Papers (Yale University Library, New Haven, Conn.) Hereafter cited as Morse Family Papers.

assist studious youth in acquiring a correct taste, and laying the foundation of solid learning." Through its publication of pieces on the sciences it hoped to "be useful to the Mechanic," but its main intent appeared to be "improving . . . the Artist."[57] In short, the purpose of the Miscellany was about the same as that of the Anthology.

According to Sidney Willard, there was never any intended rivalry between the Miscellany and the Anthology; since at least two-thirds of the contributors to the Miscellany were likewise contributors to the Anthology any other situation would seem to have been impossible.[58] Yet the two periodicals did engage in a controversy which arose with the Anthology's "observations" on the new journal and ended with the absorption of the Miscellany into the Anthology. Andrews Norton, a contributor to both periodicals wrote these "observations." First he discussed briefly the effect of periodicals in contributing, more than other types of publications, "toward forming the manners of a people." This was due to their being "easily diffused" and "easily read." Norton commended the Port Folio, which until the last year had been "the only periodical publication of much literary merit, circulating in New England," and then proceeded

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[57] Literary Miscellany (cited hereafter as L.M.), I (n.d.), 1-5.

[58] Willard, II, 157. Willard, pp. 140-54, lists the major contributors to the Miscellany as Thaddeus M. Harris, J. Q. Adams, Abiel Abbot, Levi Hedge, John Pierce, William Wells, Francis D. Channing, William Jenks, John Abbot, Arthur M. Walter, Sidney Willard, Parker Cleaveland, Loammi Baldwin, Joseph S. Buckminster, Andrews Norton, John Abbot, James Winthrop, Charles Coffin, Peter O. Thacher, Samuel C. Thacher, Daniel A. White, William Allen, and John T. Kirkland. Almost all were graduates of Harvard and members of Phi Beta Kappa.

to the Miscellany, "being native among us." His judgment of this new periodical was that, although it was conducted with some ability, "it is deficient in exciting interest or affording amusement." Thus it could hardly fulfill the purpose of contributing to the civility of the American people. Norton especially condemned the style of the Miscellany, "which has some resemblance to that, which the ancients called the Asiatic, but which has so long been the disgrace of our country, that it may now with unfortunate propriety be denominated the American."[59]

Insofar as the writers for both periodicals were the same men, the style of the Miscellany could hardly have differed much from that of the Anthology, and this criticism, as well as those that succeeded it, cannot be taken too seriously. It would appear that Norton, more than anything else, was simply having a good time. But when he ended his essay with the comment that all of his remarks on the new publication were not written "with any design to injure its reputation, but with the most sincere desire to promote its future respectability," he was very likely being somewhat ironical. Norton, who was considered practical enough to have been chosen to edit the Anthology just before its close, probably saw at the beginning that two such similar periodicals as the Miscellany and the Anthology could not long survive together in Boston and he seems to have chosen to give his vote to the latter.

The Miscellany, in its reply, mimicked Norton's apparent intention of good will after giving his piece a thorough going over, cleverly turning many of his phrases to its own advantage.[60]

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[59]Andrews Norton, M.A., II (April, 1805), 170-74.

[60]L.M., II (n.d.), 49-53.

When the Anthology published its rebuke, its fear of a rival became clear. Its solution, if the Miscellany was intent on surviving, was the separation of duties and the allocation of subjects that were peripheral to literature to the Miscellany. The Anthology writers, it admitted, "have felt more than a stranger's partiality" for the Miscellany and even though "we have whatever right to publick favour priority of birth can bestow, yet we have never felt any Turkish jealousy of this 'brother near the throne.'" Always they believed "that within the ample domains of literature, there was enough to find us both employment without interference." But it was clear that the Anthologists also saw that the domains of finance and public support were not so ample. Thus, at the same time, they suggested "that while we [the Anthology] were engaged in the humble employment of collecting the scattered and neglected flowers of its [literature's] fields, we might resign to them [the Miscellany] the more dignified task of cultivating the oaks of science, and enriching the soil around their roots." In short, the Anthology wanted priority over the belles-lettres and was willing to give up some related interests for the sake of survival.[61]

The Anthology got more than it asked for and at the end of two volumes the Miscellany ceased publication. Two such similar works could hardly have flourished at the same time in a city that could not support the single venture of Phineas Adams. Arthur Maynard Walter, informing Buckminster of the end of the Miscellany, called Boston "a bookless & museless town." He added, however, that the Miscellany had been discontinued for other reasons as well

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[61] M.A., II (August, 1805), 446.

as financial. "Nobody was earnest but Harris & myself," he confided, and after a while not even Harris. "Mr. Harris stild himself out of the list of writers & Willard did not like the labour of continual exertion." There was simply no bond of sympathy strong enough to continue the Miscellany; apparently, after Samuel Thacher and Buckminster sailed for Europe, Walter was the only dependable contributor. The consequence, as Walter wrote, was "that the A. is fattening from the fruits that were given to the M."[62] So the Anthology "gained something by the death of the Miscellany," as Willard observed, "but if it had gained all its subscribers, it would still have been poor."[63]

In quite a different vein did the Anthology treat its only other rival, the Port Folio.[64] It often praised Dennie's work, complimenting him on his "taste and talents,"[65] and when the Port Folio became a monthly, rather than a weekly, publication in 1809, the Anthology welcomed it "with fraternal cordiality, into the rank of monthly publishers."[66] The Anthology's respect was sincere; in fact, William Smith Shaw had helped the Port Folio obtain subscribers in Boston, feeling "a deep interest in the success of this periodical, not only as a friend to the proprietors,

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[62]Letter from Arthur Walter to Joseph S. Buckminster, Boston, September 29, 1806, Buckminster Papers (Boston Athenaeum, Boston, Mass.) Hereafter cited as Buckminster Papers.

[63]Willard, II, 171.

[64]See Mott, 792-94, for a list of other magazines appearing during the Anthology years.

[65]M.A., II (April, 1805), 170-74.

[66]M.A., VI (May, 1809), 348.

but also as an American."[67] But at the same time the Anthology had little choice other than to praise the Port Folio, which had both the "priority of birth," having appeared in 1800, and many more subscribers, in 1806 having 1500 compared to the Anthology's 440.[68] Moreover, the Port Folio never seemed to be so imminent a threat as the Miscellany. Not only was it published many miles away in Philadelphia by a different group of men (though they did share some contributors, among them Paul Allen, J. S. J. Gardiner, Josiah Quincy, and John Quincy Adams), but it had a somewhat different character from that of the Anthology.

Most important, the Port Folio bore the stamp of one man, Joseph Dennie, whereas the Anthology, supervised through most of its years by several men, revealed the diversity inherent in such an arrangement. Moreover, the Port Folio always had a stronger political flavor than the Anthology, and the latter a stronger leaning to theological disquisitions, a difference explained in part by the difference between Philadelphia and Boston at the time. Also, the Anthology had a more scholarly and learned tone, making less attempt to appeal to the whole public. Henry Adams did not perhaps consider Dennie's aim when he judged the original matter of the Port Folio to be "for the most part hardly better than that of a college magazine" and Dennie himself as "commonplace, trivial, and dull," but he was showing in what sense the Anthology actually

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[67]Letter from William Shaw to Arthur Walter, January 16, 1800, in Joseph B. Felt, Memorials of William Smith Shaw (Boston: S. K. Whipple & Co., 1852), pp. 90-91.

[68]Letter from Munroe and Francis to William Shaw, July 15, 1806, quoted in Felt, 215.

did take "a stride beyond Dennie's power." Attempting to amuse as well as to instruct, the Port Folio, in Adams's estimation, failed at both: Dennie's "humor was heavy and commonly coarse," and "of scholarship or scholarly criticism, his paper showed great want."[69] Still the Anthology appreciated being "cheared on their way by the smile of their distant countryman" through its many struggles. "Sensible by experience of the difficulties and vexations of a periodical publication," the Anthology knew "how to appreciate the value of success, and the worth of so distinguished a colleague and companion."[70]

On October 3, 1805, the Monthly Anthology was officially assured of that support which it had had from the time Emerson became editor, a support which the Miscellany so sorely lacked. At a meeting at the home of J. S. J. Gardiner a group of several of the most dedicated supporters of the Anthology adopted and signed the constitution for the Anthology Society, the initial purpose of which was to take charge of the Anthology. The constitution was drawn up by a committee, previously appointed at an informal meeting, of Arthur Maynard Walter, William Smith Shaw, and Joseph Stevens Buckminster. Consisting of fourteen articles, the constitution called for four officers--a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer; two committees of three; and an editor of the Society's publication. The secretary, among other duties, was to keep a journal of the Society's proceedings. This journal has been preserved and is today the major source of

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[69]Henry Adams, History, IX, 200-201.

[70]M.A., VI (May, 1809), 348.

information on the Anthology Society. The treasurer, who was to handle transactions with the printers as well as collect assessments on the Society, was also to be a member of the standing committee to purchase books, subscribe for publications, provide places of meeting, and transact whatever other business the Society undertook. The other committee was to audit the treasurer's accounts and keep track of the library. Finally, the editor of the Anthology was to "have a general power of preparing the materials & superintending the publication of this work." He was to "correct the press," solicit and present to the Society all foreign communications (presumably pieces written by men outside the Society), register with dates all book review assignments, notify the writers of series six weeks before their numbers were due, inform members of duties assigned to them in their absence, and carry on whatever correspondence the Society might desire, including soliciting contributions.

The Society was to convene every Thursday evening. Only three members were necessary to transact the ordinary business of the Society, but for the election of officers, which would occur annually, and the admission of new members, seven would be needed to constitute a quorum. Candidates for membership were to stand on nomination for four successive meetings and then be admitted only by unanimous vote. The main business was, of course, to be the Anthology, though the Anthology Reading Room, which grew into the Boston Athenaeum, soon also became a major concern. The constitution treated with particular care the problem of book reviews. Books were to be assigned by a majority vote and each

review was to be read to the Society before it was published. If any major objections arose, a committee of three would be appointed to aid the writer in remedying it and to report their success at the next meeting. Members were to deposit all communications they received with the editor, who was then to present them to the Society, but only in cases of controversy were they to be read at the meetings, "unless at the option of the Writer." Finally, the last article of the constitution provided for its amendment.[71]

For its president the Society chose J. S. J. Gardiner, who at forty was its oldest member. Gardiner was likewise perhaps the most learned member of the Society. Having been educated partly in England under the severe discipline of Dr. Samuel Parr, he was certainly the most learned classicist of Boston and probably one of the most learned of his day. While an assistant minister of Trinity Church in Boston, he had opened a school for classical instruction (a school which, some judged, began the revival of classical learning in Boston) and upon his becoming rector of Trinity in August 1805 he continued to instruct a select group of students. Among his pupils were George Ticknor and William Prescott, both of whom later attested to his superiority as a scholar and teacher.[72] Ticknor described his teaching as "undoubtedly better of the sort than any to be had elsewhere in New England" and observed that "he was a strict and accurate teacher, stern and severe to the inattentive and stupid, but kindly and helpful to

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[71]See Howe, pp. 29-32, for the "Constitution," and pp. 35-36, for the minutes of the "Journal" for October 3, 1805.

[72]See Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 3-10 for a sketch of Gardiner's life.

willing workers."[73] According to Prescott, Gardiner's "relish for classical learning" was

> visible in the habitual accuracy and propriety of his style, both in writing and conversation; in his pure taste in criticism, as well as in his increased relish for the more refined beauties of composition, and in the inexhaustible source of delight which the study of this literature, continued to afford him to the last moments of his life.

(As an example of this last, Prescott tells of Gardiner's passing the last painful days of his life by reading "the forty-eight Books of the Iliad and the Odyssey in the original, without the aid of a Lexicon or an English version.") Prescott's judgment of the pervasive effect of Gardiner's admiration for the classics is justified in the pieces he published in the Anthology. In both his style of writing and in his criticism he showed himself to be a devoted student of the classics and of those British writers whose work showed their strong influence. "The high standard which Dr. Gardiner had formed from his intimacy with the severe models of antiquity," observed Prescott, "led him to be fastidious in no little degree, in his estimation of the moderns." Whenever "he read aloud from the English classics," as he did often and with admirable delivery, they "were pretty sure to be of the age of Elizabeth or of Anne."

As an Anglican clergyman, Gardiner likewise revealed a deep respect for the past. Far from being of the stamp of the "humanitarian" Anglican James Freeman, Gardiner "was firmly attached to the doctrines of the Church of England." But he was not one to proselytize or enter into theological controversy,[74] and since he

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[73]George S. Hillard, Mrs. Anna Ticknor, and Miss Anna Eliot Ticknor (eds.), Life, Letters, and Journals of George Ticknor (Boston: James R. Osgood & Co., 1877), I, 8. Hereafter cited as Ticknor's Life.

[74]Letter from William Prescott to Sprague, December 21, 1848,

was an outsider to the controversies going on within the Congregational Church he did not express any particular religious views in the Anthology. Yet, as a traditional Anglican he was a Trinitarian, and as the Anthology came more and more to display its unitarian bias Gardiner must have gradually felt somewhat alienated. Very likely it was the heat of the unitarian controversy in which the Anthology came to take so active a role that ultimately caused Gardiner to resign from the Society, for shortly thereafter he preached a sermon in defense of Trinitarianism which the Anthology reviewed with contempt.

Many meetings of the Society were held at Gardiner's house, and, according to Robert Hallowell Gardiner, he was during his membership "the life and soul of the Society."[75] But it was not only his learning and love of literature that made him so. He was extremely convivial; he loved to talk and he talked very well. Ticknor describes the little symposia which Gardiner was fond of holding in his home, to which he invited such favorite students as Ticknor himself and such friends as William Shaw, William Wells, Joseph Buckminster, and James Savage--all Anthology comrades--for an evening "full of fun and wit, and always rich in literary culture."[76] According to Willard, the spirit of Gardiner's symposia must have carried over into the Anthology Society sessions: he "had the faculty, when any business or reading became dull, to change the scene; and, aided by the variety of interlocutory olios, the scene

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in Sprague, Vol. V: Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit (New York: Robert Carter & Bros., 1859), 365-67.

[75]Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 10.

[76]Ticknor's Life, 8-9.

sometimes became so farcically dramatic as to draw forth torrents of laughter."[77] At times, so playful did Gardiner become that he would rule that no business be conducted when the Society gathered or that an article not be read if it seemed too long and boring. At one point his playfulness provoked him to insert into the Anthology pages "the filthy story of Pope's going with Cibber to a Brothel," a story, according to Arthur Walter, that was "worse than Port Folio shamelessness." (Walter saw to it that the printed sheets were "struck off," without consulting Gardiner, so the story never appeared.) Gardiner's zest apparently was evident also in his role as rector of Trinity, a post from which he would happily absent himself on Sundays in favor of shooting expeditions.[78] According to William Bentley, when a new bishop was chosen for the Episcopal churches of New England, "Gardiner of Boston was thought to have too little of professional manners for such promotion" and, furthermore, "did not struggle against the public prejudices upon the subject."[79] Writing to Buckminster, Walter observed that "Mr. G. has qualities, which are very much in his favour, but he does not pay attention enough to decorum, propriety & opinion, & by these the world is governed. I could tell you some strange stories about him, but I shall reserve them for your private room; they are not

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[77]Willard, II, 231.

[78]Letter from Walter to Buckminster, September 29, 1806, Buckminster Papers.

[79]The Diary of William Bentley (Salem, Mass.: The Essex Institute, 1905), III, 521-22.

against him as a man, but as a minister. Yet I like him & esteem him & Mrs. G. is one of the finest of women."[80]

As secretary the Society elected Arthur Maynard Walter. Although Walter was trained for the bar, he alone among all the Anthologists seems to have put literature foremost in his pursuits. That he hoped one day to make a worthy contribution to American literature is evident in his letters, his journal, and his early literary attempts. In 1802, having finished his studies in law, he put off admittance to the bar in favor of taking a journey to several cities in the United States and to Europe. This trip was not to be one merely for pleasure, but for the acquisition of knowledge which he hoped one day to use.

> I shall have to see mankind in new situations, to improve my mind in the numerous scenes to which I shall be a party; and, under the guidance of Heaven, I hope my time will not be lost, as it regards either the acquisition of knowledge or the improvement of opinion.[81]

His ultimate aim, he confessed, was preparing himself for life as a literary man: "Literature is my object," he wrote.[82] Walter saw that the United States was becoming a land of opportunity for someone who had the financial means, the ability, and the ambition to become a man of letters, and he recognized that he himself had all these advantages. "I hope, one day, to do something which will be worthy of being remembered," he wrote a friend. Although he might accomplish something in politics or in "the empire of morals and religion by some work of merit," he saw that "in America,

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[80]Walter to Buckminster, September 29, 1806, Buckminster Papers.

[81]From Walter's Journal, September, 1802, quoted in Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 14-15.

[82]Quoted from Walter in Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 15.

letters are not too much encouraged" and that he himself had not only "ambition and perseverance" but "perhaps my fortune may enable me to print my own work."[83] "There is a pathway open in this country to a goodly land," he said. "I mean to offer my passport at the turnpike-gate." Writing to Channing, he said,

> I am glad that you and Shaw are making excursions into literature. I would I were with you, to participate the labor and the pleasure. I want my country to do something in this cause. It is high time that the young Hercules, who has strangled the serpents, should go forth in the plenitude of muscular force, and perform the mighty labors assigned to him. American literature ought to bud, it ought to promise future fruits of Hesperian luxuriance.[84]

Upon returning from Europe he was going "to study, for diligence alone can add greatness to genius, or produce respectability when talent is wanting." He was exceedingly aware of the limitations of imagination, wit, and genius.

> Imagination, without the sense acquired by industry to restrain and embellish it, is nothing but a wild hippogriff, that plays fantastically in the high heavens and amuses children with its freaks and vagaries. And what is wit even, unless illuminated by knowledge: Acquired by study, indeed, it amuses for a little while, but mere wit is contemptible.

As for genius, it could only "quicken progress, give an energy to our researches," and "illuminate what is obscure." What one needed, if wit, imagination, and genius were to be of any use, was knowledge, and it was Walter's belief that "all knowledge must be acquired from books, conversation, or reflections upon human nature."

His journey to Europe was to help supply him in all of these. In London he planned to "buy a good library."

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[83]Quoted from Walter in Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 17.

[84]Letter from Arthur Walter to William Ellery Channing, April 1, 1803, quoted in Felt, 167-68.

> I shall expend $1,500 in law books and a private, choice collection. I mean to buy the corner-stones of learning. These must support the building; and others, gradually attained, must contribute to its strength and beauty.[85]

Moreover, throughout his journey he was to keep a journal, and this journal, undoubtedly one of the most interesting and informative of any American then living, records not only the numerous conversations he held, mostly with other young Bostonians then in Europe, but his thoughtful reflections upon everyone and everything he came into contact with--the books he read, plays he saw, sights he visited, people he saw or met, and so on.[86] For

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[85]Quoted from Walter in Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 15-16.

[86]It is a pity this journal (actually there are two journals, a London and a Paris one) has never been published, though I have been told by the director of the Boston Athenaeum that its publication is, has been for several years, in process. Anyone interested in what one young man of early nineteenth-century Boston thought about, was interested in, and came into contact with--all probably typical of the experiences of several men of his time and place--should certainly peruse Walter's journals. Moreover, the journals are significant simply as a contribution to the literature of America. Here is a partial list of topics from his London journal: London hospitality and the character of Londoners; reflections on himself; Addison; the classics and their status in America; the vanity and love of praise; his father; his love of friends and conversation; his loneliness; John Quincy Adams and politics; Ulysses and Nausicaa; Johnson's Rassellas; Macbeth players (Cooke, Kemble, Mrs. Siddons) with analyses of the sleep-walking scene and the ghost of Banquo; Clarissa Harlowe; Cowper's Task; Horne Tooke; Paley on Christianity; book stores; politics in Britain; Spectator; Smith's Wealth of Nations; Gibbon; Boyd's Dante; James McIntosh; Athenian democracy; painters of London; William Jones; British Museum and other various sights in London. His Paris Journal is just as full. See Arthur Maynard Walter, "Journal" (Boston Athenaeum). Cited hereafter as Walter, "Journal."

Walter, "the object of a journal," as he had gathered from Samuel Johnson, "is to note the state of the mind, so as to observe its progress or declension in wisdom or virtue, & also to preserve the most striking impressions made on the understanding & senses by the first survey of new objects."[87] Walter, in his own journal, fulfilled this object admirably, and he himself felt that, although "a journal should exhibit the travels of the mind" and "mine fulfills this object imperfectly" and "I feel conscious that I have observed many things ignorantly, superficially, & falsely, I have still added something to my knowledge."[88]

Among his early literary pieces is a poem entitled "Poetry," written in 1797 and delivered before a Harvard literary society. A long poem written in heroic couplets, it follows the "nymph" Poetry in her varied perambulation through the ages up to the formation of the society, "A.L.S.," to which Walter addressed his poem. Besides revealing certain judgments concerning various poets of the ages--"when her Gray and favorite Goldsmith died, she left mankind and to a valley hied"--"Poetry" shows the strong devotion of a band of young Harvard undergraduates to not only the reading and writing of literature, but a life in which literary topics played an important role:

> Sure when we sit around our social fires,
> And tell the tales of learning's ancient sires,
> When we relate an anecdote of Young,
> Or tell when Alfred died, or Shakespeare sung;
> Or learn how Johnson penn'd a curious note,
> Why Priestley challenged, and why Gibbon wrote.

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[87] Walter, "Journal," July 3, 1804.

[88] Walter, "Journal," May 20, 1804.

> We then receive a joy unknown before,
> Unknown to those, on whom we shut the door.[89]

Walter left Harvard before receiving his degree, having refused to accept the role assigned him in commencement exercises, but he did not leave his literary endeavors behind. While he was preparing himself for entrance at Columbia, from where he finally graduated after a year's residence, "having considerable time, devoted to no particular object, I determined to employ myself in writing some papers for the improvement of my style and the pleasure of the public at a future period." These he planned to entitle "The Narrator." In the first he frankly reveals his literary ambitions:

> By writing often and attentively I hope to lessen defects, to gain graces and in time to become master of a style pure, correct, and harmonious. . . . I confess myself a votary, without being a slave to renown. It is often, tho' not always, the cause of actions and a pleasing delirium thrills thro' my frame when I receive the approbation of the wise and virtuous. . . . The Spectator, Rambler and Speculator were written for the world, and why should not the Narrator follow at a humble distance? . . . My happiness would be greatly advanced, should some Johnson or Burke ask, 'who is the writer of this' and say as Dryden of Pope, 'he is no mean fellow.' I care very little for inferior critics and scribblers.[90]

When the Literary Miscellany came into being, Walter supplied it with three essays which show that his endeavors had by 1805 carried him far beyond the juvenile "Narrator." The first of these, "The Influence of Religion upon the Fine Arts," was written in Paris after he had visited the Louvre, and the second, "Apology for Epicurism," perhaps also inspired in Paris,

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[89]Arthur Walter, "Poetry" (Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.)

[90]Arthur Walter, "The Narrator to his readers. October 9, 1798. Number 1" (Boston Athenaeum).

praised the delicate art of cooking. The third was "The present State of English poetry."[91] Here Walter surveyed, more carefully than any Bostonian had hitherto done, the recent poetry of England and concluded that "the present state of English poetry has few claims to applause. The days of Cowper are past, and no brother bard has great pretensions to excellence." Among the bards Walter considered are Southey, Coleridge, Bloomfield, Wordsworth, Sotheby, Boyd, and Rogers. Of these, Walter seems to have thought Southey to have shown the greatest promise, though he had not lived up to that promise. Coleridge, he said, "is the boast of many a vulgar mind; but, if the commons honor him, the lords reject, the prince disclaims him." Walter paid more attention to Wordsworth, but his final judgment of him was not much more favorable than that of Coleridge:

> Wordsworth too has written ballads; some are good; but most are bad. They are distinguished by an affectation of simplicity, and a reality of silliness. He had seen the mighty effects, produced by the natural description of Cowper and Burns, and endeavored to transfuse into sentiment, what they had discovered in real existence, or had easily drawn by natural consequence from the objects, which they had surveyed. It is well known, that he did not succeed. Readers were at first astonished by such goddipping and children's prattle; they could not believe, that the writer wished to carry them back to the simpering nursery, or introduce them to the soft easy chair of a sentimental, foolish girl. But they soon discovered, that the tendency of the ballads was to corrupt the heart by unnatural simplicity, and weaken the head by false representations of poetical beauty.[92]

Although time has certainly not substantiated Walter's judgment of Wordsworth, still in the phrase "unnatural simplicity" Walter

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[91]See Willard, II, 146, for identification of pieces.

[92]L.M., II (n.d.), 369-74.

did hit upon what many critics came to regard as Wordsworth's major weakness.

All of Walter's hopes for his future as a literary man were inseparable from his hopes as well for a virtuous Christian life. Although he never was a major participant in the theological controversies of the Anthology, none of the Anthologists was more pious than he. He did "have my own opinions" on "mysteries or doctrinal points" and did "sometimes talk about them, but not often."[93] Rather he tended to look upon Christianity as a matter of "the human heart," something that was believed in but not necessarily argued about. That he could hold this view was due to his conception of Christianity as "a benevolent doctrine, a free system of morals & a most benign religion, which appeals to the human heart for its truth." "What virtue," he asked, "is not sanctioned by Xianity, what honorable feeling is condemned, what virtuous emotions refused? None. . . . Upon this principle alone I should be willing to build my faith in Xianity. We have a natural reverence for virtue, & instinctive love of truth, & upon examinations we must find that truth & virtue can only descend from Heaven." If Christianity inculcated "a system of doctrines" involving these beliefs, Walter could "not refuse my assent to the excellence & verity of the system."[94]

In January 1807 Walter died at the age of 27, and if students of American literature today regret the untimely death of one of America's first true devotees to literature, their regret

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[93]Walter, "Journal," March 31, 1804.

[94]Walter, "Journal," November 27, 1803.

can be only a dim reflection of the grief that his contemporaries felt. The letters that passed between Joseph Buckminster and William Shaw are unrestrained outpourings of their deep sorrow in losing their fondest friend.[95] It was not only love that others felt for him, but a deep respect both for what he was as a man and for what he had attained and promised to attain as a man of letters. The Anthology devoted a page to his memory, speaking of his moral qualities and his intellect--his imagination "which seemed to glow with the pure, unmingled fire of genius, or his judgment, which appeared to shine with the clear, unclouded light of intuition"--and quoting lines from Lycidas--"Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime/ Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer."[96] In the next issue the Anthology published its own elegy on him, commending his liberal passions, the workings of his mind, his knowledge and talents, and with all this his "love of human kind" that caused him to lead an active life for the public.[97] Still later the Anthology published a poem written by Buckminster to Shaw on his death.[98] Then, two years later, when Buckminster presented his Phi Beta Kappa oration, he closed his address with a description of Walter, the model man of letters:

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[95] Several works quote these letters. See Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 18-21.

[96] M.A., IV (January, 1807), 37.

[97] M.A., IV (February, 1807), 93.

[98] M.A., IV (August, 1807), 432.

> There is now present to my mind the image of a scholar, whom some of you knew, (for he was one of us,) and those who knew him well will say with me, he was as pure a spirit as ever tasted the dew of Castalia!--How would Walter have delighted in this anniversary![99]

If Walter was devoted to creating literature, the Society's treasurer, William Smith Shaw, was no less devoted to promoting it. Shaw did write his share for the Anthology, but his primary contribution was his efforts to make others' learning and creativity possible. Like Walter, Shaw was intent on doing his part to bring about a new era of American letters. When the Port Folio appeared, he vigorously supported it, writing to Walter in 1800

> I ardently wish to live in those days, when my country, by her munificence to learned men, by a true estimation of their productions, and by the cultivation of the fine arts, shall rescue herself from the imputation under which she now very justly lies; when America, from the number of her illustrious citizens and her literary fame, may be called the eye of the world, as the ancient city of Athens was the eye of Greece.[100]

Later, again writing to Walter, he commented on America's being "deficient in literature and sciences" and said thus "she will continue till these pursuits are more liberally encouraged." For he did believe that her backwardness in these areas was not due to "any physical defect in Americans."

> We have many men among us, who would not suffer, if compared in point of genius, with the most renowned men of Greece and Rome, of France and England. Erudition must first become the object of ambition with our countrymen before they will attain to eminence. It was near six hundred years after the foundation of Rome, before she produced any celebrated poets. . . . Still there must have been geniuses, at that very period, in Rome, equal to those of the noted poets in Greece.[101]

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[99] M.A., VII (September, 1809), 156.

[100] Letter from William Shaw to Arthur Walter, January 16, 1800, in Felt, 90-91.

[101] Letter from William Shaw to Arthur Walter, June 11, 1803, in Felt, 169.

From the beginning of the Society Shaw handled many of its business transactions, not simply because he was treasurer but because he was vitally interested in the Anthology's success.

Shaw's most important role was that of progenitor of the Anthology Reading Room, a role that when the Boston Athenaeum was eventually founded brought him the nickname of "Athenaeum Shaw." His interest in books began early in life, when as a sickly youth he came to regard them as a sure source of enjoyment. Shaw, like Walter, was trained as a lawyer, but again like Walter, he did not let this profession rule his life. As private secretary to his uncle, President John Adams, he had taken advantage of his life in Philadelphia to mingle in literary circles and to begin an extensive collection of pamphlets and books, a project that was to fill the rest of his days. On his return to Boston, he studied and then practised law, but in 1806 he was appointed Clerk of the District Court of Massachusetts and through the leisure time that this office allowed him he was able to pursue his true interests with zeal.[102] Walter had earlier agreed with Welles's estimation of Shaw, that he was more interested in politics and literature than in law and that he "has not quickness of debate" nor the ability to size up "an affair immediately, tho' he can write well on any subject, which is presented him."[103] So when Shaw became Clerk, Walter was pleased at his success and wrote Buckminster

> You & I know his merits well, & there is not a being on earth at whose good fortune I rejoiced more. He is one of these

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[102]See Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 22-44.

[103]Walter, "Journal," December 29, 1803.

> very few good beings, whom we sometimes meet with in the world, who are perfectly calculated for esteem & affection, & who might make a desponding man believe that the world was not full of selfishness & knavery. I believe he will make a good Clerk.[104]

If one wants to know how an early nineteenth-century American went about building up from scratch one of the most outstanding libraries of the day, he should look at the correspondence of Shaw, a correspondence that extended to persons all over America and to England as well.[105] Among his letters those to Joseph Buckminster are the most informative regarding his aims for the Anthology Reading Room and the means by which he hoped to attain these aims. Shaw not only sent money orders of $500 to Buckminster with which he personally was to buy books for the Anthology Reading Room, but instructed him on various means (from which even present-day promoters could learn) to attain still other literature and to spread the "fame of the Reading Room." In 1806 Shaw wrote to Buckminster

> I have very little doubt, that in a few years we shall see a library in our beloved Boston inferior to none in America. If we do not, it will be owing altogether to want of exertion on the part of our literary men, whose duty it is to awake from their stupid lethargy, and to rescue our country from the scorn and derision which now lie so heavily upon her.[106]

By 1807 Shaw was able to write Buckminster:

> I can now congratulate you on the prospect of having a library in this town,--which you always seemed to believe was only a delusion of my idle brain,--on a liberal plan, highly honorable to the munificence of our citizens, and which will assist and facilitate the researches of the learned and gratify the curiosity of strangers. This, with me, I can assure you, is no ordinary subject of congratulation. Depend upon it, that the establishment of the Athenaeum, the rooms of which are to be always accessible

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[104]Letter from Arthur Walter to Joseph Buckminster, Boston, September 5, 1806, Buckminster Papers.

[105]Shaw's papers are in the Boston Athenaeum. For published correspondence see Felt.

[106]Letter from William Shaw to Joseph Buckminster, Boston, December 1, 1806, quoted in Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 26-27.

> at all hours of the day, is one of the greatest strides toward intellectual advancement that this country has ever witnessed.[107]

William Emerson, who was the second oldest member of the Society, was elected vice president, and Samuel Cooper Thacher was chosen as the new editor, requesting in January 1806 that the title be changed to "Superintending Committee" so as to relieve him of some of the responsibility. He held this post until he sailed for Europe in June 1806,[108] after which time William Shaw, James Savage, and Alexander Hill Everett each took a turn at the job.[109] Having just graduated with highest honors from Harvard in 1804, Thacher had immediately begun the study of theology under the direction of William Ellery Channing, who was then twenty-four. Then in 1805 he had become head master of Boston Latin Grammar School and after that his own private school. He became librarian of Harvard in 1808, and in 1810 he succeeded John Thornton Kirkland at New South Church, Boston, when Kirkland became president of Harvard.[110]

Thacher's early manhood is best seen through his correspondence with his classmate Andrews Norton and Norton's description of him written in 1849. At a time when, according to Norton, Harvard library numbered so few volumes that "the whole collection would, at the present time, if advertised by sale at auction, hardly draw together any purchasers," Thacher and some others turned

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[107]Letter from William Shaw to Joseph Buckminster, Boston, May 13, 1807, quoted in Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 36-37.

[108]Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 46-48.

[109]Howe, 298.

[110]Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 46-48.

their "desultory studies . . . to some account;--the more, perhaps because they were pursued from free will and inclination, and there was no danger that our appetites should be distracted or cloyed by the variety and abundance of the feast set before us." Thacher died early, in 1815, already having produced some important theological tracts, among them his criticism of Andover Theological Seminary published in the Anthology. But Norton believed that if his "life had been prolonged, his industry, his love of learning, and the clearness and comprehensiveness of his mind, would have enabled him, even under the oppressive labours of his profession, to become a clergyman of very respectable theological attainments, and a well informed gentleman."

As for Thacher's personality, "his equable and amiable temper, united with correct conduct and proper self-reliance," produced "general liking of him." As a member of the Anthology Society, he reminded Norton "of what Cumberland . . . said of Soame Jenyns,--that his company at our meetings was like bread at dinner which we cannot dispense with, whatever else may be on the table."[111] Although controversy did not seem to be particularly natural to his temperament, still he was willing to engage in it when he felt the cause justified, and it was to a great extent his labors that gave the Anthology its reputation as a mouthpiece for liberal Christianity and it was he to whom Channing in 1815 addressed his important letter in defense of unitarianism.

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[111]Letter from Andrews Norton to Sprague, September 8, 1849, in Sprague, VIII, 442-44.

Of the other officers of the Society, by far the most important, both in his personal attainments and in his contribution to the Anthology and the Anthology Reading Room, was Joseph Stevens Buckminster, one of the auditing committee. Of all the Anthologists, no one was more esteemed, and with reason, than Buckminster. During his brief life he was undoubtedly the brightest star among the "constellation of literary luminaries" in Boston. Some of his qualities he was born with. His engaging manner, his beauty, his intelligence were so evident even in infancy that a couple passing through his hometown of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, asked his parents if they might adopt him.[112] Later, Walter wrote of him, "There is something in his manner and disposition which irresistibly attracts, and something in his intelligence and way of communication, which captivates and conquers."[113] These qualities he made the best of throughout his life. By the end of it he was reckoned to be not only one of the finest scholars but by far the most brilliant pulpit orator of his day, his charming appearance and powerful delivery adding greatly to the effect of the words he uttered. So much was he admired during his lifetime that afterwards, probably partly because he died at only twenty-eight at the height of his powers, he became somewhat of a legendary figure, serving as an example to

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[112]There are several sketches of Buckminster, but the longest and most interesting account by a contemporary is his sister's Eliza Buckminster Lee's Memoirs of Rev. Joseph Buckminster, D.D., and of his son, Rev. Joseph Stevens Buckminster (Boston: Wm. Crosby & H. P. Nichols, 1849), a work that is in itself an admirable specimen of nineteenth-century feminine literary accomplishment. As her brother's companion in Boston, Mrs. Lee was herself one of the literary circle Buckminster drew about him. See Lee, 69.

[113]Letter from Arthur Walter to William Shaw, June 27, 1798, quoted in Felt, 26.

the generation that came after him of what a man might accomplish within a short life.

Buckminster had early shown a propensity towards being a scholar, so that when he became a student at Harvard at the age of thirteen (having waited a year at that) he distinguished himself in his breadth of reading, his themes, and his recitations. His interests were predominantly literary, and not only were his reading and writing in this direction but, according to Joshua Bates, his mind itself "possessed all the elements of poetic genius."[114] It was not as a poet, however, but as an essayist and philologist that Buckminster made his greatest literary contributions. His sermons themselves were--for him and his listeners--literary, as well as religious, works, as were all his orations. The 1809 Phi Beta Kappa address was universally hailed as the most brilliant oration of its time; according to Henry Adams, it was "regarded as making almost an epoch in American letters."[115] Although Buckminster wrote some literary criticism, an example of which is his criticism of Thomas Gray's poetry in the Anthology, his major work was in Biblical criticism, an area of study he saw as the only firm foundation for sound religious beliefs. It was due largely to his work in this area that he was appointed the first Dexter Professor of Biblical Criticism at Harvard in 1811.

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[114]Letter from Joshua Bates to Sprague, March 20, 1849, in Sprague, VIII, 393-99.

[115]Henry Adams, History, IX, 199. Henry Ware wrote of Buckminster's oration: "I believe it fully satisfied his greatest admirers,--which is saying as much as can be said." A classmate had followed Buckminster with an admirable poem, "but both he and his poem were perfectly killed by the preceding performance." Letter from Henry Ware to Andrews Norton, September 5, 1809, Norton Papers (Houghton Library). Cited hereafter as Norton Papers.

The religious principle that most pervaded Buckminster's thinking was the idea "that the solid foundation of all true Theology was to be laid in the diligent study of the Scriptures in the original tongues, under the lights of an intelligent and conscientious criticism." It was with this principle in mind that he undertook the task of editing the Greek New Testament of the German scholar Griesbach, in the process of which he added German to his knowledge of other languages. With this work he "gave the first impulse" in the vicinity of Boston, "if not in the United States to the systematic study of 'Biblical Criticism.'"[116] Inherent in Buckminster's insistence upon Biblical scholarship was the belief in the invincibility of private judgment and free inquiry. Through his studies, despite the efforts of his Calvinistic father, he was led to a nonsectarian view of religion, finding no evidence in the Scriptures for any creed, and a thorough rejection of Calvinism, including a rejection of Trinitarianism. One need only look at the titles of his sermons and the entries in his diary to discover beliefs completely antithetical to Calvinism. Among his sermons, for instance, are ones on self-government, practical religion, the duty of excelling in virtue, free will ("To ask whether the will be free is ridiculous"), the infinite goodness of God, and God as a benevolent intelligence. Likewise his diary contains such statements as "to take pleasure in the damnation of any one, is more than God requires of us, & even is capable of himself" and admiring portraits of such liberal divines as Charles Chauncy and Joseph Priestley.[117] In at least two ways much of the

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[116]Letter from Edward Everett to Sprague, April 12, 1849, in Sprague, VIII, 400.

[117]See Joseph Buckminster's sermons and his diary, Buckminster Papers.

later Unitarian-Transcendentalist controversy can be traced to Buckminster's principle of Biblical criticism. First, in giving impetus to the belief in the right of private judgment and free inquiry he helped to bring about the radical views of Transcendentalism. But, on the other hand, this principle likewise caused certain men, such as Andrews Norton, to reject Transcendentalism altogether. As Edward Everett wrote in 1849,

> It is perhaps not the least recommendation of this view that it leads directly to the cultivation of the congenial branches of ancient and philological literature, and thus establishes a safeguard against individual extravagancies and wild speculative novelties. It is dangerous to take any department of enquiry out of the recognized analogies of the human mind. The modern Transcendentalism, like the ancient Mysticism, claims to have a province of its own; not requiring, hardly inviting, illustration from any other quarter.[118]

Buckminster's Phi Beta Kappa address was only one of several ways in which he attempted to influence the younger generation in its respect for active learning. It was from his observations on the Liverpool Atheneum, sent to Shaw during his trip abroad, that the basic plans for the Boston Athenaeum took shape.[119] It was he, also, who began in the Anthology the "Retrospective Notices," providing knowledge of the bibliography of American literature and a critical appreciation of these works. Moreover, like Gardiner, he was fond of holding informal discussions in his study, which at his death contained one of the finest and most extensive private libraries of his time,[120] and it was here that much of the literary

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[118] Everett, in Sprague, VIII, 400.

[119] See Lee, 405-11.

[120] Catalogue of the Library of the late Rev. J. S. Buckminster (Boston, 1812), and the partial list in Lee, 483-86.

and theological activity of the day was probably initiated.[121] One of the young men who was fond of visiting him and browsing among his books was John G. Palfrey. In 1861 he could look back upon the days of his youth and write of Buckminster:

> Since his time, New England has won a recognized place in the realm of letters. Looking back through fifty years, I hold nothing to be more sure than that much of the impulse that has achieved that triumph is to be traced to him of whom I make this desultory record. An admiring company of young men was inspired with his generous love of learning. Norton, Ticknor, Frothingham, the Everetts, were among those who came within the circle of his personal companionship. Sparks, Prescott, Bancroft, felt the influence at a further remove. The more numerous scholars who have won a name in later days, have known him only by the traditions of their circle; but the propitious atmosphere in which their genius has been unfolded owes more of its nourishing quality to no other mind.[122]

The rest of the officers were John Warren and Peter Thacher, on the auditing committee with Buckminster, and Benjamin Welles, on the standing committee with Shaw and Thacher. Of these, so far as this study goes, Welles was the most important. He wrote very little for the Anthology, neither steadily attending the Society's meetings nor always contributing what he was assigned. But his one essay on nature is so advanced for his time that it alone distinguishes him among the others. Welles graduated from Harvard, along with Buckminster, in 1800[123] and afterwards began

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[121] See Ticknor's Life, p. 9, and Lee, p. 209.

[122] Letter from John Palfrey to Sprague, November 19, 1861, in Sprague, VIII, 403-406. Buckminster left a large quantity of manuscripts, now mostly in the Boston Athenaeum: student themes; his diary including an account of his trip to Europe in 1806 and notes on his reading; letters; and many sermons. See Lee, pp. 482-83, for a list of his publications.

[123] Quinquennial Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of Harvard University, 1636-1915 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1915), p. 162.

studying law. But before long he took a trip to Europe and was there at the same time as Walter. It is mostly from Walter's journal and letters that what little we know of Welles emerges. Here Walter describes his fondness and simultaneous impatience with Welles and tells us something of his unusual nature. Walter enjoyed his numerous conversations with Welles and speaks of Welles's "niceness of perception, so much delicacy, purity, agreeable wit & flowing talk that no one but is pleased who hears him, & loves him who knows him." In fact, Welles possessed "so much delicacy & sense, he is so superior to all meanness & bears his great qualities so meekly, that I cannot find in these respects a better man in the circle of my acquaintance."[124] At the same time there were innumerable things about Welles that Walter objected to. Welles carried around too many clothes and books while traveling, "his conduct to females" had been extremely "contrary to what I expected," his "political sentiments" too greatly favored "those of the present administration in America,"[125] and worst of all he did not even believe in the truth of Christian revelation.[126] All in all, Walter finally concluded, Welles was "a strange fellow."[127] Moreover, by 1806 Walter had not seen any improvement in him. Writing to Buckminster, he simply reiterated what he had already recorded in his journal, calling him "the curious, the strange & very curious

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[124]Walter, "Journal," November 26, 1803.

[125]Walter, "Journal," May 18, 1804.

[126]Walter, "Journal," December 14, 1803.

[127]Walter, "Journal," May 18, 1804.

Welles."[128] Apparently, other than his rather meager contributions to the Anthology, Welles left no writing by which we might judge his later development. He seems to have retired from what little literary life he had indulged in to the ordinary life of a lawyer, dying in 1860 after a long and apparently uneventful life of seventy-nine years.[129]

The other members of the Society who were either original members or who joined slightly later in 1805 were Joseph Tuckerman, William Tudor, Thomas Gray, William Wells, Edmund Trowbridge Dana, James Jackson and Robert Hallowell Gardiner.[130] Tuckerman had graduated from Harvard in 1798 with William Ellery Channing, Washington Allston, Sidney Willard, and Joseph Story, with whom he remained close friends throughout life. Pastor at Chelsea, Tuckerman was to distinguish himself as one of America's first social workers. It was largely through his efforts that Boston's children received more adequate school facilities including trade schools, special court treatment and institutional care in cases of delinquency, and protection and education if orphaned or neglected; that the underprivileged received just wages and steady employment, proper opportunities for public worship, and better housing; that working females received better protection and remuneration; that prisoners received better care and help in rehabilitation and employment opportunities upon release; that the

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[128]Walter to Buckminster, Boston, September 29, 1806, Buckminster Papers.

[129]Howe, 299.

[130]Howe, 298-99.

mentally ill, the intemperate, and members of minority groups all received more humane and constructive treatment.[131]

In all of his efforts for the unfortunate Tuckerman was simply practising what he believed to be Christianity. For him God was foremost a benevolent being and, according to Channing, he "understood the character of Jesus by sympathy."[132] Although Tuckerman had once thought of preparing a work on Jewish antiquities, it was the New Testament, rather than the Old, that came to occupy his studies. But he spent little time, in comparison to his fellow ministers, in study, his active benevolence absorbing his whole life. As Channing observed, "his heart was his great power."[133] Tuckerman started the Society for Religious and Moral Improvement of Seamen in 1811 and in 1826 he became the first minister-at-large in Boston. Although Tuckerman as a young man enjoyed the belles-lettres, especially Gray, Collins, and Shakespeare, and even wrote some poetry, he much preferred the "active life" to the life of books, and except for his Principles and Results of the Ministry at Large and his various pieces for the Anthology he wrote very little for the public.[134] He did, however, keep a diary, both while in America and during his trip abroad, and in it one can see what Tuckerman himself called "An Account of my conduct,

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[131]See Daniel T. McColgan, Joseph Tuckerman, Pioneer in American Social Work (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1940) for a life of Tuckerman.

[132]William Ellery Channing, A Discourse on the Life and Character of the Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, D.D. (Boston, Mass.: William Crosby & Co., 1841), p. 53.

[133]Channing, 29.

[134]See McColgan for a full account of Tuckerman's interests and accomplishments.

mental operations, etc." and his strivings toward what he called "active goodness."[135] So far as a study of the Anthology goes, Tuckerman is significant because he so perfectly represents the idea set forth so often in Anthology writings of benevolent and practical Christianity, the antithesis of what the Anthologists called "metaphysicks" and "creed-making." It was towards such a Christianity as Tuckerman embodied that liberal Christianity of the Anthology era hoped to move.

William Tudor is best known today as the first editor of the North American Review, and that magazine has been correctly seen as the literary descendant of the Anthology. As an agent for his family's expanding firm, Tudor spent some of the Anthology years abroad. Likewise his election to the Massachusetts Legislature and later his various duties for the government kept him especially busy. So, although he wrote several pieces for the Anthology, including its most humorous essays, he did not devote himself to literature until 1814 when he set about establishing the North American Review.[136]

William Wells was active in literary circles mainly as a bookseller and promoter of American publications.[137] According to the highly critical Bentley, Wells was the only intelligent bookman in Boston, making a decided effort to supply New Englanders with

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[135]See Joseph Tuckerman's Diary, in Papers and Diaries of Joseph Tuckerman, Box 1, 1803-1836 (Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass.). One of the most interesting parts of his diary is the account of his visits to Coleridge in February 1834.

[136]See Quincy, "Biographical Notices," History, 54-63.

[137]Howe, 299.

rare but important works, especially in the classics. Bentley attributed to Wells the first importation of classics from Germany.

> At his store I found him opening an importation of German Classical & Critical works from Leiden. I believe this to be the first importation of the kind in America. . . . I never heard of a Classical Collection from that quarter. Indeed I date from this arrival the commencement of a Classical Collection of Books for general sale in the Country.[138]

Bentley judged "the other Book stores" to be kept by "mere merchants"[139] but Wells's store to be "served with good books as he is a man of taste & education."[140] It was greatly through his efforts that Buckminster's edition of Griesbach's New Testament was published in Boston, an event of considerable importance inasmuch as it was the first time England imported an American edition of a classical work.

Edmund Trowbridge Dana was trained for the law, but like Walter he was also a student of literature. He was abroad at the same time as were Walter and Welles, and the three spent much time together. As with Welles, Walter found Dana to have some outstanding faults, but at the same time he had a high regard for him. After a Sunday with Welles and Dana, Walter remarked that "the whole day was a day for wrangling," and that Dana "talks before strangers . . . for the sake of fame . . . & was fond of disputing with me, in order to show Welles his powers. This I do not blame, only he should try to keep it a little concealed."[141] Again, he remarks he "could not easily make a friend of" Dana, for "he loves mystery & obscurity, which I abhor," and "hates to be fathomed, & in fine he loves mystery

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[138]Bentley, Diary, September 16, 1806, III, 247.

[139]Bentley, Diary, May 31, 1807, III, 298.

[140]Bentley, Diary, September 1, 1808, III, 381

[141]Walter, "Journal," December 4, 1803.

in conduct more than frankness." Walter added, however, "yet he is a most excellent fellow."[142] Of particular interest is Walter's account of Dana's prolonged attempt to get his poem "Seduction" published. After one publisher backed out, believing that "the moral was good, but that the poetry was poor," and another, saying that "'the work [should] not be extended beyond the circulation of private friendship,'" Dana gave up, though the poem finally reached the public through the Anthology.[143] Sidney Willard likewise remarked on Dana's being "a natural talker," and one who "was always attentively listened to." Dana, he said, was "a great reader, and remarkably conversant with the writings of all the best English poets and dramatists," "well established in his opinions of the authors he had read," and "regarded . . . as a suitable member to pass judgment on the poetical effusions that were sent to the Society for publication."[144]

Among these first members of the Anthology Society there were many similarities. Except for J. S. J. Gardiner and Arthur Walter, they were all graduates of Harvard, and Walter, as we have noted, attended up until graduation ceremonies. They mostly represented, moreover, the two professions for which Harvard trained most of its students--the ministry and the law. There were six clergymen among the group--J. S. J. Gardiner, Emerson, Buckminster, S. C. Thacher, Tuckerman, and Gray--a fact that accounts in large part for the

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[142] Walter, "Journal," November 26, 1803.

[143] Walter, "Journal," January 11, 16, 20, 21, February 3, 1803; M.A., II (July, 1805), 366-69; (August, 1805), 472-74.

[144] Willard, II, 226.

Anthology's strong theological tendency. Of these six all but Gardiner were liberal Congregationalists, Harvard being the stronghold of this group, and this fact helps to account for the strong liberal views among the Anthology's theological pieces. Five of the Anthologists were trained for the bar--Walter, Shaw, P. O. Thacher, Dana, and Welles. Two other members, Warren and Jackson, were physicians and professors in Harvard medical school.

The Anthology Society was primarily a young man's club. All of the members except Gardiner and Emerson were born after 1772 and five were born after 1780.[145] To some extent, the Anthology was considered liberal in its views simply because it was mostly a product of the younger generation. One can see this conflict between generations even within the Anthology in the debates between J. S. J. Gardiner and the much younger Buckminster and Walter. Schooled in the literature of Pope and Johnson and taught to respect the language of reason, Gardiner had never tried to appreciate either these giants' contemporaries or the newer writers who appealed more strongly to the emotions and senses of the reader. His younger colleagues, on the other hand, were well acquainted with the early romantics; and, although as we have already seen in the case of Walter they were far less appreciative of contemporary British poets than the next generation was, they were much more sympathetic than Gardiner.

Likewise, the liberal views of the Anthologists concerning religion show the tendency among youth to question the beliefs of their fathers. Archibald Alexander describes Buckminster on his visit to Portsmouth in 1801 as being "full of anecdotes, such as

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[145]See Howe, pp. 298-99, for very brief accounts of members.

were current at Cambridge, and which were mostly intended to ridicule evangelical opinions."[146] Throughout his son's youth the elder Buckminster tried to guide his son in the direction of his own Calvinistic beliefs. But the young man's studies, as well as the influence of liberal ministers such as James Freeman and his stay at Harvard, led him away from these beliefs, so that his father persistently tried to persuade him to give up the ministry altogether and enter a life devoted entirely to literature. When young Buckminster was called to Brattle Street Church, his father advised him "as an honest man . . . to tell them plainly that you do not believe in the proper Deity and Divinity of Christ," thinking that if he did the church would change its mind. But the son resolved to "leave my opinions upon disputed points to the private inquiries of my hearers," despite his deep respect for his father.[147]

The Emerson family also provides a study in the rise and fall of generations, of the conservative old being overcome by the liberal young. In 1802 William Emerson came upon Edward Bliss, the brother of his grandfather, and Bliss's son, who asked if Chauncy "was not . . . an universalist" and if Emerson "might possibly be of the same kidney," to which Emerson replied that he "did not visit them to discover the complexion of their theological creed, or to

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[146]James H. Alexander, The Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D. First Professor in the Theological Seminary, at Princeton, New Jersey (New York: Charles Scribner, 1854), p. 258.

[147]Lee, 142-45. Throughout her book Mrs. Lee provides an account of the dispute between father and son.

publish and defend my own."[148] Archibald Alexander also met an uncle of William Emerson's who told him "that the father of the latter was a pious and orthodox man; and that when he had reminded his nephew of this, the reply was, that if his father had lived to this time, he would in like manner have changed his opinions."[149] Ralph Waldo Emerson was not so charitable in his estimation of his father's, William's, ability to change, however, and viewed him simply as a stodgy conservative, even though William Emerson was by his own contemporaries considered to have gone "farther on the liberal side than most of his brethren with whom he was associated."[150]

Partly because of their similar backgrounds and ages, there was a strong similarity of interests among the Anthology Society members, a likeness that accounts, in fact, for the founding of the Society. They were all interested in a cultural life, beyond their immediate professions, that would bring them personal enjoyment and benefit their community and their country. For them it was a matter of self respect not to be (as Walter pointed out so many of "the gentlemen of Boston" were) "ignorant of literature, & unskilled in languages, & science."[151] In order to acquire such knowledge many of them journeyed to Europe. During Walter's visit abroad there were at least six other young Harvard men who were also

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[148]Letter from William Emerson to Phebe Ripley, Boston, March 3, 1802, Emerson Papers.

[149]Alexander, 264.

[150]Letter from John Pierce to Sprague, May 8, 1849, in Sprague, VIII, 243.

[151]Walter, "Journal," December 5, 1803.

taking the tour--besides Edmund Dana and Benjamin Welles, Welles's brother Samuel, Charles Lowell, Washington Allston, and William Austin.[152] It was especially popular for young ministers to go abroad, some of them, like Lowell, for study among the Scotch divines, but others to educate themselves through travel so as to better fill their posts as intellectual, as well as spiritual, leaders of their congregations.[153] Several, like Buckminster, went abroad initially for their health, but once there they took advantage of the opportunities offered them. Buckminster, S. C. Thacher, and Tuckerman all took the tour.

While abroad it was customary for them to keep journals, write descriptive and analytical letters home to their friends, and acquire libraries. John Quincy Adams, Washington Allston, William Tudor, Winthrop Sargent, Joseph Buckminster, John Lowell, and William Scollay all wrote letters--some a long series of letters--that were published in the Anthology. But even if they travelled only in the United States, they felt an obligation to learn from their travels and to make what they had learned known. William Emerson wrote, with a touch of humor, to his wife from Merrimack,

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[152]Willard, II, 165.

[153]William Bentley speaks of the traveling ministers in several places in his diary. See Diary, February 26, 1815, III, 317, for a brief account of the tradition and its effects; also Walter to Buckminster, Boston, September 29, 1806, Buckminster Papers. Buckminster's salary from Brattle Street Church was continued during his absence, though he had to pay the ministers who supplied the pulpit (Lee, 252). Walter gives a fairly detailed account of his personal expenses in his journal a year after his arrival in Liverpool. His expense for the year was £ 177.5.10, which he thought "sufficiently reasonable" since he had expected it to be at least £ 200. He calculated he would spend $3,000 in all during his stay and said he was worth about $7,500 on his return to Boston.

> If I should be prospered, you know, I should like well to keep a sort of journal of my tour, that would be worth publishing--with a view of putting an end to the alarming dearth of periodical publications in & about our metropolis.[154]

Several of the European travellers acquired extensive libraries. Buckminster's, the most impressive among those of the Anthologists, numbered 1136 items, some items including several volumes, when sold, and the quality matched the quantity.[155] Some of the Anthologists bought books for the Anthology Reading Room as well as for themselves, and Walter, Welles, and Buckminster all wrote Shaw descriptions of the Liverpool Atheneum, after which the Boston Athenaeum was modeled, Buckminster's letter being published in the Anthology.[156] Shaw's private collection itself was valuable, most of it, like John Quincy Adams's, ultimately going to the Boston Athenaeum.

With so many similarities among its members it was no wonder that the Anthology Society was a closely knit group. It cannot be denied that it was to some extent a social club, where the members gathered for the pure enjoyment of conversation over dinner, wine, and cigars.[157] The Society was composed, after all, of many of the most socially successful and convivial men in Boston. Eliza Buckminster Lee remarked that "ladies would not invite company on

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[154]Letter from William Emerson to Ruth Emerson, Merrimack, September 19, 1806, Emerson Papers.

[155]See Catalogue of . . . Buckminster. The catalogues of the libraries of several Anthologists were published upon their being auctioned after their owners' deather.

[156]M.A., IV (November, 1807), 597-99; Felt, 161-62, 181.

[157]See Howe for various entries in the "Journal" describing the Society as a social club. The secretary is often moved to record even the menus for the suppers.

Anthology evening, because the meeting of the club robbed them of the presence of the most agreeable gentlemen."[158] But beyond pleasant chitchat, the members enjoyed talking about literature and in particular their mutual literary project, so that although the Society was a social club it was primarily a literary club. They liked to indulge in what Walter called "the mingling of mind,"[159] to exchange ideas and criticize one another's works.

Several writers on the Anthology Society, contemporary and later, speak of the esprit de corps of the Society. Joseph Dennie, welcoming the Anthology into the world of literary periodicals in August 1805 after the Anthology Society had taken over the Anthology, wrote:

> So unfrequent in America is the intercourse between men of letters, so sullen is the genius of republicanism, so wide is our waste of territory, so narrow our prejudices, so local our interests, so humble our means either of receiving or imparting knowledge; that we have but little of that esprit du corps, which characterizes the Literati of Europe. Our men of letters scarcely ever act in concert, each unconscious and often careless of what another is doing, proceeds sullenly alone, and a Magazine, or even works less ephemeral, may be projected and executed at Boston, of whose authors and whose objects an inquirer at Philadelphia or Baltimore, may be profoundly ignorant.

Though Dennie had no idea who was conducting the magazine or how it had begun, he praised it, for it was "correctly and elegantly composed. Men of real scholarship and versatile talents are engaged in its support."[160] What Dennie felt about the state of

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[158] Lee, 222.

[159] Walter, "Journal," November 26, 1803.

[160] Port Folio (August, 1805), quoted in Howe, pp. 13-14. This view is echoed by Buckminster in his introduction of the "Retrospective Notices of American Literature," M.A., V (January, 1808), 54-57.

American men of letters as a whole, the Anthologists had felt about the state of Boston men of letters in particular, and with the Anthology Society for the first time they felt an esprit de corps based primarily upon literary interests. Kirkland described this spirit in one of the addresses of the editors in the Anthology:

> Perhaps the present state of society tend in a peculiar degree to foster general selfishness of character. A man's intellectual attainments appear to be regarded as the means only of his personal advantage. Doubtless many men of sense ascribe to us a species of fanaticism, as the spring of that propensity we discover to enlighten, improve, and entertain a publick, which gives us for our pains neither fame nor money. We suggest to them a solution of our conduct which does not assign us a place greatly below or above the standard of human nature. We are exposed to the influence of that 'Esprit de corps' which animates literary association. The pleasures found in composition and in the exercise of the mental powers put some of us upon blotting paper. If the cause still appear inadequate to the effect, we must be supposed to feel a desire to be useful in the way which our pursuits and studies direct; or if this seem too elevated a principle, let our services be deemed symptoms and effects of an impulse of more doubtful value, what a late writer on moral philosophy denominates the passion for reforming the world.[161]

The numerous bonds of friendship within the Society could only strengthen this spirit. Buckminster was very close to Walter, Shaw, and S. C. Thacher; Walter to Dana, Welles, and Shaw; and so on, there being unions within circles and circles within circles, all evident in the letters and diaries of these men. But these bonds were themselves based greatly upon mutual appreciation of literature and its accompaniments. Buckminster described this interaction of friendship and pursuits in a letter to Shaw:

> England, with all her learning, luxury and arts, has not yet furnished me with any pleasure equivalent to that which I relinquished when I broke away from the circle of beloved acquaintances in Boston, who were bound to me by all the

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[161] M.A., IV (January, 1807), 1-4.

> enthusiasm of literature, by habits of daily intimacy, by similarity of pursuits and of age, and by the still finer ties of that holy affection, on which Cicero has written that golden treatise, and I believe I may also add by the bonds of Christian charity and love.[162]

It is only to be expected that as this bond of sympathy, as Willard called it,[163] lost some of its power the Anthology Society, and consequently the Monthly Anthology, should have suffered. The first members tried to guard against their own weaknesses by strengthening the Society's ranks. Over the years they admitted twelve more members, who shared many of the similarities among the first members: Robert Field, James Savage, John Thornton Kirkland, John Gorham, Joseph McKean, Sidney Willard, Winthrop Sargent, John Stickney, Alexander Hill Everett, Joseph Head, George Ticknor, and Jacob Bigelow. Gorham, McKean, Willard, Ticknor, and Bigelow were all soon to become professors at Harvard, and Kirkland, in 1810, was to become its president.[164] All of the men connected with Harvard were to have considerable influence over the succeeding generation and several had already exerted theirs. Kirkland, who was thirty-five when the Anthology Society was founded, had already influenced Buckminster and S. C. Thacher, who according to Buckminster's sister were like "younger brothers to Dr. Kirkland."[165] Being one of the most liberal clergymen of his day, he undoubtedly had some effect on their religious beliefs, and when he joined the

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[162] Letter from Joseph Buckminster to William Shaw, June 9, 1806, in Felt, 214.

[163] Willard, II, 225.

[164] See Howe, 299-301.

[165] Lee, 312.

Anthology Society in 1806, becoming president in 1811 after Gardiner's resignation, he added strength to the liberal views already being expressed in the Anthology. None of the Anthology clergymen was more anti-Calvinistic than Kirkland or tended more toward a purely ethical view of Christianity.[166]

The Society likewise acquired at least eighteen corresponding members: John Pickering, John Dexter Treadwell, Jeremiah Smith, Daniel Webster, Nathaniel Appleton Haven, Charles Stewart Davies, Andrews Norton, Benjamin Merrill, John Davis, Josiah Quincy, Isaac Parker, John Lowell, Levi Frisbie, Paul Allen, James Luce Kingsley, Benjamin Silliman, James Kent, and Thomas Day.[167] So far as this study goes Allen and Norton are the most important, Allen contributing several significant articles dealing with literary criticism and Norton being proposed as editor of the Anthology just before it died and summarizing the theological views of the Anthology in the periodical that he began shortly thereafter. Allen, during the Anthology years, lived in Philadelphia, where he was an active member of the literary circle surrounding Joseph Dennie and for a brief time even edited the Port Folio. He never seems to have produced a major literary work, but he was prolific as an essayist and poet, writing considerably for both periodicals and editing his own newspaper.[168]

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[166]See Sprague, VIII, 261-81, for several accounts of Kirkland's views.

[167]Howe, 301-303.

[168]Mott, 239. Allen signed his Anthology articles "R." Mrs. Lee, p. 244, says these articles were "supposed to have been written by Mr. Rockwell of Boston," but the volumes of the Anthology having signatures to the articles do not support this view.

Norton was proposed several times for membership in the Society but for some reason, probably because he was not in Boston, never joined. Throughout its life, however, he was closely associated with several of the most active members, sharing both their literary and their theological interests. His student themes and his letters to S. C. Thacher show a deep interest in literature, especially poetry, and a strong sensitivity to poetic elements. At this time of his life, he was obviously easily moved, whether by signs of affection or by the beauty of nature, and deeply introspective, even to the point of depression. Although Norton contributed a fair amount to the Anthology, Thacher time and again asked him to submit more, knowing from his letters what he was capable of writing. It is a pity, for instance, that passages such as the following never reached the Anthology:

> There seems much reason to prefer the sinking to the rising sun. The natural beauty attendant on each may be equal, but with the one is associated the anticipation of the cures and the business of the day; to the other succeeds the interesting elegance of evening and the undisturbed solemnity of midnight. Some days since I was uncommonly pleased with this prospect of sunset. I was walking, after a slight shower, by the side of a small inlet from our harbour bordered on one hand by a beach sloping diversified with woodland; when turning the corner of a high bank, which had before shaded him from my view the sun appeared purpling the whole horison before me; the deep green of the fields glittering with drops of rain and a broad line of light trembling upon the waters.
>
> It was not I believe in this walk, though at a time not very distant, that to divert my-self from 'sorrier fancies' I attempted a translation of that very beautiful passage of Tibullus to which in your letter you referred. Like most other translations it is an inexpressive, colourless, plaister of paris copy of the original, infelix simulaeturum
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> When life with fluttering wing departing flies
> Thou kindly, sadly near my couch shalt stand
> On thy lov'd form I'll rest my closing eyes
> And dying grasp thee with a trembling hand.[169]

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[169]Letter from Andrews Norton to S. C. Thacher, Hingham, July 31, 1804, Norton Papers. See, besides the letters of Thacher

The tendency in some Anthology essays towards what we have come to term Romanticism would undoubtedly have been strengthened by such pieces, and Norton, had he pursued this line of writing, might have emerged as one of the first American Romantics. As a young man he apparently seriously considered devoting himself to literature, as his letters to Samuel Thacher suggest, but probably partly because of bad health he seems to have decided that such a course was more than he could undertake. During one of his states of despondency, Henry Ware wrote him an encouraging letter, saying

> I would not have you hasty to abandon a literary life,--it will be departing from the line which nature & providence have pointed out to you, & in which patience & perseverance will certainly give you, sooner or later some honorable place.[170]

As it is, Norton is remembered as one of the sternest opponents of Transcendentalism and a distinguished Biblical scholar. It was, in fact, his Biblical studies that seem to have led him to "distrust all appeals to the emotional nature" and insist on "a solid basis of fact, and superstructure of argument" for "every item of belief,"[171] a position that made him reject Transcendentalism entirely.

The strength gained by the addition of new contributors, however, was not enough to offset the loss of support from some of the more important members of the Society. Several were away from Boston for long periods of time, like Buckminster and Thacher, who went to Europe in 1806, and William Tudor, whose business and political

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and Norton, Norton's student themes, HUC/8803/386.61/1803 (Harvard Archives, Cambridge, Mass.)

[170]Letter from Henry Ware to Andrews Norton, September 5, 1809, Norton Papers.

[171]Letter from A. P. Peabody to Sprague, December 10, 1859, in Sprague, VIII, 435.

responsibilities were constantly taking him away. Others, like Benjamin Welles, were simply not dependable and eventually quit coming to meetings.[172] Even as early as June 1806 Walter could write Buckminster:

> Our Anthology Club is growing thin. You are gone, & S. Thacher going, B. Welles lives out of town, R. H. Gardiner is going to Maine . . . , Dana will go away with Shaw at 11. because E. Dana is moving to Cambridge, W. Wells grows really uninteresting & stupid at his own house; Emerson will begin to snarl at summer suppers, the Drs never come, and there is only Mr. Gardiner who is stable to invite, & myself, who am stable to stay.[173]

In 1807, as we have already noted, Walter died, and in 1810 Gardiner resigned, perhaps because of his disagreement with the theological views of the Anthology. Kirkland took his place as president,[174] but he could not take his place as a writer or scholar of literature. A year after Walter's death, another Anthologist, Winthrop Sargent, died at the age of twenty-five.[175] Finally, the Anthology Society lost William Emerson. He resigned apparently because of pastoral obligations in 1809 and then in 1811, when the Anthology was near its end, he died.[176] Samuel Thacher, writing the last words for the Anthology, had the task of writing at the same time a tribute to the man who had rescued that periodical from what would have been almost certain oblivion and who had gathered round him the men who had formed the Anthology Society and given it whatever cause it has for fame.

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[172] See various entries in Howe.

[173] Letter from Arthur Walter to Joseph Buckminster, Boston, June 3, 1803, Buckminster Papers.

[174] Howe, 297.

[175] See M.A., V (January, 1808), 36-37, for Emerson's obituary on Sargent and M.A., VIII (January, 1810), 32, for Joseph Head's PBK anniversary poem that concludes with a tribute to Sargent.

[176] Howe, 303.

> In taking our final leave of the public, we yet linger awhile. It is because we have a mournful duty to perform. It would be unjust that the pages of the Anthology should be closed without at least a passing tribute to the memory of a man to whose zeal and activity we owe it, that our work did not perish at its birth. Though the pressure of other cares had prevented him from giving much direct assistance to us during the last years of his life; yet we were always sure of his smiles and good wishes. His short and active course is now ended; but his bright example still remains, and 'marshals us on' in the path of virtue and piety.
>
> Peace to the memory of a man of worth,
> A man of letters and of manners too.[177]

The tribute Thacher here paid Emerson he was in a sense also paying the Anthology, for the Anthologists hoped that it too might be remembered for its worth, its manners, or taste, and its contribution to literature, thus serving as an example for other such periodicals in the future.

Had the Anthology been financially successful, the loss of the Society's esprit de corps might not have loomed so heavily. But the experiences of Phineas Adams and of the Literary Miscellany had already shown that early nineteenth-century Boston was not a town to offer adequate support to a literary magazine. In 1807 the Anthology republished a poem taken from the Port Folio on Boston, which depicted it as a city that "thinks only on gold" and its inhabitants as slaves of avarice. The Anthology outdid itself defending Boston from these attacks,[178] but undoubtedly it only hoped to gain support by trying to convince the city that it was more generous than it was, winning its patronage through flattery and cajolery. The publishers wrote in May 1805, "We confess

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[177] M.A., X (June, 1811), 361-65.

[178] M.A., IV (May, 1807), 289-91; (July, 1807), 416-21.

ourselves ambitious of refuting a charge on the character of this town, a charge no less disreputable to its munificence than its taste, that no attempt within its limits to support a literary publication can be long successful."[179] Even through its original poetry the Anthology attempted to convince Bostonians that it was only to be expected that they would support their only literary magazine:

> What? will a land of learned Merchants see
> Their muse's carrier pine in poverty?[180]

But the Anthology was never able to convince any wealthy Bostonians that it was worth patronizing, or even many less wealthy Bostonians that it was worth subscribing to.

As a result the Anthology Society journal offers an interesting account of the financial struggles that a literary magazine faced in early nineteenth-century Boston. During its eight years, the Anthology had four different printers, the Society appointing one committee after another to deal with them. Always there was the same problem that, as one of the printers put it to the Society, the number of subscribers "has decreased, is decreasing and will probably decrease more."[181] Several times the Society contemplated the possibility of ceasing publication. The last time "the momentous question of the continuance or dissolution of the Anthology" was brought up in February 1811, it was

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[179] M.A., II (June, 1805), 333.

[180] M.A., III (December, 1806), 645-46.

[181] Howe, January 29, 1811, p. 247.

> very humourously discussed, and there was on the whole but one opinion and that was that the club would not suffer it to be sent to its account with so little ceremony and that they would support it totis viribus, until the present volume shall be completed--that it would be very much to our discredit to have it stop at the commencement of this year after a succession of indifferent numbers and on the whole that it shall never die until it carry with it the regret of the publick.[182]

That the topic could have been "humourously discussed" may seem somewhat surprising. But one of the Anthology Society's most admirable assets was the sense of humor that so many its members possessed and that as a group it revealed not only in its meetings but even in the most heated theological controversies in the Anthology. The Anthologists were sincere in their efforts to make the Anthology financially successful, no less sincere than in their statements on liberal Christianity, but still they were capable of enjoying their arguments, whether with printers or with orthodox ministers; towards the end, when they once more had to deal with the printers, they looked upon it as "yet one fine opportunity left for a quarrel."[183]

With such spirits it is perhaps not surprising that the Society's last meetings were some of its most enjoyable ones. But it is doubtful that anyone today reading the "last words and dying speech" of the Anthology, written by Samuel Thacher, would recognize it as the piece of "ironical solemnity" that the Society considered it to be. "Written in his happiest manner," according to Ticknor, then secretary, it "was admirably adapted to the languor and indifference of the Society and was read amid bursts of laughter."[184]

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[182]Howe, February 5, 1811, pp. 247-48.

[183]Howe, April 23, 1811, p. 253.

[184]Howe, June 11, 1811, p. 256.

Although of the next meeting, when two apparently critical pieces on the Anthology were read, Ticknor recorded "it is really a grievous thing, that these blockheads will not suffer us to die in peace" and "in our better estate we could endure it, but, to be kicked by every ass in our weakness and decrepitude is heaping insult upon injury,"[185] the next to the last session was so gay that "the members seemed by their hilarity to have forgotten the feeble and perishing state of the Anth."[186] Thus the Society went down, but in apparent good spirits.

Financial success might also have been able to remedy still another serious disadvantage under which the Anthology always functioned, the lack of a single, permanent editor. When Samuel Thacher requested that the title of "editor" be changed to "superintending committee," he was acknowledging the apparent inability of any Anthology Society member to fill the post of editor by himself. The Society was very much aware that many of the "imperfections of our work . . . arise . . . from the number of hands employed to fill its pages" and from its never passing "under the rigorous review of any single editor."[187] Eliza Buckminster Lee justly remarked that

> when it is recollected that all of the contributors to the Anthology were men engaged in laborious and exacting professions; that their contributions were the fruits of chance half-hours, or of moments lighted by midnight lamp, after days of fatiguing labor in their offices; 'that they did not pass under the rigorous review of any single editor'; that each was his own censor, proof-reader, and critic;--there is certainly a wonderful

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[185]Howe, June 18, 1811, p. 257.

[186]Howe, June 25, 1811, p. 257. The minutes for the final meeting read "Finis" (Howe, July 2, 1811, p. 258).

[187]Joseph Buckminster, "Address of the Editors," M.A., VI (January, 1809), 3-6.

> degree of unity of purpose and harmony of sentiment, and a general respectability, in its pages, highly creditable to the dawning literature of the day. Any one reading it now will be startled at the independent tone of its criticism.[188]

It was bad enough that each of the contributors had a full-time profession of his own to attend to, but this situation might have been helped if each contributor had not found it necessary to edit his own work, or if there had been one among them for whom the Anthology was a full-time profession. What the Anthology needed, in short, was what the youthful Phineas Adams had hoped to be, a professional man of letters, but one with the backing that the Anthology Society was able to give. It needed "an editor devoted to the work, whose literary reputation would be in a measure at stake,"[189] and towards the last, the Society thought that it had found such a man. The Anthology published a statement on its expected change of policy, saying "hitherto the receipts of the Anthology" had not made it possible for the Society to have a full-time editor.

> One of our number has voluntarily assumed the responsibility of seeing the work through the press; and when the materials have not been furnished to his hands, he has been obliged to make such hasty selections, in order to complete the requisite number of pages, as his leisure amidst professional engagements would permit. For this evil we have the prospect of a speedy remedy, and if our hopes are not disappointed, the Anthology will be placed under the peculiar care of a gentleman, whose learning, talents, and taste, will enable him to make it all that its friends can desire.[190]

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[188]Lee, 223-24.

[189]Sidney Willard and S. C. Thacher, "Address of the Editors," M.A., X (January, 1811), 3-5.

[190]M.A., X (January, 1811), 3-5.

The gentleman thus described was Andrews Norton. Samuel Thacher had proposed him and asked him to draw up "a project of the new establishment by letter" telling "what degree of agency" he desired "the club still to exercise" and Norton, never a Society member, attended some of the meetings. But in the end the "only difficulty" Thacher had foreseen, that of the Society's perhaps not being able to "make the office of editor worth your acceptance," seems to have become insurmountable.[191] In his "dying speech" Thacher revealed that the Society's hopes for "a permanent editor" had "been disappointed, from the inadequacy of the receipts of the Anthology to repay the labour of any gentleman to whom we should be willing to confide it."[192]

One reason the Anthology never had enough subscribers was that it never was willing to lower its standards enough to attract them. It was "our pride and our praise," wrote Samuel Thacher, "that we have never sought patronage by making our work popular and insipid; that we have never sought the praise of any one who does not relish manly thinking and manly literature." Thus they insisted on their object's being "exclusively literary," with no attempt to please the public.[193] But in attempting a literary magazine the Anthologists ran up against a situation that they, even had they been completely devoted men of letters aided by similar contributors outside the

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[191]Letter from S. C. Thacher to Andrews Norton, Boston, January 12, 1811, Norton Papers.

[192]S. C. Thacher, "Address of the Editors," M.A., X (June, 1811), 361-65.

[193]M.A., II (December, 1805), 677-78.

Society, could not easily have remedied. "American literature," Buckminster remarked,

> is not a tract where we expect any regular annual product, or where we are sure of constant improvements from the hand of well directed industry; but it is rather a kind of half cleared and half cultivated country, where you may travel till you are out of breath, without starting any rare game, and be obliged to sit down day after day to the same coarse, insipid fare.[194]

One periodical, published only from 1803 to 1811, could not change this.

Yet the Anthologists had such a broad view of literature that it would seem that this breadth alone would have won their journal more support than it had. They were fond of referring to the Anthology as a "literary" periodical, but this term meant to them something much more broad than it means to the present generation. Certainly they recognized the difference between, say, a political tract that happened to be well written and a poem, written well or not; and there is no question that they were more devoted to the development of American poetry, no matter how poor most of it seemed to them, than of American political tracts, no matter how well written. But they saw that literature, especially an undeveloped literature, could not grow in a vacuum and seemed to believe that it would be the product of a general awakening of intellectual activity in America. Thus they fostered any area that might contribute to such an awakening. That the Anthology came to take such a leading role in the theological controversies of the time is due just as much to a belief that religion was a part of the whole culture of America as to the simple fact that several of the Anthologists were themselves liberal Christians who used the Anthology to express their views in

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[194] M.A., VI (January, 1809), 3-6.

one of the major movements of the era. In fact, for them the breakdown of orthodoxy was a necessary step in the creation of an American literature; if a mind was to create a work outside the realm of theology it could not be fettered by theological chains, by dogma that prohibited inquiry of whatever kind.

But theology was only one of a great many areas that the Anthology treated. In their "passion for reforming the world" they delved into education, slavery, liberty of the press, democracy, and even women's rights as authors. They had something to say about the fine arts of music and painting and kept abreast of news concerning museums and other institutions related to the arts. Among the sciences they treated medicine, astronomy, chemistry, and agriculture, their most significant pieces being the series of essays called "The Botanist" by Benjamin Waterhouse.

Even within the realm of more purely literary matters there was great variety, ranging from sketches of the lives of such prominent literary figures as Dr. Samuel Johnson and Joseph Warton to serial romances of young girls or soldiers. Of the pieces they themselves wrote, the series entitled "The Remarker" was the most significant, the separate essays being written by any one of the Anthologists and treating theology, literature, character traits, or anything else that happened to be interesting to the author. Just the opposite of these finished essays were the entries in "Silva," which the Anthology defined as "a wilderness of sweets, and a repository for curious remarks on men and manners, and literary fragments and novelties"[195] and, more simply, as "disjointed

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[195] M.A., IV (February, 1807), 84.

paragraphs."[196] Here one will find in abundance brief comments on all sorts of literary topics.

By far the most informative expositions of the Anthology's views on literature, as well as some of its most significant writing, are to be found in its review sections. From the beginning the Anthology presented reviews of current publications on all topics, though they were primarily concerned with literature and theology, in its section called "The Boston Review." In 1808, moreover, Buckminster instituted the "Retrospective Notices of American Literature," which was to offer a survey of all American works, "chiefly of literature and scholarship," outside the realm of theology, which was not only the "most rich in materials" but also "the best known" and "less generally interesting."[197] Here one can find reviews of Nathaniel Ward's Simple Cobler of Aggawam; poems by John Adams and Philip Freneau; histories by John Smith, John Callender, Ezra Stiles, Nathaniel Morton, Ira Allen, Samuel Williams, Daniel Neal, Jeremy Belknap, and Thomas Morton; and several editions of classical works as well as a grammar of Hebrew by Judah Monis. Among the works reviewed in the "Boston Review" are novels, or similar works--William Godwin's The New Man of Feeling, Maria Edgeworth's Leonora, Hugh Henry Brackenridge's Modern Chivalry, and Washington Irving's History of New York. Included in the plays reviewed are William Dunlap's Dramatick Works, John B. White's Foscari, and William Charles White's The Clergyman's Daughter and The Poor Lodger, all American productions. The "Boston Review"

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[196] M.A., II (December, 1805), 636.

[197] M.A., V (January, 1808), 54-57.

likewise treated poetry: among American works, William Cullen Bryant's Embargo, George Cockings's War, Henry M. Lisle's Milton Hill, and, with special attention, Joel Barlow's Columbiad; and among British productions, poems by Thomas Moore, George Crabbe, William Sotheby, and Walter Scott, reviewing the works of Scott on three different occasions.

Either in reviews, in "Silva," or just here and there in various essays one can find comments on Pope, Collins, Dryden, Jonson, Southey, Thomson, Burns, Cowper, and Scott, to name only a few British poets, and on such American poets as Trumbull, Dwight, and Humphreys. Moreover, the Anthology offered a special section on poetry that included both British published poems and American original poems. To this latter group several Anthologists or their friends regularly contributed: Joseph Head, Jacob Bigelow, E. T. Dana, Joseph Story, Winthrop Sargent, Levi Frisbie, and Washington Allston.

The scope of the Anthology was not confined to works originally composed in English. Most important was the attention it gave to the classics. Walter had described the state of classical learning in America while he was abroad, considering for a time devoting his studies towards becoming proficient in Greek.

> We have very few Greek scholars in America, not more than three in Boston, perhaps not more than one that can read Aeschylus & Pindar, tho' there may be three or four, who read Homer & Thucydides, because this poet & this historian are more easily understood than the dark obscurity & refind eccentricity of the two former. John Q. Adams I believe knows little of Greek. Mr. Theophilus Parsons pretty well & so does Rev. Mr. Freeman. Josiah Quincy precious little Judge Davis something. Mr. Welles [William Wells?], the pupil of G. Wakefield reads Homer. I believe these are the only Grecians in Boston, Some of the Gentlemen I know, & the characters of others I have heard from. . . . Such is the state of Greek literature in that place at

> the beginning of the nineteenth Century; & unless a spirit of ambition should arise among the scholars, I fear that the state of things will be worse in a few years, than it is at present, the young men are fonder of Latin, than of Greek & perhaps an attentive observer might find three Romans for a Grecian, but no more; & yet in general knowledge, in correct information, & in number of scholars Boston exceeds any other city of U. States.[198]

This somewhat inaccurate view Walter repeated in the Anthology two years later, still ignoring the learned J. S. J. Gardiner.[199] Particularly important to the Anthologists was the encouragement of the classics within the schools. One of its articles stated,

> Since the revolution, owing either to a relaxation of the discipline at our university, or to a general mistake of our countrymen, under pretence of devotion to more useful pursuits, the study of ancient literature is so much slighted, that few can read Latin and fewer write it with ease . . . while to be versed in Greek is almost as rare, and may soon become as dangerous, as the practice of the black art.[200]

According to William Wells, not only the revolution in general, but

> the publication of Mr. Locke's Treatise upon Education, which very properly animadverted upon the exclusive attention, then prevailing in the English grammar schools, to the acquisition of the dead languages, unhappily gave some degree of countenance to that darling opinion of dunces and projectors--that the study of the Latin and Greek languages is a branch of education both unnecessary and injurious.

To combat this notion, the Anthology was publishing a lengthy essay on the utility of classical learning, written in 1769 by Dr. [James?] Beattie. Wells suggested that if anyone wished "to see how weakly and absurdly the contrary side may be defended by a respectable and sensible man, he may read Dr. [Benjamin] Rush's Essays 'On the mode of education proper in a republick,' and 'On the study of the Latin and Greek languages.'"[201] The most necessary step in bringing about

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[198]Walter, "Journal," November 23, 1803.

[199]"Silva," M.A., II (June, 1805), 304.

[200]M.A., IV (February, 1807), 65-71.

[201]M.A., VIII (April, 1810), 227-36.

a revival of classical learning in America was the acquisition of classical texts on a large scale. With the Salem edition of Sallust, Buckminster wrote,"We record it as a memorable fact in the annals of our literature, that in the year of our Lord 1805 appeared the first edition of an ancient classick ever published in the United States, which was not a professed reimpression of some former and foreign edition."[202] In 1810 William Wells announced the publication by him and T. B. Wait and Co. of "an elegant, uniform, and complete series of those writings, which from their just celebrity have acquired the appellation of the Latin Classicks." This occasion was especially important to the schools, where "the progress of classical literature is materially obstructed by the almost total want of good editions of the ancient writers." A few of the classics had been published in the United States, and individual scholars could obtain copies of various works at a high price,

> but should a class at a university be desirous of making themselves acquainted with a classick of the higher order, they will probably find it impossible to procure a sufficient number in the United States. The consequences to literature are obvious, the ardent curiosity of youth receives a check, and that knowledge, which, if imparted at the favourable moment, might have been eagerly accepted, will probably never be acquired.

After all, Wells pointed out, "our young men aspire to be something beyond schoolboys."[203] The Anthology attempted to review all classical works that appeared in America and published translations of various classical poems and essays on the lives of some classical scholars and on classical literature. Of this last group by far the most

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[202] M.A., II (October, 1805), 549-51; VII (July, 1809), 55-56.

[203] M.A., VIII (January, 1810), 69-72.

significant were Sidney Willard's "Remarks on English Translations of the Roman Poets," a series begun in the Literary Miscellany and extending to about fifteen essays by the last number of the Anthology.

The Anthology made a considerable contribution, moreover, to the diffusion of both French and German literature in America. It reviewed such French publications as Madame de Staël's Corinna and her father's life, published various surveys and letters on the state of French literature, and treated in one way or another such writers as Voltaire, Rousseau, La Harpe, and Racine. The Anthology's interest in German literature was more pronounced, partly because of the Anthologists' strong interest in Biblical scholarship and the publication of the classics, both of which were gaining strong support in Germany. The Anthology at several times published lists of German works appearing on these subjects, and in the "Boston Review" treated Zollikoffer's sermons on the reformation as well as Reuben Puffer's address on "the propriety and importance of free inquiry on religious subjects" which he delivered at Harvard in 1808.[204] It is likely that in both the areas of Biblical exegesis and the concepts of private judgment and free inquiry the liberal Christians among the Anthologists were somewhat influenced by German scholars and theologians.

The Anthologists may have been influenced, as well, by German romanticism. As early as 1799 Shaw wrote to Walter thanking him for his "accurate account of Wieland's Oberon. It is as curious a fact as the history of literature presents," he continued, "that a

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[204] M.A., V (July, 1808), 387-89.

nation, known as the Germans have been for productions of a phlegmatic caste, should, all at once, astonish the world by works of fancy and feeling."[205] The Anthology reviewed Sotheby's Oberon, based upon the German poem of Wieland, and gave some attention to Herder's Scattered Leaves, Goethe's Elective Affinities, and Schiller's The Robbers. The German writer most frequently mentioned, however, in both the Anthologists' private writings and the Anthology, was Kotzebue, particularly his play Pizarro. Although "Silva" records that the "chief purposes of the illuminated author" of Pizarro were "to dazzle and seduce a romantick fancy, to raise delightful and exalted notions of a savage state of nature, and by partial delineation and false colouring, degrade and calumniate the mild doctrines of Christianity,"[206] such adverse criticism was soon to insinuate itself into even Anthology literary criticism as favorable comment. Finally, the Anthology offered several listings of books currently being published in or on Germany and a lengthy survey of German literature from the commencement of its "Golden Age" up to 1811 in an article entitled "On the effects of the industry of the literati of Germany on the literature of that country; and on the influence of the four last years of war upon it," by John Chr. Huttner.[207]

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[205]Letter from William Shaw to Arthur Walter, November 4, 1799, in Felt, 80. For German literary influences in New England at this time, see especially Stanley M. Vogel, German Literary Influences on the American Transcendentalists (New Haven, 1955), and Scott M. Goodnight, German Literature in Magazines Prior to 1846 (Madison, Wis., 1907). Both works give some attention to the Monthly Anthology.

[206]M.A., V (January, 1808), 97.

[207]First published in Treue Verkündiger, a German newspaper published in London. M.A., X (January, 1811), 62-67; (February, 1811), 122-25.

In the end, the Anthologists' broad view of literature and their concept of what was needed to produce literature helped to defeat their purpose. It cannot be denied that today the Anthology is important largely because of its breadth--historians of literature, philosophy, religion, science, government, art, and social, cultural, and educational institutions can all learn much from its pages. Moreover, it cannot be denied that the Golden Age of American literature, which it helped to bring about by trying to produce a general awakening of intellectual activity, was no less broad in its scope of interests. But it must also be admitted that had the Anthologists devoted themselves to literature in a more narrow sense, to what we know as belles-lettres--which was what they were ultimately hoping to foster--they might very well have contributed more significantly to the development of American literature, both in the production of essays and poetry of more lasting quality and in the inspiration of the succeeding generation to follow their example. As it was, the Anthology refused to give its powers to a single object, so that its greatest contribution towards the Golden Age of American literature was in the formulation, sometimes through otherwise insignificant pieces, of ideas that ultimately matured into the two main branches of that Age--Romanticism and Transcendentalism.

CHAPTER II

A CRITICAL TRIBUNAL

The Anthology's major contribution to American literature as belles-lettres is in its role in the transition of American literary theory from neoclassicism to romanticism. This contribution can be seen to a limited extent in the original poetry that the Anthology published. But it is in their prose--whether in brief entries in "Silva," in full-length essays in "The Remarker," or in reviews of books--that this transition is most apparent. In their literary criticisms the Anthologists did not voice any ideas about the nature of literature that had not been stated before by eighteenth-century British critics. On the contrary, they played out parts that had already been created. Rather, their importance lies in the fact that they did play them and that they played them with vitality. Romanticism arose in America not solely because there was a transition in literary theory and practice in eighteenth-century England, but because there was a transition in literary theory, at least, in early nineteenth-century America as well. Although the topics of the controversies that were waged in the Anthology were not new, neither were they mere replicas of eighteenth-century British controversies. There was freshness in the appeals of the Anthologists; they believed what they themselves said.

Through their literary criticism the Anthologists helped to accomplish what they had intended: the creation of a milieu conducive to literary creativity. In their reappraisals of British poets and their restatements of British poetic theories, they weighed the problems that any literati must weigh. Moreover, in their application of these problems to American literature, as in the "Retrospective Notices" and the "Boston Review," they not only acknowledged a body of American literature already created, but kept the direction of its advancement before the public eye and to some extent determined that direction. Finally, voiced by American critics, the concepts of such British critics as Edmund Burke and Joseph Warton had a special effect. The transition from neoclassicism to romanticism, gradual and relative as it was, became in America a transition from British authoritarianism to American originality as well. One manifestation of this transition was that the stature of the critic decreased while that of the poet grew. American critics had always insisted upon the primacy of the poet in the republic of letters; but in fact the poet's position was not supreme until critics saw his contribution as one of originality. As George Ticknor wrote in 1810, "Criticks certainly ought to give place to those who without or even in defiance of art and rules, perform wonders in literature. . . . This seems to be the characteristick mark which discriminates the man of genius from the scholar."[1]

That critics came to pay originality such high regard resulted from a change in attitude towards established models and rules for

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[1]George Ticknor, "Silva," M.A., VIII (January, 1810), 19-25.

writing. Basic to the neoclassical position was a belief that there were standard models of literary excellence and certain rules by which that excellence might be attained. American neoclassical critics were obligated to point out these models and rules to American poets, as well as to the public, and to criticize works according to their success in attaining the established standard. This was the least they could do for the struggling artists of a new nation, who were faced with not just the continuation of English literature but the creation of a new American one. But once the neoclassical position was questioned and certain critics began to emphasize originality, genius, and imagination over learning, rules, and imitation, the necessity of the critic himself was questioned. The new critics also could voice views of certain British critics and hold up models such as Collins, Thomson, Cowper, and Burns. But if they were sincere in their emphasis upon originality, genius, and imagination, they had to admit that any model was not only unnecessary but even detrimental to the creation of poetry. Thus, although there was a new wave of criticism that arose from the attack upon neoclassical criticism, the role of the critic himself could only become inconsequential. Far from telling the artist how to create a work of art, the critic could only comment upon the work once it was created. Instead of insisting upon a powerful "critical tribunal" to guide American poets towards the creation of literature according to rules, the new critics came to speak of critics as merely "commentators."[2] The freeing of the

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[2]See Paul Allen's essays on commentators, M.A., VII (July, 1809), 31-37, and IV (July, 1807), 345.

American artist (or more precisely the imaginary American artist), not only from British models but from American critics as well, was perhaps the most important contribution of the Anthology critical writing to the development of American literature.

The Anthology poetry shows its tendency towards romanticism mainly through the prevalence of odes. But even here, although the ode offers more freedom to the poet than most forms of poetry, there was more imitation than initiation on the part of the poets. Very often the form was used simply because it was an appropriate one for tributes: one will find odes to the anniversaries of Washington's birth, independence, and the election of Vermont into the union; to a young divine upon his ordination; and even to the Massachusetts Charitable Fire Society (this last, written by Robert Treat Paine, to be sung, along with two other poems, by a Mrs. Jones). On the whole the Anthology poems are weak imitations of eighteenth-century British poetry that attempted to present familiar themes in an elevated manner. William Story's remarks on the state of American poetry at the beginning of the nineteenth century accurately describe most of the Anthology poetry (though they may less accurately describe the state of English poetry). Speaking of his father's, Joseph Story's, "Power of Solitude," he called it a didactic poem written in heroic verse and modeled on Samuel Rogers's "Pleasures of Memory."

> It was written at a time when English poetry was nearly at its lowest ebb, and it had the faults of its age. The Della Cruscan School then reigned supreme in America, and even in England the influence of the lake poets was very limited. Every versifier used a poetic language. Poetry was prose gone mad. Milton's parenthetical definition of what it should be, 'simple, sensuous,

> passionate,' had long been set aside, and by universal acclaim, the Muse as she was called, was required to be bombastic, artificial and unnatural. Simple English was too common for her use. She must be pampered by Latinized forms. She drove a Pegasean two-in-hand of metaphor and personification, which usually managed to run away with her and bear her beyond the regions of sense. Phaeton was a trifle compared to her. Her bathos exceeded his fall. In America, there was no native poet whose reputation was superior to that of Robert Treat Paine. . . .[3]

William's criticism of his father's poem in particular, both of its defects and of its attributes, might have been given of much of the poetry of the time:

> The defects of his poem on the 'Power of Solitude' are exaggeration of feeling, confusion of imagery, and a want of simplicity of expression. The style is tilted and artificial. But though dull as a poem, it shows facility and talent for versification, breathes a warm aspiration for virtue and truth, and is creditable to his scholarship.[4]

The Anthology review of the second edition of Story's poem was not even so charitable as William's estimation. The reviewer admitted that it was a "better poem, than nine tenths that are published," but found little to recommend it, other than the second edition's being "undoubtedly improved, as it is diminished to one third of its former size."[5] That the Anthology could condemn a poem that was on a par with the poetry that it published is indicative of the extent to which its poetic criticism exceeded its poetic practice.

It is through the Anthology's essays, rather than its poetry, that its tendencies toward romanticism are most evident. Most of these essays are critical, dealing with theories of poetry. But there are a few that are primarily descriptive essays, and these are

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[3]William W. Story, Life and Letters of Joseph Story (2 vols.; Boston: C. C. Little and J. Brown, 1851), I, 107-108.

[4]Story, 109.

[5]M.A., II (July, 1805), 379-82.

in themselves examples of the literary theory advocated in the critical essays. These descriptive essays, however, were not the chronological result of the critical essays. In fact, so far as the Anthology goes there was no steady chronological development away from neoclassicism towards romanticism. The new wave of criticism was evident as early as 1805, the year the Anthology Society was founded, and the old views of poetry were restated up to the end in 1811. Although the development from neoclassicism to romanticism did happen chronologically so far as the overall history of American literature goes, in the Anthology one sees rather the range of critical thought and the ferment involved in this development. Since many of these essays are, taken individually, significant documents in the development of American romanticism and are in themselves some of the best composed essays in the Anthology, they are here treated as unified pieces, though discussed in an order showing the overall development away from neoclassicism to romanticism.

Joseph Buckminster concluded his "Remarker, No. 5," with a recognition of the superior rank of the author over the critic "in the ceremonial of literature." Aside from the "intrinsick respect" that the author commands and the fact that "it requires less ability to detect faults than to avoid them," the author "forever retains the right of primogeniture" because, "while authors may exist without criticks, the latter cannot maintain themselves a moment if writers should withhold the customary prey." But the theme of Buckminster's essay is the necessity of "a critical tribunal" of unlimited power. Buckminster saw the early nineteenth century as a time of emergency in American letters, a time when it was essential to the welfare of

the literary republic that "the right of critical severity" be established. To those who might argue that America was young and inexperienced in the republic of letters, and that therefore her productions were rather "to be cherished by the gentle and perfumed gales of flattery than to be checked by the chills of neglect, or beaten down by the blasts of angry criticism," Buckminster replied that "the everlasting oaks of our forests were not raised in a hot-house." American writers needed "a manly and unprejudiced criticism," not "indulgent remarks of candid friends, the simpering smiles of kitchen-criticks, the puffing advertisements of newspapers, and the lullaby strains of poetasters." He who wished to excuse American literature from examination could not be a friend to it; the "easy multiplication of feeble works" could not form "a solid basis for our future fame." But the critic did not have to justify his criticism, for "this right of literary censure is bestowed upon the critick by the author himself. Every man who publishes virtually offers a challenge to the publick, or at least courts their decision." Buckminster quoted La Harpe, from his introduction to his Lycaeum, in which he suggested that an author who would have us admire him must permit us to judge him, and he went still further, this time gaining support from Dr. Johnson (Rambler, No. 176), to say that even derision, ridicule, or baiting was the right of the critic, the object of criticism being not the author but his work.

The assumption that underlay Buckminster's strong insistence upon the need for a powerful critical tribunal in America was that a responsible and learned critic could teach an author how to write. The reason the critic could teach the author was that, according to Buckminster, there were "laws of fine writing." There was little

excuse for shoddiness in American letters, for "every candidate for fame has it in his power to consult innumerable precedents, statutes, declarations of criticism by which the verdict of the publick and the sentence of the reviewer may be previously and probably conjectured."[6] As John Adams observed in "An Essay on Method," "poems will please, only in proportion as these rules are observed."[7]

The Anthologists repeatedly demonstrated their devotion to what they thought were established rules in their reviews of various works. Nathaniel A. Haven, reviewing George Cockings's poem War, condemned it as a heroic poem, which it purported to be, because "it spurns at the unities so extolled by Aristotle and the minor criticks."[8] Jacob Bigelow likewise criticized Mason L. Weems's Life of George Washington for not fulfilling "the first requisites in biography," which were "fidelity and correctness." Being "at a loss whether to denominate [Weems's work] a biography, or a novel, founded on fact," Bigelow concluded that the author had "presented a specimen of writing, which for variety and oddity is almost an unique in the annals of literature." Thus, just as Cockings failed in his attempt to write an epic, Weems unintentionally succeeded, "for, besides its figures, characters, battles and episodes, it is duly provided with a suitable quantity of preternatural machinery."[9]

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[6]Buckminster, M.A., III (January, 1806), 19-23.

[7]Adams, M.A., III (March, 1806), 120-24.

[8]Haven, M.A., X (June, 1811), 389-93.

[9]Bigelow, M.A., IX (December, 1810), 414-19.

By far the most exhaustive criticism of a poem according to "the rules" is Andrews Norton's review of Joel Barlow's The Columbiad. In every respect, Norton suggested, Barlow's poem was an invocation to freedom.

> The present poem opens in a very appropriate manner (as may appear), with an invocation to Freedom. That undoubtedly, in which the author wanted her assistance, and in which he has indeed been very successful, was in freeing himself from the old prescriptive rules of criticism, those rusty fetters by which genius has been so long manacled. The oppressive regulations, of which we speak, have produced, it is true, many murmurs of disgust and many symptoms of sedition, but still their authority was in some degree respected, and before the author of this poem none had dared to break out into such open rebellion and defiance. It is this, which constitutes the grand characteristick of the work. . . .

In a sixteen-page criticism Norton then set out to prove his point. One by one he listed the characteristics of epic poetry and showed, with devastating accuracy, how Barlow failed in his intent. The epic required for its subject "one single great event, to which all[its] parts are to have relation," but Barlow's poem had avoided this tedious uniformity" and treated "of a variety of things, which have no common bond of connection, except their nearer or more remote reference to one or the other of the grand divisions of the continent." The epic required "that its subject should not be of modern date" and "that from every serious poem, which treats of recent events, the agency of supernatural beings should be entirely excluded," but Barlow had treated both rules "with equal contempt." The characters of an epic were to be "distinctly marked and distinguished from each other," but Barlow had invested "all his favourite characters with an uniform dignity and splendour." It was imperative that "when the characters introduced were not of the poet's invention, but were already known in history, that no qualities should be attributed to

them very different from what they were in reality considered to possess," but Barlow's "characters introduced from history undergo a process of melioration and refinement." The epic poet was "to regard the manners and usages of any age or country, the events of which he might be describing," but again this rule "did not often come in the way of the genius of its author," or when it did was "trampled upon with as little remorse as any other." The epic poet was to "adopt some one system of mythology or religion, which he should uniformly regard throughout his work," but Barlow had not revealed "any such particular partialities and attachments." Finally, in technique Barlow had failed miserably: his versification, "not such as we could praise in any other" poem, fitted "very well . . . the character of the present"; in phraseology, he outdid himself in "enriching the language and extending its limits"; and, as to figurative language, his poem simply abounded in "splendid compounds of hyperbole and metaphor." All in all, Norton had "scarcely ever met with a work, in which every thing, to use an expressive vulgarism, was so much of a piece as in the present poem."[10]

Moreover, there are descriptions of "fine writing" in the Anthology that suggest what the Anthologists expected when they argued that precedents, statutes, and declarations of criticism could teach an author how to write. Typical of such passages is Josiah Quincy's criticism of the works of Fisher Ames, whose devotion to political, rather than literary, matters was time and again regretted in the Anthology.

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[10]Norton, M.A., VII (August, 1809), 114-30. For more on Barlow (his dispute with Henry Gregoire over the religious aspects of his work), see M.A., VII (July, 1809), 3-11; (September, 1809), 166-67; (October, 1809), 290-97; (November, 1809), 289-98.

> The common observer is chiefly attracted by the novel and splendid imagery which abounds in his writings. But the critical eye delights in the purity and perspicuity, both of style and sentiment, the correct choice of language, and the sweetness and simplicity, for which they are no less distinguished. His political essays, particularly those written in the latter years of his life, are eminently conspicuous for such characteristicks. In these, his periods are free from all classical inversion and oratorical ostentation. His sentences, short, terse, and often sparkling with antithetical brightness, attract the attention of the heedless and facilitate the comprehension of the dull. They seek and preserve an unambitious level of style, equally removed from vulgarity, or elevation; softening the severity of research by their facility, and beguiling the tediousness of investigation by frequent scintillations of wit and fancy. They are models, as fine perhaps as any language possesses, of that species of composition, in which learning and genius may best diffuse wisdom and truth among the mass of mankind. The flow of thought is easy, and the arrangement of the words unstudied and natural. His style, springing from the soil of the best English and Latin classicks, partakes of the raciness of both. In the pride and power of his fancy, he sometimes takes flights into regions, where criticism can neither follow nor uphold him. On these occasions, it is enough for men in general to gaze and wonder. But should any, not endowed alike by propitious nature, strive to emulate,
>
> ceratis ope Daedalea
> Nititur pennis, vitreo daturus
> Nomina ponto.[11]

Quincy attributed to Ames's writing virtually every quality that eighteenth-century British critics had admired; it was a perfect blend of novelty with correctness, fancy with wit, ease with precision, genius with learning. Moreover, it was rooted "in the best of English and Latin classicks." None of the Anthologists ever assumed that native genius was not essential to a writer; nor did any of them ever suggest that learning was undesirable. Quincy made it clear that Ames possessed both. Yet, in viewing Ames's work as the attainment of the literary standards of both the critics and the models of fine writing, Quincy suggested that, though a writer not endowed

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[11]Quincy, M.A., VIII (February, 1810), 112-22.

with genius could never hope to emulate fine writing, granted this endowment he could succeed in writing well only through striving towards the established standards. Moreover, he could "diffuse wisdom and truth" only insofar as he wrote well. Style was exceedingly important. There was no question simply of an author's putting down what he felt; indeed, there was no question of his feeling anything. He was a magician who knew the tricks by which he could make the public believe what he believed to be true. He had to be able to attract the reader's attention and affect even the dullest one's understanding, to make his message palatable through facility and beguilement. There was no question, either, simply of a reader's being moved; even when the author, on occasion, soared on the wings of fancy, the reader could only "gaze and wonder." The style best suited to such ends was of "an unambitious level": a smooth blend of simplicity, clarity, correctness, flavored with fancy; one that was consistently comprehensible, yet "often sparkling," frequently scintillating; one that was neither dull nor ostentatious.

Such fine writing, as well as the means by which it was attained, was usually considered to be the product of proper taste. It was the duty of the critic, Buckminster asserted, "to check the contagion of false taste," to correct and refine taste, among both authors and the public.[12] The Anthologists were aware that "to assign correct rules for taste is not easier than to give a definition of beauty" and one critic suggested "that the most accurate

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[12]Buckminster, M.A., III (January, 1806), 19-23.

standard will be to decide by taste in eating."[13] But although there was as much dispute about taste as about morals, as Samuel Thacher remarked, "we might as well say, that morals are baseless and fortuitous, because men dispute on them, as to say, that taste has no laws, because all do not assent to them."[14] Even in a single essay the word taste could contain a whole spectrum of qualities. This is true, for example, of William Emerson's essay "On Taste," delivered before the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa Society in 1789 and printed in the Anthology fifteen years later. Emerson's thesis was a moralistic one, that "the man of true taste, like Quintillian's true orator, is a man of virtue," virtue being "the amiable qualities of a good heart." But Emerson did not define taste only in terms of virtue. He inserted, throughout the essay, other concepts of taste, all previously expounded by British critics and expounded again by other Anthologists. Taste was the harmony between fancy and judgment; it was the union of the powers of reason and the soul; it involved imagination and native genius, as well as respect for certain modern writers and the ancients.[15] In the Anthology one can find not only essays emphasizing judgment, reason, or study of the ancients as a means to literary taste, but also essays emphasizing fancy, the soul, imagination, and genius, even with a complete disregard for taste as an end to be attained. It is these latter essays that helped to

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[13]"Silva," M.A., III (August, 1806), 416-19.

[14]Thacher, "Remarker, No. 7," M.A., III (March, 1806), 124-27.

[15]Emerson, "On Taste," Emerson Papers; published in M.A., I (August, 1804), 435-39.

make possible such statements as Ralph Waldo Emerson's concerning his father's papers: "At best, they showed no more than that candor and taste, or I should almost say, docility, the principal merit possible to that early, ignorant & transitional Month-of-March, in our New England culture."[16]

The man of taste was most consistently a man of learning, one who studied, or even imitated, the writings of other men of taste. These models were almost always either Latin or late seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century British writers. Although it was generally agreed that "good taste is that holy fire of Vesta, of which the writings of antiquity are the principal depositaries,"[17] in practice, the models for taste were probably more often works written in English. William Emerson's observation concerning the abilities of his sister Mary and the expedient road for her to take in her literary endeavors was probably no less accurate for the majority of American writers: "It is highly improbable that she will ever be able to slake her thirst for knowledge at the fountain of the ancients: she must therefore content herself with the purest streams, which her native language can boast, and these are the works of Addison, Pope, Swift, Steele, Hawkesworth, Johnson, Goldsmith &c. &c."[18] Reading these British authors was, in fact, reading the ancients once removed: they themselves were admirable writers greatly because they were learned in the classics.

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[16]Letter from Ralph Waldo Emerson to William Emerson, in Ralph L. Rusk (ed.), Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson (6 vols.; New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), IV, 179.

[17]"Silva," M.A., II (May, 1805), 239-41.

[18]Letter from William Emerson to Phebe Ripley, March 19, 1805, Emerson Papers.

Of all the moderns Addison was the most frequently held up as the best representative of "fine-writing" and "true taste," and the qualities attributed to him were those likewise attributed to the ancients. "All true taste will be best cultivated in the ancient soils," wrote Winthrop Sargent in his review of the 1806 Cambridge edition of Horace.

> It would be foolish to assert, that no one has ever thought correctly or written well, whose mind was not imbued with ancient lore; but the history of letters assures us, that the instances are rare. Original genius sometimes vindicates its superiority from the deficiencies of education . . . but grace of fine-writing in poetry or prose; that ease, which every man, before the experiment, is confident he could equal; that justness of thought and propriety of expression, so distinguishable at a second reading from violent paradox and tawdry decoration, that may mislead at the first; that indescribable charm, diffused over the humour of Addison, like a thin fleecy cloud upon the surface of the sun, mitigating its ardour, but not lessening its radiance; all are derivable from early, and frequent, and enthusiastick study of the Grecian to the ancients.[19]

Sargent's reference to Addison is indicative of the place he held among the models to be imitated. To William Emerson, in fact, he was "the inimitable Addison; whose elegant writings, breathing the spirit, they were intended to disseminate, effected a happy reformation in the world of letters, and will stand a perpetual monument of virtuous and refined taste."[20]

The qualities most admired in Addison were ones of expression--his ease, grace, propriety, correctness, elegance, charm--the very traits that Anthology critics found to be so lacking in American

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[19]Sargent, M.A., IV (July, 1807), 380-89.

[20]Emerson, M.A., I (August, 1804), 435-39.

writers. There was a slow progress in American letters, J. S. J. Gardiner contended, because of the want of taste, and that want of taste was primarily a deficiency in style. "In fertility of thought, and cogency of argument, our writers are excelled by few; but in the chaste elegance of a style, at once dignified and simple, we are greatly inferiour to the authors of Europe." Gardiner singled out Johnson, Gibbon, and Burke as the three writers who more than any others had "corrupted the publick taste": "The colours of their style are too glaring; there is too much artifice, there are too many balanced sentences, there is too much appearance of labour, in the two former, to please a man of correct taste." The remedy lay, rather, in imitating Addison, as Johnson himself had advocated. "The repeated perusal of Addison might remedy the most striking defects of our compositions, by affording us natural and easy flow of period with imagery, that has the glow of nature, not the glare of art."[21]

When Gardiner criticized American authors, he dwelt mainly upon their style. In his review of The Miscellaneous Works of David Humphreys, he compiled a list of flaws in Humphreys's works, almost every one a stylistic weakness. His similes were too tremendous for his topics, his epithets had misplaced accents, he emphasized adjectives rather than substantives, his rhymes were incorrect, he took advantage of poetic license in coining words, he gave words more, or fewer, syllables than they really had, and so on. Throughout

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[21]Gardiner, "Remarker, No. 38," M.A., V (November, 1808), 599-601. See also, Gardiner, "Remarker, No. 2," M.A., II (October, 1805), 517-19.

his criticism Gardiner relied upon English Augustan standards, even though he admitted such comparison was unjust, there being so great a disparity between American (and even contemporary British) authors and Augustan ones. But since there was no American standard, one had to refer to English standards. Otherwise, "if every one has a right to accent as he pleases, and use whatever words are current among his associates, unknown to good authors, as Noah Webster and other conceited innovators assert, the language will soon degenerate into a Babylonish dialect, and be fit only for the lowest of the populace."[22]

With this review Gardiner provoked a controversy, in which his opponent, Harvardiensis (perhaps Humphreys), set out to disprove Gardiner's assertion

> that the age of good English poetry ended with the reign of queen Anne; that the British Muse has, from that period, been declining in a gradual nervous decay; that her young offspring, the American Muse, inherited from her parent the same disorder; and that both are now in the last stages of an incurable hectick.

He picked out certain passages describing scenes of desolation from Pope, Goldsmith, Trumbull, Dwight, and Humphreys to "observe in what manner the poets of their Augustan Age of England, the modern British poets, and the 'bards of Columbia' have written upon the same subject," and he concluded that "in strength, novelty, and sublimity, none of the thoughts or images in the others, are equal to the personification of the pestilence by Col. Humphreys."[23]

Gardiner in reply disputed the authorities his opponent raised and particularly attacked his justification of word coinage, which only

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[22]Gardiner, M.A., I (September, 1804), 507-511.

[23]"Harvardiensis," M.A., II (January, 1805), 7-9.

proved him "a true disciple of Noah Webster, that scourge of grammar, no less than your sneer at English literature."

> Yet let us inform you, young Sir, that all sensible Americans will rely on the great writers of that nation as authorities, until we can produce equal excellence. We know of no American language that is not Indian, and feel no inclination to resort to the Choctaws, the Chickesaws, the Cherokees, and the Tuscaroras for literary instruction. Whilst we speak and write the English language, we are satisfied to be guided in our use of that language by approved English writers, by which we shall guard against modern foppery and provincial impurities. If we flatter ourselves that we have already attained to perfection, we encourage a vain delusion, which will tend to cherish vanity and prevent improvement.[24]

Gardiner's concern over language as an element of style and his strong opposition to the development of an American language, separate from English, was representative of the Anthology's running controversy with Noah Webster, which began with James Savage's review of A Philosophical and Practical Grammar of the English Language. Savage scorned "the notion of an American tongue, or of gaining our idiom from the mouths of the illiterate" rather than from established English works and reminded Webster that "the English language, as well as their liberties, is our birthright."[25] Webster replied by first questioning whether "reviewers constitute the only legitimate Board of Criticism on this continent" and accusing the Anthology, in particular, of being untrustworthy because it was prejudiced against American and toward English products. He then argued that principles of philology, not men, were the proper authority for language and that, besides, the Anthology's major authority, Dr. Johnson, had harmed the language more than Webster

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[24]Gardiner, M.A., II (January, 1805), 44-45. See also M.A., I (December, 1804), 631-35, and M.A., II (January, 1806), 53.

[25]Savage, M.A., V (May, 1808), 267-77.

himself had. Johnson had introduced innumerable local, vulgar, obscene, and pedantic words, which Webster had rejected; yet the Anthology had not censured Johnson.[26]

Savage again attacked Webster in a review of his Dictionary. In every respect--syntax, definition, pronunciation, spelling, selection--Webster's work was inferior to Johnson's. Again Savage emphasized the dangers of innovation and the importance of accepting the foremost English authors as authorities. In setting up "our illiterate writers," among them Barlow, as authorities, Webster seriously hindered the progress of American literature; his book was "a most dangerous guide for our young scholars."[27] The controversy continued with another long review, by James Perkins, of Webster's works, which was mainly a portrayal of Webster as a "literary proteus" whose sole object was "pecuniary emolument." Clever and biting in his attack upon Webster, Perkins did not restrain himself.[28]

Indeed the debate had become not unlike some of the more rabid theological controversies in the Anthology. In the end, Webster took refuge in the theological antagonist of the Anthology--the Panoplist. "The spirit displayed in the Anthology," Webster wrote, "renders it necessary for me to withhold all communication, with the conductors of that work." Following Webster's reply was a "Prospectus" of his New and Complete Dictionary and then a letter

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[26]Webster, M.A., VII (September, 1809), 205-212.

[27]Savage, M.A., VII (October, 1809), 246-64.

[28]Perkins, M.A., VIII (February, 1810), 80-89; (April, 1810), 219-27.

from Timothy Dwight, president of Yale, the stronghold of the theological conservatives, and three of its professors. "We sincerely regret," the letter said, "that you [Webster] have so many obstacles to encounter, particularly so many prejudices, in an undertaking, which, we think, will be honorable to you, and useful to the public."[29]

This antipathy to innovation is also evident in the Anthologists' criticisms of poets whose works seemed to be more the product of inspiration or genius than of learning and industry. "Literary excellence," wrote John Gorham,

> is not the effect of an accidental ray of genius, nor of a momentary glow of enthusiasm; the former must be tempered by industry, the latter by judgment.

Gorham agreed with Pope that "True ease in writing comes from art, not chance."[30] In an essay on the state of American literature, in which he condemned a whole bevy of American poets--besides Humphreys, Barlow, Dwight, and Trumbull--J. S. J. Gardiner, too, put forth the view that "genius without judgment is useless or ridiculous, and that there can be no good poetry where there is not good sense."[31] In another essay, on "the art of puffing," Gardiner took to task those critics who considered "every new production . . .

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[29]"Intelligence. From the Panoplist, published at Boston. To the Friends of Literature," M.A., VIII (March, 1810), 207-210. See also M.A., VII (October, 1809), 246-64, and M.A., VII (December, 1809), 366-71, for further attacks by Savage and Perkins and M.A., VII (November, 1809), 353, for another reply by Webster. A humorous essay on the possibility of establishing a native language is by William Shaw, "Remarker, No. 12," M.A., III (August, 1806), 399-401.

[30]Gorham, M.A., III (October, 1806), 529-31.

[31]Gardiner, "Remarker, No. 4," M.A., II (December, 1805), 630-32.

a masterpiece, and every new author a first rate genius." In particular he attacked the Port Folio for "this wholesale kind of approbation," even accusing its critics of sometimes praising what they had never read.

> Nothing can prove more injurious to the cause of literature than this conduct. The majority of readers are incapable of appreciating the literary merit of any work, and generally suspend their judgment till they are acquainted with the opinions of profest literati. This gives the latter immense influence in the province of taste, in which they may be justly considered as the public guides.

Gardiner was especially upset by the praise that had been heaped upon the poet Robert Bloomfield, "an English cobbler (for I believe he never rose to the dignity of a shoe-maker.)." Gardiner observed,

> We have native nonsense enough among us without importing foreign absurdities; if we choose to employ an English shoemaker, let us employ him to make shoes for us and not poems.[32]

But all of the Anthologists did not scorn originality or respect the sole authority of the past giants of English literature to the degree Gardiner did. This is made clear in an exchange between Gardiner and Arthur Walter over the poetry of Pope. Gardiner, of course, defended Pope and in his defense showed the importance he attributed to style and the extent to which he propounded imitation of Augustan writers as the proper means for American writers to develop an admirable style. Paraphrasing to some extent the poet he was defending, Gardiner wrote,

> High, masterly execution is what constitutes a preeminent writer. He exhibits the best thoughts, exprest in the best manner. When he borrows, he improves; what he imitates, he excels. He commands a certain felicity of style, which, though simple, is highly figurative, which convinces by its energy, and charms by its beauty.

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[32]Gardiner, M. A., I (August, 1804), 452-53.

Pope himself learned from Virgil: "He has the same correctness, the same majesty of numbers, allowing for the inferiority of a modern language." Virgil learned from still other writers: "There is scarcely a page of Virgil, his Georgics excepted, in which we cannot trace him imitating or translating whole passages from other writers, so that he has fewer pretensions to originality, than almost any poet ancient or modern." Gardiner's opinion of the importance of originality he could state briefly: "Originality! Fiddledy diddledy!"[33]

Walter, on the other hand, charged that Pope was not even a poet because he lacked originality. The "essence of poetry" was, as Longinus saw, genius; and genius was the power--natural, not acquired--to create. "Genius rejoices in nothing vulgar or common. It is exercised about novelty and invention. It is ever attended by a bold and ardent imagination. It delights to discover new properties in mind and to form new arrangements in matter." A poet was "not merely a constructor of verses, but an inventor." Pope's advocates, Walter pointed out, usually referred to The Rape of the Lock as his most imaginative work. But, although it was a poem of "fine taste, pleasant satire, and nice humour," it was not one "of strong, operative imagination." Indeed, "original genius" was seldom found in any of Pope's works.

> His page is irradiated by little of that mysterious light, which is generated by this unknown power. Taste, judgment, and sense, predominate in his works; in vain do we seek for the creative energies of invention, the sublime soarings of thought, and the audacious struggles of imagination, bursting from the confinement

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[33]Gardiner, "Silva," M.A., III (January, 1806), 15-19.

> of reason. In the translation of Homer, there is splendour of verse; in his satires, acuteness of remark; in the art of criticism, ingenuity and knowledge; in the 'Rape of the Lock,' playfulness and delicacy of fancy; in the 'Windsor Forest,' beauty of just description; and in the epistle of 'Eliosa to Abelard,' a dignity of diction, a selection of images, and a gloominess of thought, which render it one of the most attractive, and therefore most dangerously licentious poems in the circle of literature.[34]

Pope obviously had numerous qualities, but, lacking the essential quality of genius, he could not be considered a poet.

Just as Gardiner was aware that he was voicing the conviction of Dr. Johnson that Pope was a superior poet, so did Walter know he was supporting and even going beyond the view of Joseph Warton, who had questioned this claim. If Walter's essay did no more than deny the authority of an Augustan poet in the American republic of letters, if would be an important document. But it does much more. It denies the authority of Pope, the most eminent of Augustan poets; Johnson, the most eminent of eighteenth-century critics; and Gardiner, their most vocal supporter in Boston. Moreover, it is an attack on imitation of any kind, arguing the incompatibility of imitation with poetry, poetry being above all a creation. It emphasizes novelty and invention, genius and imagination, enthusiasm and the sublime, qualities that were identified with the new British poetry and criticism. In contrast, it denounces the characteristics associated with "polite literature," "fine writing," and "taste." That a work was endowed with "fine taste," "acuteness of remark," "ingenuity of knowledge," "just description," "dignity of diction" was not enough. Gardiner was defending not only a poet and a critic who were slowly becoming unfashionable, but an outmoded vocabulary as well. Finally,

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[34]Walter, M.A., II (May, 1805), 233-38.

in denouncing these qualities, Walter rejected the means by which they were attained--study and imitation--and consequently the standard idea of criticism as a purveyor of these qualities. His emphasis upon originality as the essence of poetry made not only model poets but also critics who extracted their "rules" undesirable and unnecessary. In expounding such views, Walter's essay offered a new kind of criticism in the American republic of letters.

It was Gardiner's controversy with Joseph Buckminster over the poetry of Thomas Gray, however, which completely opened the doors of Anthology criticism to a romantic view of literature. It may at first seem strange that the same Anthologist who called for a powerful critical tribunal to guide American authors toward taste and fine writing by way of rules should also have stressed the importance of original genius and freedom in this controversy over Gray. But Buckminster seems to have seen the best of both worlds, or one world full of diverse qualities that were not mutually exclusive but that instead complemented one another. In this sense, Buckminster, more than any other Anthologist critic, represented the mixture of ideals expressed in the Anthology pages. He seems to have respected them all. It was perfectly natural that just as he had advocated writing correctly according to rules he should have defended the "indistinctness" and impressionism in Thomas Gray's poetry and, in so doing, contributed to the new criticism. These apparently antithetical views, however, may also indicate a chronological development in Buckminster, since the essay on the critical tribunal was published in 1806 and the essay on Gray's lyric poetry in 1808. If so, such a development would be more an indication of Buckminster's personal

speed in acquiring new ideas than of a steady chronological change toward romanticism in the Anthology itself.

The controversy over the poetry of Gray began with the publication of Gardiner's "Ode to Winter," written in imitation of the odes of Gray. As in the debate between Gardiner and Walter over Pope, both Gardiner and Buckminster found support in British eighteenth-century critics. Gardiner, as usual, backed up his statements condemning Gray with criticisms from Dr. Johnson; Buckminster based much of his argument supporting Gray on Edmund Burke's conception of the sublime. Gardiner prefaced his ode with a profession of his alliance with Johnson. Whereas Warton and Wakefield had thought Gray's poetry to be a "genuine offspring of lyrick sublimity," Johnson had seen his "quaint and affected language, the false glitter of florid epithet, and the repeated recurrence of alliteration" for what they were. Gardiner aligned himself with "that party who think Gray a mechanical poet. His Elegy is indeed an unique, and deserves all the praise, which it has received. His ode to Adversity also contains both poetry and good sense." But his other odes were the "offspring of a taste sickly and fastidious," "compositions of long time and great labour," which could have been written by anyone in the space of one sitting, as Gardiner attempted to show in his "Ode to Winter."[35]

Prompted perhaps by conversation with Gardiner and an acquaintance with the controversy over Gray begun by his contemporaries, as much as by Gardiner's ode, Buckminster published a long essay not

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[35]Gardiner, "Silva," M.A., V (February, 1808), 100.

only defending Gray, in particular The Progress of Poesy and The Bard, but praising the qualities of lyric poetry in general. He treated Gray as a "neglected genius," a poet "of the first order" whose reputation had suffered from the ignorance, envy, and insensibility of his contemporaries. But Gray's final reputation, he argued, had not been damaged by the neglect of a public who saw the qualities neither of Thomson nor of Milton; by the parody of Colman; or by "the invidious and contemptible criticisms" of "that great man who could pronounce Dryden's ode on Mrs. Killigrew the finest in our language, and who could find nothing in Collins' but 'clusters of consonants.'" Nor, Buckminster implied, could it now be hurt by Gardiner's attempted imitation or this latter-day Johnson's denouncement. For the judgment of Gray had been one simply of ignorance of and insensibility to "different forms of perfection in writing," "arising from notions of poetry too confined." It was based upon the mistaken beliefs that poetry was always a matter of "faithful description, fine sense, or pointed sentiment in polished verse," that it was always didactic in intent, that "obviousness of meaning is . . . always an indispensable excellence," that there was no "higher species of poetry than the mere language of reason," that "to be a poet it is always indispensable to write like Pope." In short, it was based upon the denial that there was such a thing as lyric poetry. Spenser, Milton, and Dryden had known better and studied the Italian poets. Since Pope's time, Gray, Collins, Mason, and Warton had retrieved lyric poetry, saving English poetry from "the elegant perfection" of the school of "the merely didactic" Boileau, "while French poetry yet continues barren

of the higher beauties of verse, correct without enthusiasm, and sensible without inspiration."

Buckminster suggested that "if Pindar and Horace were poets, so too was Gray. The finest notes of their lyre were elicited by the breath of inspiration breathing on the strings; and he who cannot enter into the spirit which animates the first Pythian of Pindar, or the '_Quem virum aut heroa_' of Horace, must be content to be _shown_ the beauties in Gray, which it is not yet granted to him to feel, or spontaneously to discern." One might be helped, however, by a perusal of the last part of Burke's essay on the sublime. There one would find it argued that "passages, which produce the most powerful effect on a sensible mind, present no ideas to the fancy which can be strictly marked or embodied," that "the most thrilling touches of sublimity and beauty are consistent with great indistinctness of images and conceptions," that "the effect of poetical expression depends more upon particular and indefinable associations than upon the precise images which the words convey." The effect of Gray's poetry, like that of the finest passages of Milton's _L'Allegro_ and _Il Penseroso_, "is to raise a glow, which it is not easy to describe; but the beauty of a passage, when we attempt to analyze it, seems to consist in a certain felicity of terms, fraught with pictures, which it is impossible to transfer with perfect exactness to the canvas." Buckminster asked the reader to consider, for example, these lines from Gray:

> O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
> The Bloom of young desire, and purple light of love.

"Here," he contended, "we feel that no other expressions could have excited in the mind an emotion so vivid, though they might have conveyed an image more distinct."

Just as Buckminster defended Gray's indistinct images, so did he defend his "irregularities." One would not find the "regularity of the drama, the coherence of a canto, the bearings and dependencies of an epick leading to some definite conclusion," "a beginning, a middle, and an end" in Gray's odes. For "the ode has by the consent of criticks in all ages been indulged in irregularities, which are not pardonable in other kinds of verse, because it is supposed to follow the rapid and unrestrained passages of images through the mind." Buckminster observed that he himself took "as much delight in contemplating the rich hues that succeed one another without order in a deep cloud in the west, which has no prescribed shape, as in viewing the seven colours of the rainbow disposed in a form exactly semicircular." As to the objections of abrupt digressions, obscurity, and stale morality in Gray's poetry, Buckminster replied that "violence of transition" was one of the laws of lyric poetry; Gray's obscurity was "not the fog of dullness; but . . . vanishes the longer it is contemplated" and, further, was appropriate to the "language of prophecy" found in The Bard, for instance; and that "there are no discoveries to be made in ethicks." Unequalled in poetry were Gray's "wonderful raciness of expression," "the astonishing force and beauty of his epithets," which were impossible to imitate; "the classical raciness of his diction"; and "the power of his numbers." This last quality, especially, Buckminster, himself a musician, appreciated: "I admire in silent rapture the genius of that man, who could so

mould our untractable language as to produce all the effect of the great masters of musical composition. If the ancient lyricks contain many specimens of numerous verse equal to this, we need no longer wonder that they were always accompanied with musick."[36]

In this essay Buckminster expounded several of the concepts which have come to be associated with romanticism. He saw the poet Gray as an isolated genius, misunderstood and unappreciated by his contemporaries. The poet was isolated by his lack of concern for the predominant, most admired forms of poetry of his time; if not a rebel trying out new forms, he was at least exercising his right to revive forgotten ones. In choosing to revive the form of the ode, the poet was paying even more respect to freedom, for its form was one of irregularities. As lyric poetry, the ode was, moreover, an expression of personal feeling. Its source was pure inspiration. Indeed, Buckminster suggested the romantic image of the poet as an aeolian harp, the mere instrument of a power greater than himself, when he spoke of "the breath of inspiration breathing on the strings" of his lyre. Just as feeling was essential to the poet, so was it the reward of the reader. The poet moved the reader, or the reader was made to feel, through an appeal to his senses. It was the beauty and sublimity of the poem's images that moved him, images that appealed to his sense of hearing as well as to his sense of

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[36]Buckminster, "Remarker, No. 34," M.A., V (July, 1808), 376-72. George Ticknor remarked that Buckminster was "very fond of music, and played on a small organ which stood in his study." (See Ticknor's Life, p. 9.) Mrs. Lee, p. 208, also noted her brother's musical abilities and interests. Besides the organ, he had learned to play the flute, violin, and cello, and he also sang with choirs and assisted in the hymnal collection of Brattle Street Church.

sight. But they did not need to be distinct images; rather their purpose was to create an impression, "to raise a glow." Far from seeing poetry as a clearly reasoned and pleasantly stated lesson to the reader, Buckminster emphasized the qualities of beauty and emotion over didacticism, of images and impressions over reason and sense, of inspiration over rules, of freedom over propriety. Such a view of poetry was in direct contrast to that which the Anthologists associated with the poetry of Pope and the criticism of Johnson. Indeed, Buckminster was here replacing these giants with Milton, Spenser, and Dryden; Gray, Collins, Mason, Warton, Cowper, and Thomson; Aiken and Burke. And, in the realm of American literary criticism, he was replacing Gardiner with such critics as himself.

Gardiner suggested in his reply that Buckminster might have used his "acknowledged talents as a writer more usefully, than in the defence of absurdity." Again, he based his opinions on "the superiour authority of the mighty Johnson," this time supported by some review of Burke's essay. His central charge was directed against Buckminster's praise of Gray's sublimity, or his "indistinctness," and partial defense of his obscurity. Gardiner stated that obscurity was never commendable in poetry, and that the "indistinctness" that Buckminster saw as being consistent with the sublime in Gray's poetry was actually obscurity, indeed corruption. Burke's reviewer had argued that "nothing can move but what gives ideas to the mind"; Gardiner carried on this theme to state that, except for images "which are not subjects of the eye," "whatever imagery a good painter cannot execute on the canvas, must necessarily be incorrect." Moreover, even if one should find Gray's meaning, it would probably

not "repay the labour of the search," as one could see from examination of his "purple light of love." Just as Gardiner could not agree with Buckminster on the presence of the sublime in Gray's poetry, so did he deny that the "power of his numbers" was unrivalled. Again, his complaint was one of "incorrectness," of "inaccuracy"; Gray was "determined to write like no one but himself." Finally, Gardiner again argued that imitating Gray, unlike imitating Horace or Dryden, was a simple matter.[37]

Buckminster retorted, playing upon Gardiner's insult to him, that "instead of employing your acknowledged talents as a poet, in burlesque imitations of Gray [according to James Savage, Gardiner wrote four imitations in all[38]], you would have the goodness to give us an ode equal to the Bard." "The highest sublimity," he suggested, "is most susceptible of being burlesqued." He further accused Gardiner of lacking what Buckminster had earlier termed "manly and unprejudiced criticism" and even of having such a poor ear as not to be able to "distinguish between a jig and the movements in an oratorio; or, in American phrase, between Old Hundred and Yankee Doodle." As for Gray's "purple light of love," it surpassed the Greek source; in describing a goddess, moreover, it was not "unnatural or far-fetched" to suppose "the light, which encircles the features of this celestial being, to be tinged with the purple glow, which love diffuses over her cheeks." Again, Buckminster argued that in lyric poetry the strength of the impression seldom depended upon the exactness of the

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[37]Gardiner, "Remarker, No. 35," M.A., V (August, 1808), 416-19.

[38]Lee, 231.

images conveyed because lyric poetry was chiefly concerned about ideas generated within the mind and hence "always in some degree obscure to those whose intellects have not been exercised in similar contemplations." Buckminster might just as well have been defending Shelley's hyacinth, whose music "was felt like an odor within the sense," or even twentieth-century abstractionism.

> The force of the words used often depends upon some fine associations and remote sympathies, with which the canvas has nothing to do. What is there absurd or unphilosophical in supposing, that an abstract word may excite a train of delicate and poetical associations in the mind, so as to affect it with sensible emotion, without presenting a definite picture?[39]

And so the controversy continued, Gardiner reiterating that "men write to be read, and are read to be understood; and there can be neither good poetry, nor good prose, without good sense"; complaining that English elegiac poetry was diseased with "a drowsy, monotonous, funeral pageant of undertaker's imagery and sobbing snivelling sentiment" and that he "would not give the worst ode of Horace or Pindar for all the moping melancholy of all the elegies in christendom";[40] and even ironically implying that there was a connection between Buckminster's literary and religious views. "When a man resolves to believe . . . the very absurdity of the creed confirms him in the faith. This appears to be the situation of those, who admire the lyrick poetry of Gray. Like new lights in religion, they are impenetrable equally to ridicule, and to reason."[41] The controversy terminated, according

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[39]Buckminster, M.A., V (September, 1808), 484-86.

[40]Gardiner, "Silva," M.A., V (December, 1808), 654-58.

[41]Gardiner, "Silva," M.A., V (September, 1808), 493-97. See also Gardiner's review of William Bentley's 1807 election sermon in

to James Savage, when Gardiner read his "fourth attempt at the ludicrous" to the Society. In it was

> something unguardedly personal from the satirist to his antagonist, which produced strong tho silent emotions of sympathy in many of the party. In an instant, the writer threw the inconsiderate effusion into the fire. This as a striking instance of the powerful influence of the gentleness of Mr. Buckminster, and the profound regard felt for him by a critic of opposite sentiments in a protracted controversy, has dwelt forty years in my memory; yet the kindly natured polemics had, I dare say, in half as many weeks, utterly forgotten it. From that moment, no allusion was made in the club to Gray's merits.[42]

Half a year later Paul Allen, one of the most prolific corresponding members of the Anthology Society, published a long defence of Gray against Dr. Johnson's criticisms of The Bard. Allen's essay made no reference either to Buckminster's or to Gardiner's statements on Gray and cannot be considered as part of their controversy. His concern was not over the success of Gray as a writer of odes or the indistinctness or obscurity in poetry but the problems of probability and didacticism. First he considered Johnson's belief that "we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find something to be imitated or declined" and his denial "that the Bard promotes any truth, moral or political." Allen quoted a critic of Shakespeare in saying that "the delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of the fiction" and issued a strong statement against the didactic theory of poetry:

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which Gardiner refers to the misconception of obscurity as a source of the sublime and condemns Bentley's sermon for being obscure, M.A. IV (June, 1807), 335-37.

[42]Lee, 231.

> Morality is one thing, poetry is another, nor have they any necessary, or inseparable connection. The moral may be bad, and the poetry good; or the moral good, and the poetry bad. Whether, therefore, the Bard 'promotes any truth, moral or political,' leaves the integrity of the poet just where it found it, untouched.

Allen examined Johnson's criticism of The Bard point by point and finally returned to the problem of morality in poetry when he argued that "it is the very height of hypercriticism to censure sentiments, without any consideration of the character of the person who is speaking," and that the bard should not be studied as "a christian moralist," but as the "poor barbarian" that he was.[43]

Allen considered the problem of probability more fully in his essay "On Taste," as significant for what it excludes as for what it includes. Instead of identifying taste with morality, as William Emerson had done, or with "fine writing," as Gardiner had done, Allen defined it as the "delicate and judicious combination of fancy and fact." He was not so much concerned with the author's effect upon the moral life of the reader, or with the execution or form of the work, as with the extent to which it was a product of the "imaginary existence" of the author. His thesis was that there is "a sort of fairy ground," "a middle nature," "a visionary world," which is in the mind of the artist and where fact and fancy meet, lose their identities, and "appear a perfect whole."

> Whereever the point of their union is discovered, the alliance seems forced and unnatural, and we pronounce the artist destitute of taste, or, in plainer dialect of that skill to combine those two opposites, so as to fascinate us into the belief, that the representation is just.

Thus "a man who possesses no fancy can never be a man of taste."[44]

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[43]Allen, M.A., VI (February, 1809), 95-98.

[44]Allen, M.A., V (August, 1808), 410-16.

This emphasis upon fancy, "the liberty . . . to embellish fact," and upon the imagination of the poet--although both had been acknowledged by the most authoritarian of British critics as integral parts of literary creativity--was yet another step towards a romantic view of poetry among Anthology critics.

In his essay "Imitation" Allen set forth still more theories tending towards romanticism. Here his main argument was against that view, expressed by Sargent, that "all true taste will be best cultivated in the ancient soils."

> Many of our authors aspire to nothing further than an imitation of the ancients. Disregarding an entire revolution of life and manners, they endeavour to modernize antiquity; and the composition is what might be expected, a cluster of forced thoughts and artificial conceits. It has neither the masculine strength and simplicity of the ancients, nor the graceful ease of the moderns, but is a discordant and uncouth union of both, and resembles the brawny statue of Hercules dressed in petticoats. By the devotees of antiquity it is thought more criminal than classick (a word of wonderous import) for a writer to pen his own ideas. Homer, Horace, and Virgil are immediately resorted to by our good lords the criticks, and because an idea is not found in them it is thought unworthy to be read. This idolatry of the ancients has done more to repress the exertions of genius than any other circumstance whatever.

Rather than imitate the classics, Allen wished American poets to imitate nature. "Our country is abundant in objects for the exercise of pastoral genius," but "the first thing one of our pastoral writers undertakes to do is to forget his own country." The reason the American poets had "forsaken nature for antiquity" was that they were compelled to by their "severe task-masters, the criticks." Some critics had "graciously condescended to . . . substitute modern writers for the ancient," each critic offering his favorite author for imitation. But, in either case, the critics had lost sight of the fact that the excellence of a writer was due not to imitation but

rather to the development of his own peculiar and exclusive traits. "Every author of eminence has such discriminating points of character, irrecoverably lost, if he makes imitation his standard. . . . Let an author give less attention to his criticks and more to his own talents, if he would wish the applause of his readers."[45] Again the significance of Allen's views lies not in their novelty, but in their emphasis.

The idea that the poet should imitate nature rather than antiquity was likewise expressed by Edmund Dana in his review of John Blair Linn's The Power of Genius. This essay, along with Dana's "Remarker, No. 18," heralded more loudly than any other in the Anthology the dawn of romanticism in American letters. Point by point, Dana attacked the whole framework of the "establishment."

> It is difficult to conjecture wherefore, but it has latterly become the vogue to imitate any thing but nature; to filter through the pericranium the fancies of other people in preference to cultivating our own. If, now a days, you take up a communication from a correspondent, you are either enveloped in the voluminous curl of the Johnsonian peruke, or pierced through the sensorium by the tart laconism of Lavater. 'Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light: for the law of writ these are the only men.' It is not our inclination to cavil at the singularities of established writers, but we wish it always recollected that those who follow can necessarily never come up; and that the peculiarities which are interesting with their originator may be preposterous in his imitator.

The ancients themselves had not "squandered themselves on the manufacture of facsimile"; rather, "nature, pure and unadulterated by frosty infusions of literary empiricks," was "the fountain from which they drank of immortality." But today, despite the presence of such capable writers as Cowper and Southey, we accept the belief,

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[45]Allen, M.A., VI (April, 1809), 242-46.

along with Milton, in the degeneracy of human nature and bow to the authority of the classics. "One is hagridden, as it were, . . . with nothing but the classicks, the classicks, the classicks!" The sole authority of the classics as "the law of writ" had been erected by the critics, including those within the schools. "A smooth gentleman from Alma mater tutors you, forsooth, that this performance is classical and that is not classical; that this metaphor is disjointed, or that metaphor articulates, and so on to the conclusion of the chapter," the result of such a lesson being only "the interesting disclosure, that to write classically is to write accurately."

The main concern of the idolators of classicism, Dana observed, was style, and style meant, in particular, a correct manner of expression. In so emphasizing a correct style based upon imitation of the classics, these critics overlooked what the ancients themselves knew: that "style, without character appropriate, will perish with its mannerist." Furthermore, they ignored one of the most essential characteristics of the classics--their vigor--which could be gained only through expression of individuality. Poetry, after all, was "not intended merely for the retirement of the student" but was a "universal appellant . . . to the sentiments and passions of mankind." But we had to "be awakened" before we could be "persuaded to feel," and "the frigidity of correctness" could not accomplish this. Among contemporary works there was "very little . . . directed to the fancy or heart"; it was considered "unfashionable to be moved." The most demanded of a work, by either author or critic, was only that it have a style that was "equable and level as water at rest . . . ; smooth &

tonsored as the forehead of a friar." There were to be "no pleasing sallies of cadence or thought . . . , but members of sentences be intermarried with members, tediously constituting, like the links in a chain, a series of polished monotonies."

In short, Dana argued, in attempting only to imitate the style of the ancients, writers, following the advice of critics, had denied the existence of "that miracle of nature and genius"--variety. In place of inspiration and nature, our writers had substituted rhetoric and thus "degenerated to a race of manufacturers"; in striving to be "faultless," they had "neglected to be natural." The result was that "criticism is satisfied, but sensibility frozen"; "establishment has crowded out sentiment; luxury and refinement have enervated virility." "When, oh when," wailed Dana,

> shall the winter of criticism be passed and the springtide of passion return! when shall the library be deserted for the fields, and poetry ruminate in the shades she loves to depicture! when, oh when, shall the idolatry of learning be superseded by the worship of truth! We are surfeited with the repetition of repetitions, and want opportunity for reflection; for thought is as necessary to the soul as exercise to the body; and the intellect incessantly in arms is rickety for life.

Yet, in the end, the writer who was governed by his own genius, rather than by rules; who valued the emotions and imagination over learning and propriety; who imitated nature, rather than the ancients; who recognized and respected the variety in that nature and hence among writers--such a writer would be vindicated by posterity.

> Thousands will daily devour Shakespeare for one that reads Pope; thousands shall prefer playing with a dried leaf and a switch in the simple retirements of Weston and Cowper for one that sits primly with Addison and propriety, on a visit of ceremony in the parlour of the muses.[46]

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[46]Dana, M.A., II (October, 1805), 530-38. Andrews Norton wrote, about 1803 probably, a whole essay on the idea of the degeneracy

Dana even more strongly defended genius and individual sensibility in his "Remarker, No. 18." Accepting the idea that "the best society and conversation is that, in which the heart has a greater share than the head," he condemned his own society as one of a "calculating age" in which the heart was never consulted. He would not do away with judgment, or the intellect, altogether; rather he merely objected to "overtasking the judgment and neglecting the affections." "If the head is invited to judge," he argued, "let the heart, too, be permitted to feel."

> I will defend to the utmost the cause of the heart, and never advance the cold dictates of reason on the warm ruins of good feeling and dignified passion. There is somewhat so cold about the philosophy of the head, that it should be laid to warm in the bosom, to be made pleasant for use.

Critics, in particular, should beware of "continually puzzling their brains, and never consulting their bosoms." Such were the hypercritics: "with empty hearts, and overcharged heads, they set about scrutinizing an author whom they want sentiment to relish, and measure his contents by the dogmas of the schools, with the same degree of deliberateness with which a mechanick employs his mensuration upon the dimensions of timber." "Obedience to the canons, obedience to the canons, is the thing," declared Dana, "though the critical code is as unnecessary to true genius, perhaps, as the criminal is acknowledged to be to the exemplary and ingenuous."[47]

In emphasizing sensibility, and especially sensibility to one's surroundings rather than to books, Dana himself was carried away from the realm of critical writing into purely descriptive

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of man in which he said, "Man, unsatisfied with the present, is apt to prize the past too highly. To complain of degeneracy has always been common." (HUC/8804/386.61, Harvard Archives.)

[47]Dana, "Remarker, No. 18," M.A., IV (February, 1807), 77-83.

writing. In his defense of "genuine taste," as opposed to the false taste erected by proponents of imitation, learning, and style, he observed that "nature is brimful of character," and that "the untutored gestures of children are more exquisite than the accomplished ceremony of courts. In the adjustment of their little etiquettes of first meeting," for instance, "there is sweeter food for contemplation than my lord Chesterfield or yourself would imagine." Then Dana slipped into just such contemplation: "Nay, there is an interesting character about my great grandmother, smoking in the chimney corner, or even in the playsomeness of kittens through the broken straw-bottoms of the old family furniture." The reader is here drawn into the realm of descriptive writing, indeed of fiction. Neither the intent nor the effect of this passage is didactic; rather it both originates and results in sensibility. Moreover, it is not the language of reason that moves the reader but the language of images. These images are familiar ones, not gleaned from books but from the author's immediate surroundings. Dana quickly followed up this passage with a critical generalization, returning the reader to the arena of literary theory: "We are environed with articles of delicacy and daintiness, yet murmur at the narrowness of materials; we starve upon copying in the centre of originals!"[48] By his own example, Dana was showing that American

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[48]Dana, M.A., II (October, 1805), 530-38. For a poetic statement of Dana's poetic theories, see his poem "Seduction," M.A., II (August, 1805), 366-69; (September, 1805), 472-74. A long poem written in heroic couplets, "Seduction" tells of an old man named Bruno--an "unletter'd, indigent, yet gay" recluse, who "till'd his scanty ground,/ And din'd from oaken plate on homely meal,/ With all the luxury Content can feel"--and his daughter, Lucy--"In innocence as pure, as void of art"--who is seduced by a city dweller and huntsman and taken off to a

authors did not need to "starve upon copying." Indeed, he was suggesting that American literature could develop only when American authors became free from the authority of foreign criticism and literature and American reverence for that authority; that it could develop, in short, only when American authors accepted their own responses to their own immediate surroundings as their sole authority.

When Dana spoke of nature, he used the term loosely, to include all of one's surroundings. A kitten playing through a chair was as much a part of nature as a grove of trees. Other writers, however, referred specifically to the landscape. Thus, when Paul Allen suggested that our poets imitate nature, he was arguing for the development of pastoral poetry: "Our green fields are as pleasant, our cataracts roar as loudly, and our mountains project the same grandeur of shade as those which the pages of Homer or Virgil describe."[49] Nature was the one source for poetic matter in America that was abundant. Moreover, it was the one source, according to some Anthology critics, from which an original poetry could arise; a poetry not just distinctively American, but a poetry that would be a contribution to the literature of the world. Such a view was expressed by Samuel Thacher:

> The common charge against us of poverty of genius is least easily eluded, when we are told, that America has never yet produced a poet of more than second rate excellence. . . . The birth place of the original poet has often been, where, as in our country,

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life of corruption in the city. Besides praise of the simple life in nature, "Where soul view'd soul in native truth array'd,/And naked Nature scorn'd to masquerade," Dana's poem shows his theory of writing poetry according to one's response to his immediate natural surroundings and of the proper effect of poetry's being the emotion felt by the reader: "The poet writes from rules of conscious art,/And feeling feigns to catch the reader's heart./But I, alas, can feign no feeling here;/And all my art is Pity's simple tear."

[49]Allen, M.A., VI (April, 1809), 242-46.

> nature appears in all her rudeness, where the mountains rise in their unsubdued and gigantick elevations, the cataracts fall without artificial meanders. The only reason, that I can think of, without admitting the justice of the charge, is that our writers import the style and imagery of the poets of England, as much as our merchants do its wares. The new appearances of nature in our country, one would think, ought to have extended the limits of an art confessedly imitative. But our poets have been contented with attempting to revive the lilies and roses of Europe, all whose leaves are withered, and all whose fragrance is exhausted by having been so long plucked, and having been transferred to so many possessors. When we are farther advanced in refinement, we shall have poetry of as much beauty, as any that has recently appeared in Europe; but whilst we continue to receive our riches by inheritance, and not to produce them by our vigour, we shall not be able to boast of any imperishable name; of one, who may sit down with Homer, Milton, and Shakespeare.[50]

It was not enough that the poet merely observe the nature surrounding him, however. Arthur Walter viewed nature primarily as a place for reflection, much like the privacy of his own study. If one was to gain "renown among generations to come" and "produce something, which may be of use and honour to his country," he had to retire to "his own snug chamber," where he could "consult books for authority" and his own mind for reflection"; where "confirmed by the knowledge of others, and full of raciness from the deep, strong soil of his own powers, perhaps he may feel the solemn inspirations . . . which breathe a consciousness, that his great secret work will be immortal."[51] Again, referring to lines from Tacitus that "woods and groves and solitary places afford . . . the pleasures of a poetick imagination . . . far from the noise and bustle of the world," Walter suggested that one must live "in the coolness and greenness of the valley, communing with his own spirit, or conversing

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[50]Thacher, "Silva," M.A., II (September, 1805), 358-61.

[51]Walter, M.A., II (December, 1805), 624-28.

with those illustrious intelligences, who are immortal in their writings." Like Virgil, one who sought beauty, truth, purity, or sublimity had to retire "from the nonsense and business of the world" and live in the solitude of the country.[52] In including the desirability of knowledge of illustrious and authoritative works, Walter attempted a balance between the poet's learning and his inspiration, his reliance upon what others can teach him and what nature and he himself can teach him. But, as in his essay defending originality, his emphasis was upon the solitary figure delving into sources that are peculiarly his own, reflection that could be done in the privacy of the study or the fields.

In another essay, that by Thomas Tracy, the association between reflection and nature is more strongly expressed. Nature alone becomes the place of contemplation:

> In a melancholy, contemplative frame of mind . . . I last evening took a solitary ramble in the neighbouring woodlands, and imperceptibly arrived within the limits of a circular glade, which opened toward the east. The setting moon gleamed on a distant lake. All was silent, save a waterfall. . . . The uncommon beauty of the evening induced me to pursue the train of congenial ideas, which the surrounding scenery had produced.[53]

This passage creates a mood such as one of the English romantic poets might have created, a mood of solitude, contemplation, melancholy, beauty; insistent upon the beauty of the scene as the source of thought. Indeed, the passage, in all its romantic trappings and

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[52]Walter, M.A., III (April, 1806), 172-74.

[53]Tracy, "The Literary Wanderer, No. 3," M.A., II (April, 1805), 179-81.

its awkward symbolism, appears artificial, no less imitative of contemporary British poetry than other American lines were of Augustan. When one reads that "contemplation teaches us to commune with ourselves" and brings back with the "joy of grief" the "scenes of departed years," one feels as though he were reading William Wordsworth. Or Ralph Waldo Emerson. What is important here is that this essay by Tracy, published only two years after Ralph Waldo Emerson was born, might just as well have been published after 1836. What is no less important is that the course of action Tracy suggested is directed at not would-be American poets but at everyone; moreover, in his own "evening walk" he displayed purely descriptive writing. In short, he was not writing as a critic. One is led to believe that whereas advocates of Pope were able to state in critical terms the advantages of writing like Pope, advocates of such a poet as Wordsworth, because they emphasized individual response to nature, could not state further rules for achieving his heights, but instead were bound to apply his methods to their own situation and attempt to create something as original as his poetry. Tracy's attempt ended up in an appearance of imitation.

Benjamin Welles was more successful. His "Remarker, No. 10," is perhaps the most significant essay in the Anthology, an example not only of romanticism but of transcendentalism as well. Indeed, it shows more clearly than any other the union of the two. Like Tracy's essay, it might have been written much later, but, coming in 1806, it offers further evidence for an early nineteenth-century American source for both romanticism and transcendentalism. The

ideas expressed by Welles seem to have arisen as much from his own individual response to his surroundings as from a sympathy with any views currently being expressed by British writers, though he was probably familiar with these views. He does not seem to have been writing according to any rules other than faithfulness to his topic. Insofar as Welles's essay is successful, it is an indication of the American writer's source for originality being the American artist, rather than the American critic or the foreign writer. Indeed, it professes complete unconcern with the problems of literature or with literature itself.

What Welles wrote about was "beyond . . . the fascination of poetry." His topic was the love of nature and the relationship of man to nature, his theme being the same, essentially, as that voiced some thirty years later in America: "Man . . . appears to hold an intimate connexion, and grand alliance with nature" wherein "his mind may, for a moment, stand and gaze on the very borders of its own perfection"; "he, who thus gives himself up to nature, is in the brightness and purity of his existence." Welles condemned all men for being "too niggardly" in taking advantage of what nature could offer them during their lifetime; at death their "eye shuts blankly on the walls of their prison, while the vision of him, who has communed with nature, slowly fades with the melancholy dimness of things, and vanishes with their departure." He emphasized the importance of acquiring truths that were beyond man's own perception; that could be perceived only through the contemplation of nature, which was beyond the logic of man. Finally, Welles suggested that literature itself was "only

imitative of nature." We had, then, to go beyond mere descriptions,

> turn from the transcription, however charming and exact, to the raptures of the original. We are no longer content with the ideal sympathy of visionary existence, but we extend all the pleasures of fiction into the emotions of sensible truth. In the presence of nature, even the minuteness and exactitude of Cowper is indiscriminate and unsatisfactory; the mellow luxuriance of Thomson barren and wasteful. In the bright expanse, which surrounds her, even the sublime and transcendent genius of Milton flutters with dark and heavy wings, near the earth, but faintly tinged with the celestial light, and rests on objects blasted or deformed. Let him then whose soul is pure and holy with the love of nature take his position in the midst of creation and commence the mighty work of the eternal perfection of thought.[54]

In reading Welles's essay, one is led to believe that it is only when a man loses respect for literature that he can produce literature. No wonder that Gardiner called this piece "nonsense & unintelligible and the most absurd production he ever read," "the most contemptible thing that has ever appeared in the Anthology."[55]

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[54]Welles, "Remarker, No. 10," M.A., III (June, 1806), 285-88.

[55]Letter from Arthur Walter to Joseph Buckminster, August 7, 1806, Buckminster Papers.

CHAPTER III

A SPIRIT OF INQUIRY

Any study of the development of nineteenth-century American religion, theology, or philosophy should take into account the views expressed in the Monthly Anthology. For here, perhaps more easily than anywhere else, one can observe the intellectual ferment during the first decade of the nineteenth century that preceded the emergence of both Unitarianism and Transcendentalism. The Anthology makes clear that Transcendentalism was not merely an English or German importation, but to a great extent a natural outgrowth of liberal thinking in America, and that its American roots were intricately intertwined with those of Unitarianism. The formation of the Unitarian Association was the direct result of the theological controversies in which the Anthology came to take a leading role. But it might be argued that Transcendentalism was no less consequent, for the spirit of inquiry that fathered the liberal views expressed in the Anthology gained enough momentum with the Anthology to carry thought beyond the boundaries of all associations. It might be argued, in fact, that the Anthologists were more truly the immediate progenitors of the Transcendentalists than of the Unitarians: there is little doubt that the Anthologists were just as free thinking for their own time as the Transcendentalists were for theirs.

The liberal Christianity of the early nineteenth century as it was manifested in the Monthly Anthology developed out of that of the eighteenth century. The controversies in which the Anthology took a leading role were a continuation of the debates that had accompanied the growth of Arminianism in America.[1] That dissidence within the church had arisen at all, Calvinism being the strict theology that it was, was made possible by the peculiar church polity of Congregationalism. Unlike Presbyterianism, in which the individual churches conformed to a governing synod, Congregationalism permitted each church individual government. As occasion demanded, councils might meet to discuss specific problems, but they could only advise, not rule, individual congregations. Thus it was possible for a minister to dissent from Calvinistic theology and still remain in his pulpit, if his congregation did not object to being led astray by him. Between the establishment of the Congregational system in the seventeenth century and the formation of the Unitarian Association in the nineteenth, ministers did dissent, though still remaining within the orthodox church.

So it was that the eighteenth century saw the growth of a liberal Christian force within the Congregational Church that gradually substituted for Calvinism a more humanitarian theology. Liberal Christians came to believe that man was not a helpless,

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[1]Although there are several works that treat the rise of Arminianism and Unitarianism in eighteenth-century America, the following discussion is based mainly upon Conrad Wright, The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America (Boston: Star King Press, 1955). Also of particular help were the unpublished lectures of Claude M. Newlin and an unpublished paper by him entitled "From Puritanism to the Age of Reason in New England."

sinful creature, dependent upon an arbitrary Judge for his salvation, but rather a being capable of goodness as well as evil whose salvation depended upon his freely choosing right actions over wrong and upon the benevolence of a God of love. In short, during the eighteenth century, liberal Christians seriously challenged the five points issued by the Synod of Dort in 1618 against the teachings of Jacob Herman Arminius. Point by point, they attacked the belief in the total depravity of man, unconditional election, prevenient and irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints, and limited atonement and substituted, at least for themselves, beliefs more flattering to man. In essence, they took some of God's sovereignty away from him and gave it to man.

From the beginning Puritan preachers were faced with a serious problem: how could they justify preaching good deeds when the damned would be damned and the elect would be saved whether they practised good deeds or not? If man had no power to save himself, if his salvation or damnation was determined before he was born, at the beginning of time, he had little need to conduct himself righteously. It was here that Arminianism first got its foot in the door of Calvinistic theology. The Puritans, as a chosen people, formed a covenant with God, and through this covenant, tried to effect a compromise between Antinomianism, which stressed the sovereignty of God, and Arminianism, which stressed the freewill of man and salvation at least partly through moral conduct. Man was to enter into a covenant with God, whereby God would lay down certain rules of conduct for man to follow; but man could follow these only if he were of the elect. Good deeds were the result, not the cause,

of justification. But the covenant with God could at most be only a stopgap measure; preachers were still faced with the problem of how to prevent the damned from sinning.

Fundamental to this problem was the belief in total depravity. If man was totally depraved, he had to depend upon God's grace for salvation; if not, he might do some good and perhaps help to save himself. An early attempt to disprove this belief came in 1749, when Lemuel Briant of Braintree preached a sermon entitled The Danger, and Blasphemy of Depretiating Moral Virtue, in which he tried to show the bad effects of resting man's salvation completely upon God's grace. When Christians hear of their "being saved by Grace," he warned, "they conceive of it so as to destroy all moral agency, and set themselves down with this vain thought, that nothing on their part is necessary to Salvation but if they are designed for it, they shall irresistibly be driven into Heaven, whether they will or not." John Porter of Bridgewater and John Cotton of Halifax rebuked the heresy of Briant, and a church council found him guilty of publicly renouncing the Westminster Confession and advised his congregation to "withdraw themselves from his Ministry"; but, since the council could only advise and not rule, it could not dismiss Briant from his pulpit.[2]

Charles Chauncy of First Church, Boston, and Ebenezer Gay of Hingham continued the attack on original sin with the doctrine of limited or partial depravity. Adam had sinned, they contended, but man had inherited only some--not all--of his sin, and thus came

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[2]Newlin, "Puritanism," 3-4.

into the world with "a nature less perfect than it might have been" but nonetheless with a power to control it.[3] With this argument Arminians came to the position that men were born "neither Righteous nor Wicked, but capable of being either." God, they argued, gave us "certain Appetites and Passions" which could lead us astray, but He also provided us with "an intelligent Nature: He has bless'd us with the Power of Reason, and implanted in us that moral Sense which we call Conscience" with which to control these appetites.[4]

If man was not chained by original sin, he had freewill to do good as well as evil, and through his choice of good he might help to save himself. Salvation, the Arminians came to believe, was not the prize merely of an elect, but was possible for all men. Here they attacked especially the Hopkinsians--New Divinity men who derived their name from Samuel Hopkins of Yale, a follower of Jonathan Edwards. The Hopkinsians stressed the Calvinistic doctrine that man had to be converted or regenerated to be pleasing to God and that only the elect could be converted; that justification came only through faith and that only the elect could have faith. The Arminians argued that since all men were capable of righteous living, all men might attain justification, or become worthy in God's eyes of salvation. Thus did the Arminians do away with the doctrines of irresistible and prevenient grace and limited atonement.

In the process of breaking down the five points of Calvinism, the Arminians changed the Calvinistic conception of God. He could

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[3]Newlin, "Puritanism," 5.

[4]Wright, 88-89.

no longer be looked upon as a terrible God of wrath, who unmercifully and arbitrarily judged the majority of men to damnation. Instead, the Arminians asserted, God's sole concern was the happiness of all men and his main attributes were love and benevolence. Man's duty was to try to model himself after God; hence the Arminians emphasized an ethical, rather than a metaphysical, Christianity. There was, in fact, a growing suspicion that hell did not even exist. If God could do only good (as Edwards himself said) and if He was essentially a loving and benevolent Deity, what could man fear? If man led a good life, surely he would be saved; if not, surely God through his infinite goodness and mercy would not condemn him to eternal hell.

Accompanying the belief in man's ability to choose right over wrong was a faith in man as a reasonable being. To be sure, the Calvinists acknowledged and greatly respected reason. But they did not think it could help save one. To some extent the Arminian confidence in reason was a reaction against the enthusiasm generated by the great awakening, though British figures of the enlightenment were also influential. But the Arminians were not Deists: they believed that man's reason had to be supplemented by revelation from God. The faith in man as a reasonable being did, however, lead Arminians to the belief that man was able to interpret the revealed truth, the Bible, for himself and that there was therefore little need of creeds or confessions of faith. But even though the Arminians claimed to be nonsectarian, they still were church members. By the end of the eighteenth century, they still had hopes of effecting their reformation within the bounds of the Congregational body.

It was not until the last quarter of the eighteenth century that unitarianism became a dominant issue. The early part of the century had seen a few arguments for unitarianism, such as Samuel Clarke's Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity (1712) and Thomas Emlyn's An Humble Inquiry into the Scripture-Account of Jesus Christ (1702), to which later unitarians often referred. Later, in 1755, Jonathan Mayhew had preached on the New Testament passage "to us there is but one God, the Father" and scolded his congregation for not giving God his due reverence.[5] But probably no one would have been more astonished than Mayhew had he known that a debate over the Trinity, and not the doctrine of grace, was to occasion the actual separation of liberal Christians from the orthodox church. Mayhew did, however, arouse Trinitarian feeling. Some of his opponents wanted to deprive him of his seat on the Harvard Board of Overseers; orthodox Boston ministers began to stress the doctrine of the Trinity in their sermons and lectures; Joseph Sewall, Thomas Foxcraft, and Thomas Prince sponsored the publication of All Power in Heaven, and in Earth Given unto Jesus Christ, by Ebenezer Pemberton, to which was added an appendix containing Scriptural evidence for the Divinity of Christ. Jonathan Edwards, Thomas Foxcraft, Jonathan Parsons, and Joseph Bellamy all were moved to write publicly or privately on the subject. A year after Mayhew's sermon Thomas Emlyn's Humble Inquiry was republished, probably at Mayhew's instigation, and dedicated to the clergy of New England that they might recommend it to their congregations. Aaron Burr of the College of New Jersey replied with The Supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maintained (1757). Unitarianism

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[5]Wright, 204-205.

gained still more ground when Simeon Howard succeeded Mayhew upon his retirement from West Church in 1767. Howard held theological views similar to those of his predecessor, and his ordination caused Andrew Croswell and Samuel Hopkins to denounce his waywardness and uphold Trinitarianism.

Most of these unitarians were Arians, believing that Christ was inferior to God yet more than a mere man because he was created before the beginning of the world. But by the end of the eighteenth century there were at least two avowed Socinians--believing that Christ was simply a man, though a perfect one, endowed with special authority and a faithful revelation of God's will--among the Arminian clergy around Boston: the Anglican James Freeman of King's Chapel and William Bentley of East Church, Salem. The growth of Socinianism was aided by the visit of William Hazlitt to the United States between 1783 and 1786. Through his influence on Bentley and Freeman, he helped to establish a link between English and American unitarians, and before long the writings of Joseph Priestley were circulating and even being printed in New England.

By the early nineteenth century New England was still predominantly Calvinistic, but Boston itself had yielded considerably to the influence of Arminianism and along with it unitarianism. A succinct view of the State of religion in New England in 1804 is found in Jedidiah Morse's "miscellaneous observations" which he sent to a friend as an appendage to his History of New England:

> The congregational clergy in New England, generally speaking, may be styled Calvinistic in their doctrinal sentiments, with shades of difference from the severe views (if I may so speak) of Calvin himself, Edwards, and Hopkins, to the milder schemes of

> Doddridge, and Baxter. Of this character are I apprehend, 19/20ths of the clergy of Connecticut, the western parts of Massachusetts proper, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine; and I may add Rhode-Island, where there are but five or six clergymen of the congregational denomination, and very few of any other, and consequently but little religion.
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> In the other part of Massachusetts, there remain a few elderly ministers, reputable for their understanding and character, who are Arminians, upon the old scheme of Arminius, Tillotson &c--and a considerable body of younger men, also men of good abilities & characters, who may be denominated Arians; and who, there is reason to believe, embrace in their scheme, the doctrines of Arminius, and of the late Dr. Chauncey. Boston and its neighborhood, embraces the largest portion of the divines of this description.
>
> There are a few Socinians, not I apprehend ten in all, in all New England among the clergy who are of this sect--not half that number avowedly.
>
> Modern Arminianism, and the still more liberal views of Christianity, entertained by Arians, Universalists, and Socinians, have been on the increase in the eastern part of Massachusetts proper ever since the close of the Revolutionary war, 'till within a year or two, when they apparently became stationary, and I conceive are now retrograde; and their injurious effects having alarmed some of our best men in civil life, and awakened more serious christians to increased zeal and diligence in prayer and other religious duties--which have been happily followed by the blessing of God, in remarkable revivals of Religion in this, and of late in almost every part of our country.
>
> It is proper to remark that departures from the orthodox faith of the fathers of New England, have been chiefly among the clergy.
>
> The progress of liberal sentiments in religion in churches, has been slow. . . .[6]

Had Morse written this observation in 1805 it is doubtful that he would have described the liberal views as having become stationary. With the controversy over the election of a Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard, Morse himself became involved in a controversy that was to gain such intensity that it ultimately ended in the Unitarian schism. Viewing this era in retrospect, Henry Adams could write that, far from the liberal side having become stationary or "the progress of liberal sentiments" having been "slow" at this time, "the Unitarian movement

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[6]Letter from Jedidiah Morse to Dr. Kemp, Charlestown, October 17, 1804, Morse Family Papers.

. . . with astonishing rapidity passed through phases which might well have required ages of growth."[7] But certainly there is little doubt that the liberal spirit was centered "in the eastern part of Massachusetts."

Describing a visit to Boston taken in 1801, four years earlier than Morse's account was written, Archibald Alexander gave a somewhat more detailed account of the religious opinions in eastern Massachusetts at that time:

> One might learn with ease what each man believed, or rather did not believe, for few positive opinions were expressed by the liberal party. Dr. Kirkland was said to be a Socinian, as was Mr. Popham; and Dr. Howard an Arian. Dr. Eckley had professed to be an Edwardean, but he came out after my visit, a high Arian. Mr. Eliot was an Arian, Mr. Emerson a Unitarian of some sort, and Dr. Lathrop a Universalist. Dr. Freeman, one of the first who departed from orthodoxy, was the lowest of all, a mere humanitarian. He still used the book of Common Prayer, altered so as to suit his opinions. Dr. Morse was considered a rigid Trinitarian. Dr. Harris, of Dorchester, was reckoned a low Arminian, and became a thorough Unitarian.[8]

Of this group Kirkland, Eliot, Emerson, and Freeman all contributed to the religious writings of the Anthology, begun two years later. Alexander also described Harvard College at the time of his visit, the stronghold of liberal Christianity and the center of the first of the major controversies in which the Anthology engaged:

> Harvard College was not yet fully under Unitarian influence, but was leaning in that direction. President Willard was thought to hold the old Puritan doctrine, but had no zeal for orthodoxy. Dr. Tappan, professor of theology, was in his writings a Calvinist of the school of Watts and Doddridge. . . . Dr. Pierson was professor of Hebrew; he was much opposed to Unitarianism, but did not possess great influence. All were for making little of doctrinal differences. As soon as the liberal men had caused this to be settled as a principle, they devised a way to introduce

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[7] Henry Adams, IX, 205.

[8] Alexander, 252.

> the ablest Unitarians into the College, as fast as vacancies occurred. . . . Even at the time of my visit, all the young men of talents in Harvard were Unitarians.[9]

In these passages Alexander suggested several characteristics of the liberal movement of early nineteenth-century Boston, not the least significant of which is seen in his last statement, that "all the young men of talents in Harvard were Unitarians." Several of these young men were to become Anthologists. But the most pervasive impression that Alexander seems to have come away from Boston with was the unsettled quality of the liberal movement. Not only was there a wide variety of opinion within the liberal group itself, but as individuals the liberals seem to have been in a state of flux. This "diversity of opinion," as it was so often called in both orthodox and liberal writings, was perhaps the dominant characteristic of the liberal movement of the early nineteenth century and it is this quality that sharply distinguishes it from the later Unitarian sect. In fact, insofar as there was any unifying factor among the liberals of this era, their respect for diversity of opinion seems to have been it. William Emerson at times even seems to have felt almost debilitated by it. "In every view the profession [of clergyman] is honorable & important," he confessed to Ezra Ripley as early as 1790, "but who wil [sic] not exclaim, with the Apostle, who is sufficient for these things? The amazing diversity of opinions respecting modes & doctrines, all of which claim our Savior for their patron, is enough to confound our ideas of religion itself."[10] Buckminster, however,

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[9]Alexander, 253.

[10]Letter from William Emerson to Ezra Ripley, Roxbury, November 20, 1790, Emerson Papers.

expressed in his diary the prevailing attitude among the liberals concerning controversy over religious doctrines:

> There is often much astonishment expressed in the world at the diversity of xtn [Christian] sects, & the contradictory opinions conscientiously maintained by men who profess to derive their faith from one common source. . . .

Men react to this diversity in varying ways. Some "give up the whole doctrine of revelation," but in doing so they deny that Christianity involves profundities "worthy of such deep . . . discussion." Others may maintain "that their own articles of faith are solely & infallibly true," but "this 'claim of infallibility' cannot be proved."

> Others more rationally & candidly conclude, that the diversities on the subject are to be traced to the same source with all other differences of opinion to the education, circumstances, tempers & talents, of men, & that this variety is so far from being an objection to religion in general or to xnity in particular that it may be so conducted attempered regulated as to produce the most beneficial xnity.[11]

According to Samuel Thacher, it was "to a spirit of inquiry we are indebted for all our improvements in knowledge"[12] and what Arthur Walter in his diary called the "instinctive love of truth" that the liberals of the Anthology period so valued.[13] Only through "a curious & exploring understanding," Buckminster insisted, could one hope to arrive at any religious truths.[14] "The understanding gains strength by exercise, the memory constantly adding its treasures by means of a principle of curiosity, which is ever grasping what is new, exploring

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[11]Joseph Buckminster, diary, n.d., Buckminster Papers.

[12]Samuel Thacher, sermon on Romans xiv.10: "But why dost thou judge thy brother. . . . ," n.d., Massachusetts Historical Society.

[13]Walter, "Journal," November 27, 1803.

[14]Buckminster, "Cultivation of the Understanding on Matters of Religion," 1805, Buckminster Papers.

what is abstruse & calling up what is forgotten." Yet, Buckminster added, "the consequence of every new inquiry is the discovery of new ignorance, and among the few truths which cannot be doubted the imperfection of our knowledge seems to be that which receives the most frequent confirmation."[15]

In so emphasizing the principle of the right of private judgment, the liberals expressed confidence in man as a reasonable being and his ability to discover truths through his reason. It was a "rational religion" that they advocated, one that relied upon neither "enthusiasm" nor "metaphysicks" but rather upon individual freedom of inquiry. "Let them acknowledge no authoritative guide of their faith & practice," Eliphalet Porter said at the ordination of Charles Lowell,

> but the holy scriptures; & no master in religion, but Jesus Christ. The regard, which has been paid by Christians to human names & authorities, in forming religious opinions, is not easily reconciled with that respect, which is due to the divine oracles. Nor does the use, which has often been made of the creeds, confessions, & compositions of fallible men, as tests of soundness in faith, & as preferable or at least, as supplementary to the holy scriptures, appear honorary to the word of God, or promotive of free inquiry, & the progress of truth.[16]

This reliance upon individual interpretation of the Scriptures, this strong respect for free inquiry and the right of private judgment, explains why at the beginning of the nineteenth century there could be such a variety of opinion among the eastern Massachusetts liberals. Although they were all church members, either Anglican or Congregational,

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[15]Buckminster, "Religious Knowledge," n.d., Buckminster Papers.

[16]Eliphalet Porter, A Sermon Preached at the Ordination of the Rev. Charles Lowell to the Pastoral Care of the West Church and Congregation in Boston, Jan. 1, 1806 (Boston: Belcher & Armstrong, 1806), 14.

they saw themselves as nonsectarians, and it was the doctrine of nonsectarianism that they most consistently advocated. William Emerson went so far as to form a plan for the establishment of a nonsectarian church, a plan he never lived to realize. "If I had not left Harvard for Boston," he wrote Samuel Ripley, who was then in Washington,

> it was my intention to leave it for Washington, where I designed to plant a church strictly on congregational principles, in which there was to be no written confession of faith, no covenant, and no subscription whatever to articles as a term of communion. It was my plan, and still would be in forming a new church, to administer the rituals of christianity to all who would observe them, without any profession except such observance.[17]

Such a liberal attitude was possible--the nonsectarians could at the same time be Congregationalists--because of the polity of the Congregational Church. Yet this liberal attitude was liberal only in comparison to what preceded it within the Congregational Church. Just as the early nineteenth-century liberals identified themselves with those liberals of the Reformation in respect to the right of private judgment, so did they see their alliance in an insistence upon trying to reform religion within the bounds of their established church. Except for a few isolated instances--instances which are, nonetheless, important to our understanding of the later liberality of Transcendentalism--these early nineteenth-century liberals were liberal only within the confines of the Christian belief in the necessity of revelation through the Scriptures and of the structure of the Congregational, or in some cases the Anglican, Church.

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[17]Letter from William Emerson to Samuel Ripley, Boston, Jan. 22, 1806, Emerson Papers.

So far as this study goes, the significance of the nonsectarianism of these early liberals lies in the fact that they were, because of their professed nonsectarianism, more liberal than the Unitarians they spawned or became. Henry Adams remarked that "the earlier stage of Unitarianism was more interesting than the later," that the society of Boston "had never been so agreeable or so fecund," that "no such display of fresh and winning genius had yet been seen in America as was offered by the genial outburst of intellectual activity in the early days of the Unitarian schism."[18] Here Adams referred to the Boston under Channing's influence. George Ticknor, however, himself a member of the Anthology Society as a very young man, saw the era of the Anthology, rather than of Channing, as the more inquiring period. By 1849, when he reviewed Eliza Buckminster Lee's Memoirs of her father and brother, Ticknor had found that

> in the course of this long warfare, that Labarum of Liberal Christianity, which Mr. Buckminster had done more than any other man of his time among us to plant on the high ground of the Bible, as interpreted by the private judgment of its Christian readers,--this true standard of the Cross has been removed,--whether by the skilful strategy of its assailants or by the unsound principles of defence adopted by its friends, it is useless here to inquire;--but it has been removed, and it has been planted on the ground of 'Unitarianism,' as if the doctrine of the Trinity were the only, or the chief thing, that separates Liberal Christians from Papacy or Calvinism, from the Methodists or the Baptists. This we regard as a misfortune to the great cause it claims to lead on. For from this time, and in consequence of this movement, the old body of 'Liberal Christians' has lost something of its original and kindly comprehensiveness, and more of its peculiar character. It has become a denomination and a sect, like other denominations and other sects. It has felt obliged, and in some degree, to pass without censure, if not to receive into its fellowship, persons who are Unitarians only because they believe in the unity of God, while they deny all miraculous authority to the Christian revelation. It has been placed before the world in a false

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[18]Adams, IX, 182-83.

> position, where it is more easily assailed than it ought to be, and where its defences are necessarily rendered weaker by being so much extended, as, on the one side, to include some whom it cannot protest and ought never to countenance, and, on the other, to shut out those generous and independent Christians of the elder school, who are its natural allies, and safe and honorable support. . . . Has, then, Christianity, faithful, devout, liberal Christianity--really gained by this change of its position . . . ?[19]

Despite the liberals' profession of nonsectarianism, the orthodox Calvinists persistently labeled them Unitarians, as if the Unitarian schism had been effected long before it was. Ticknor suggested two reasons for this. First, despite the fact that, as Ticknor pointed out, the doctrine of the unity of God was only one aspect of liberal Christianity and there were far more fundamental differences between orthodox Calvinism and liberal Christianity, this doctrine was the most controversial one at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As Buckminster observed in his diary,

> the diversity of opinion is on no subject greater than on the character of Jesus, the acknowledged author of the xtn faith.[20]

That this one doctrine concerning the Trinity should finally have distinguished the liberals from the orthodox seems to be due to its just happening to have been the most controversial one by the time liberal Christianity had ripened enough for its proponents to desire separation from the Congregational Church. That they finally did desire separation leads to the second reason. As Ticknor pointed out, with the debates over the unity of God the controversy between the orthodox and the liberals became so heated that separation became necessary; the two groups could not remain within the same framework with compatibility. That it became so intense was due, Ticknor

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[19]Ticknor, "Review," 29.

[20]Buckminster, diary, n.d., Buckminster Papers.

suggested, to "the skilful strategy" of the "assailants" of liberal Christianity--their most effective weapon being their labeling the liberals Unitarians when they were only unitarians--and to "the unsound principles of defence" employed by the liberals. The liberals, being forced to defend the doctrine of unitarianism, even though it was only one aspect of liberal Christianity, defended it with such vigor as eventually to make true the charge of their assailants: they became a sect like any other sect, and in the process alienated those men who either had carried on or inherited the "generous spirit of inquiry" that they themselves had fostered.

During the Anthology era the orthodox developed their "skilful strategy" through four major steps: the creation of the Panoplist; the establishment of Andover Theological Seminary; the organization of the General Association; and the establishment of Park-street Church. So far as the Anthology goes, it is the first of these that is most important, for it is in the Anthology's debates with the Panoplist that its liberal Christianity can best be seen.

The first of these debates was initiated by the death of David Tappan in 1803, leaving vacant the Hollis Chair of Divinity at Harvard College. From its endowment in 1721 this chair had been held by Calvinists. Now the orthodox feared that it might be filled by a liberal; and there ensued a debate between the liberals and the orthodox, putting off the appointment of the next Hollis professor for two years. The main point of controversy concerned the terms upon which Hollis had established his chair. The Calvinists, led by

Jedidiah Morse, claimed that Hollis had intended the chair to be held by a Calvinist; but the liberals argued that Hollis had "wished to found a Professorship of Divinity, in the large interpretation of the word, and not a Professorship of Calvinism or Arminianism."[21] Secondarily, this debate was over academic freedom, the liberals finally contending that to demand any kind of profession of faith from a teacher impeded the process of learning, of discovering truth. After several fruitless meetings, on February 1, 1805, the corporation elected Henry Ware of Hingham, a liberal, to the chair. Then on February 14, the overseers ratified the election.[22] In his declaration of acceptance, Ware pledged to "religiously observe the Statutes of my Founder and all such other Statutes and Orders, as have been, or shall be made by the College," but at the same time insisted that "the Scriptures . . . are the only perfect rule of faith and manners."[23]

Up until January 16 the controversy was waged through the pages of the Columbian Centinel. On that date the editor, after having announced that he would publish no more controversial letters, admitted one more, apparently because the first part consisted of praise for his decision. But "Constant Reader," as the writer signed himself, went on to state the liberal view that "whether the candidates for the Presidential and Theological chairs, be Calvinists, Arians,

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[21]Wright, 274-76.

[22]Wright, 279.

[23]Declaration of Henry Ware, Ware Papers, HUG 1871 (Harvard Archives).

Socinians, or Latitudinarians, is not of so much importance, as whether they are learned, pious, moral men."[24] In the February issue of the Anthology is a letter by William Wells that restates the position of "Constant Reader" in the Centinel. With the publication of this letter, the Anthology took up where the Centinel left off, providing for the continuation of public debate. Wells described himself as a true liberal, saying that he was not a Calvinist, but that he couldn't object "to a man as a publick instructor" who was a Calvinist.

> Feeling, as I do, most seriously interested in the prosperity of our Alma Mater, I shall lament, as deeply injurious to her usefulness and reputation, that hour, when her present liberal principles shall be exchanged for subscriptions to Articles of Faith; or, what is the same thing, when the belief of a certain speculative system shall be esteemed necessary in him, who aspires to the honorable station of an instructor to her sons. The next step, a very short one, is to require such a condition from the youth at their matriculation; to turn the college catalogue into an Index Expurgatorius; and to expel from the shelves of the library all heretical publications. So shall all access of errour be prohibited, and the fountain of knowledge shall flow with an unpolluted stream from generation to generation.[25]

Immediately after the decision of the overseers, Morse published The True Reasons on which the Election of a Hollis Professor of Divinity in Harvard College, was Opposed at the Board of Overseers, Feb. 14, 1805. In March William Wells reviewed this work for the Anthology. Morse had said that Hollis had intended a Calvinist to hold the chair, and that the overseers were wrong in permitting Ware to hold it, since he was a liberal. Wells questioned whether Hollis, in saying the professor should be one of "sound or orthodox principles," meant he should be a Calvinist. He thought Morse was misinterpreting Hollis's words and

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[24]Wright, 276.

[25]Wells, M.A., II (February, 1805), 78-80.

reiterated what he had said in the February letter. Hollis, "tho' a Baptist," Wells said, was a liberal-minded man. He suggested that Hollis held the same views as his "pastor and confidential friend," Jeremiah Hunt, whom Hollis had consulted when he established his chair. Hunt had not subscribed to the articles of the Church of England, the synod of New England, or the Westminster Confession, declaring that the Bible alone should be the religion of Protestants, especially dissenters. Wells felt that Hollis could not have been prejudiced in favor of any one sect for all time if he had believed as Hunt had. Moreover, the overseers in general wanted the new Hollis professor to be of Christ rather than "of Paul, Appollos, or Cephas." Finally, Wells suggested that even Edward Wigglesworth, who had filled the chair before Tappan, was not in his later life a Calvinist.[26]

In April Morse replied in a letter to the editors of the Anthology. He accused the Anthology reviewer of thinking that "our fathers were ignorant and we are wise; we disdain to follow their steps." But, he said, there were others among us who had not grown so wise as to reject the precedents of our fathers. He then tried to show that Wigglesworth was a Calvinist because he had consented to William Ames's Medulla Theologiae; the Westminster Confession; and the articles of the Church of England (the Trinity, predestination, salvation through grace, and infant baptism). Moreover, only five years before his death, Wigglesworth had preached a sermon in which he condemned reliance on natural reason and emphasized the depravity

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[26]Wells, M.A., II (March, 1805), 152-57.

of man and predestination. Finally, when Wigglesworth took the Hollis chair, he had been examined by Calvinists to see if he was orthodox.[27]

In the same issue Wells offered a lengthy reply. He began by scolding Morse for writing such a long letter. It would have been better had Morse limited his reply to correction of important points and vindication of his evidence before given rather than to add so much new material as "to serve as an appendix to his first publication." Wells then asserted that Hollis was an Arminian; but whether he was Arminian or Calvinist did not really matter. The present overseers were to judge a man orthodox by what they themselves thought orthodox and not by what Hollis or the overseers before them thought orthodox.

> Such an examination as that which the gentleman has detailed as taking place with regard to the first professor [Wigglesworth], may be favourable to the support of a sect, but not of truth. It is that imposing and judging system, which lays a snare for a man's conscience, discourages inquiry and discussion, impedes the progress of truth, which endeavoured to stifle the reformation in its cradle, and which drove our puritan fathers to this country. It is at war with the three great principles of protestantism--the sufficiency and certainty of the scriptures as a rule of faith; the right and duty of private judgment in religion; and liberty of conscience. If therefore the corporation and the overseers were not expressly required by the statutes of the founder to resort to this method of obtaining evidence of the principles of the professor, they were wise to decline it. They had this additional justification of the omission, that they left the gentleman taking the office at full liberty to be faithful to the declaration required by Mr. Hollis, in which he engages to explain and open the scriptures according to the light he shall receive.

This was a strong plea not only for liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment in religion, but for academic freedom as well, for the two could hardly be separated where a professor of divinity was concerned. Samuel Thacher was later to use the same argument against sectarianism in reference to professors of Andover Theological Seminary.

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[27]Morse, M.A., II (April, 1805), 206-211.

In defending liberty of conscience, Wells also defended modern beliefs. Something was not the worse for being modern "if it be proved right and salutary. Christianity was once modern; the reformation was once modern; congregationalism was once modern." Moreover, Wells suggested that it would really be an impossibility to judge the Hollis professor orthodox according to nineteenth-century Calvinism. Not only was modern Calvinism vastly different from the Calvinism of Ames's time; now there were several classes of Calvinists. One class "have incorporated with it the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and another many of the leading sentiments of the Arminians; though both are ambitious of being considered as entitled to the name." Finally, Wells recommended to Morse a certain passage which pointed out that in a country where there was religious freedom "that religion which is founded on reason, will gradually gain over the other to it." Not that men would formally renounce their traditional religion, but they

> will adopt into it the more rational doctrines, the improvements and discoveries of the neighbouring sects; by which means the worse religion, without the ceremony of a reformation, will insensibly assimilate itself to the better.

Thus where Catholicism and Protestantism might be permitted to dwell together, the "Papists might not become Protestants, for the name is commonly the last thing that is changed, but they would become more enlightened and reformed," gradually incorporating into their creeds the more reasonable tenets of Protestantism, "as well as . . . a portion of its spirit and moderation." Wells attempted to show the truth of his generality in the situation at hand. Wigglesworth had been examined according to "Dr. Ames's Medulla, Westminster Confession, doctrinal articles of the Church of England, and the five points, sharp and unblunted as Perkins's Tractors." The corporation then reported

his confession of faith to the overseers and it was "entered upon their records with great formality; always ready to rise up in judgment against him, whenever the light which God should give him might lead him astray from these good old paths." But with the introduction of the second Hollis professor--David Tappan--"what a falling off from the faith once delivered!" There remained no account of any inquisition of the candidate by the overseers because there was no examination--"only a report to the overseers, that from their examination the corporation were satisfied." Now, Wells ironically asserted, in consequence of these precedents,

> we shall be liable to professors, who have no qualification for the place but acknowledged talents, piety, virtue; who give no proof of the soundness of their principles but edifying instructions, a character for probity and sincerity, and an avowal of the scriptures as the rule of their faith and practice.[28]

Later in May, the Anthology reviewed another work, apparently intended "to add another and a louder note to the dolorous croakings, which the publick have already heard on this subject": Two Discourses on Christ's Self-existence, by Samuel Spring. Either Emerson or Buckminster wrote the review. Again the writer attacked through irony:

> If, as this writer asserts, the Unitarians, under which term he comprehends all who are not Athanasians [Trinitarians], mediate a total revolution in the theological opinions of our country, we should recommend to them to commence their labours by a liberal distribution of his pamphlet. We hope this mild, catholick, ingenuous, and polished writer will not suspect us of aiding and abetting so nefarious a design, by presenting the following specimens of the sentiments, spirit, and style of his performance.[29]

In June another letter to the editors appeared, this time from a member of the liberal camp, probably Emerson, which pointed

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[28]Wells, M.A., II (April, 1805), 211-16.

[29]M.A., II (May, 1805), 263-64.

out a mistake in Morse's letter: the Wigglesworth who had held the Hollis chair was not the same Wigglesworth who had preached the sermon from which Morse had extracted passages to show that he had been a Calvinist.[30] In August Morse replied, acknowledging his mistake, but still insisting that Wigglesworth had been a Calvinist, though of the "middle ground."[31] His opponent then wrote another letter in which he begged the readers of the Anthology to observe how Morse had tried to revive the controversy on "the Hollisian Professorship of Divinity, in which he was so fairly vanquished."[32] This letter brought the controversy to a close, though the Anthology in October published a review by John Eliot of the sermon that Ware preached on leaving his Hingham parish to go to Harvard. Eliot praised Ware as "a divine of high literary character, an excellent preacher, and a man very amiable in private life," who "will be eminently useful to future generations"[33]--useful in furthering the cause of liberal Christianity.

In the midst of this controversy Jedidiah Morse began editing the Panoplist and the Anthology Society organized to take over the management of the Monthly Anthology. Both the orthodox and the liberals realized that a theological war had begun with the squabble over the Hollis Chair of Divinity. "We are on the eve of revolutions

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[30] M.A., II (June, 1805), 322.

[31] Morse, M.A., II (August, 1805), 437.

[32] Emerson, M.A., II (September, 1805), 492.

[33] Eliot, M.A., II (October, 1805), 601.

of incalculable consequences," wrote Morse not long before Ware's election.[34] The Anthology had made it clear that it was not about to offer itself as a mouthpiece for the orthodox through Morse's long letters. Moreover, the Anthology's being able to reply to his letters with even greater length put the orthodox and Morse at a decided disadvantage. If the orthodox were to participate in the controversy that they had so long awaited and had tried to force into the open, they needed a publication of their own. In June 1805 the first issue of the Panoplist appeared with a preface, probably written by Morse, which stated its purpose. Morse, like the Anthology editors, insisted that his magazine was to be nonsectarian "unlike some other periodicals," Morse here referring to the newly created Christian Monitor as well as to the Anthology. But when he said that the function of the Panoplist was to defend God and Christ against "one species of . . . publications, conducted by unprincipled and designing men, [who] have administered poison to the publick faith and morals," it was evident that he meant to defend Calvinism. This enemy, he said, "armed with a specious and subtle philosophy," had been no less than "an engine to throw the world into convulsions."[35] "The Panoplist," as Morse was later to observe in a letter to Joseph Lyman, "is the only channel through which we can, with effect,

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[34]Letter from Jedidiah Morse to Joseph Lyman, Charlestown, Dec. 4, 1804 (Copy), Morse Family Papers.

[35]"Preface," Panoplist, I (June, 1805), i-viii. Hereafter cited as Pan. For an account of Morse's activities throughout the controversies with the Anthology, see James King Morse, Jedidiah Morse, a Champion of New England Orthodoxy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939).

communicate such information to the public from time to time, as may be necessary to our purpose. It is the only weapon of the kind which our opposers fear."[36] On October 3 the Anthology Society held its first meeting, adopting a constitution which specifically stated the procedure for admitting controversial reviews to the pages of its publication. Perhaps one immediate reason for the formation of the Society, as has been suggested already, was to insure the continuation of the Anthology as a means for liberals to make known their views.

The Anthology Society, however, did not publish just any attack on the orthodox that it received. Indeed, for a time it tried to avoid entering any direct controversies with the Panoplist. On June 19, 1806, William Shaw read to the club "a strange communication on Transubstanti[ati]on as believed by the Peruvians," which "ridiculed ironically & seriously a piece on the 'Trinity' in the Panoplist." But the Society did not publish it because "the author was unknown, the thing was singular, & perhaps poorly written," and, most important, because "the S[ociet]y had kept free from all kind of intercourse with the Panoplist in the management of the Anth[olog]y."[37] The Panoplist, too, professed intentions of keeping out of religious debates with the Anthology. "It is our fixed determination to avoid filling our consecrated pages with angry and fruitless controversy on any subjects," it printed;[38] and Leonard Woods, one of its major

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[36]Letter from Jedidiah Morse to Joseph Lyman, Charlestown, April 22, 1806, Morse Family Papers.

[37]Howe, 78-79.

[38]Pan., II (July, 1806), 96.

supporters, wrote to Morse on the day of the Panoplist's first publication that he hoped and prayed "that there may not be a spice of Bitterness or ill nature, in the whole Panoplist."[39] But the Hollis Divinity Chair controversy had made it clear that although "the present is a crisis which ought to be discreetly . . . improved,"[40] the two publications could not and would not restrain themselves very much. By 1809 the orthodox Leonard Woods could admit "I have become less afraid of directly attacking them, than I was. Indeed I almost think it a duty publickly to rebuke such absurdity & falshood," though he still thought "it ought to be done with good temper, & with great caution." His greatest fear was not so much that his attacks were not within the Christian spirit, but that "a formal attack . . . will provoke a rejoinder."[41]

In March, 1806, the year following Ware's election to the Hollis Divinity Chair, the orthodox were dealt another blow at Harvard College with the resignation of Eliphalet Pearson, professor of Hebrew, immediately after the election of President Samuel Webber. Pearson resigned, according to his letter to the corporation because the change of personnel at the college and the events of the preceding year all "spread such a gloom" over the whole college and so "alarm all my fears" as to exclude "the hope of rendering any essential

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[39]Letter from Leonard Woods to Jedidiah Morse, Newbury, July 1, 1805, Morse Family Papers.

[40]Letter from Jedidiah Morse to Joseph Lyman, Charlestown, July 17, 1805, Morse Family Papers.

[41]Letter from Leonard Woods to Jedidiah Morse, Andover, February 1, 1809 (Copy), Morse Family Papers.

service to the interests of religion by continuing my connexion with it."[42] The orthodox had hoped that Pearson would be made president, and his failure greatly increased their anxiety. In a letter to Jedidiah Morse Pearson urged that they rally forces immediately: "The time is short the period of exertion will soon close. The enemy seems to be gaining ground. Can nothing more be done to arrest his progress?"[43] Leonard Woods also wrote Morse:

> I am more and more convinced that we can't keep any terms with the Socinian crew. They are not honest. They hate the true Gospel, & the true God. We have suffered by treating them too well. I think heaven has placed you in the front of the battle against the powers of error & wickedness. The Lord support & guide you, & give you victory. If we can only get all calvinists together, we need not fear. Hopkinsians must come down, & moderate men must come up, till they meet. Then the host will be mighty.[44]

With the publication of John Sherman's One God in One Person Only the orthodox and liberal camps once again had occasion to put forth their opposing views. The Anthology was the first to review the work, Buckminster writing the review. Sherman offered no new evidence, he said, in support of the unitarian position, but his work was "one of the first acts of direct hostility against the orthodox, which has ever been committed on these western shores" and as such offered "a kind of challenge to the orthodox" that "they will be sensible . . . must either be answered, or thrown by with affected

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[42]Letter from Eliphalet Pearson to the Corporation, March 21, 1806, quoted in Willard, II, 177.

[43]Letter from Eliphalet Pearson to Jedidiah Morse, Andover, September 1, 1806 (Copy), Morse Family Papers.

[44]Letter from Leonard Woods to Jedidiah Morse, March 15, 1806, Morse Family Papers.

contempt." However much Buckminster may have agreed with Sherman, he did treat the work critically, now and then questioning Sherman's translations from the Greek. But the most interesting part of his review so far as the unitarian controversy goes is his quotation from William Wilberforce:

> one great advantage possessed by the Unitarians in their warfare with the orthodox results from the very circumstance of their being the assailants. If the Unitarians or even the Deists were considered in their turn as masters of the field, and were in their turn attacked, both by arguments tending to disprove their system directly and to disprove it indirectly, it is likely they would soon appear wholly unable to keep their ground.[45]

This observation may explain in part why the liberal Christians of the Anthology era were so strongly against being labeled Unitarians and for remaining professed nonsectarians. A united group was open to attack, and the attacker was in a far more advantageous position than the attacked. A Unitarian sect, if formed at this time, the liberals very likely suspected, would not have been strong enough to withstand its assailants. But even if such a sect became "masters of the field," such was the nature of theological warfare that they would soon lose the battle. Either way the best policy was to remain disunited. If the liberals, and in particular the Anthology liberals, were putting off organization for this reason, the charges, made time and again by the orthodox, that they were acting in secret union may have had some foundation. "It would facilitate our work, as reviewers," the Panoplist later complained, "and assist the decision of the community, if these gentlemen would cease to hide any part of their object, and would honestly declare, what religious

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[45]Buckminster, M.A., III (May, 1806), 249-56.

opinions they embrace, as well as what they oppose."[46] But the Panoplist was perhaps only trying to create an exact target so that they might better aim their fire, for, on the whole, the liberals' profession of nonsectarianism seems to have been sincere.

Buckminster also reviewed Daniel Dow's Familiar Letters to the Reverend John Sherman, which attempted to answer Sherman's treatise. In these letters Buckminster found "the utmost contempt of scriptural criticism, ignorance of theological opinions, impudence of style, and bigotry of doctrine."[47] Sherman's work stirred up considerable controversy in both America and England. John Codman wrote Morse from Edinburgh, where he was studying divinity, that he was sorry to hear of Sherman's vindication of Arianism and called the unitarians the "new antichrists" rising in the world,[48] while the Unitarian Thomas Belsham, writing to Buckminster, had nothing but praise for the author.[49] A month after Buckminster's review, the Panoplist offered its opinion of the book. Sherman's "liberality of sentiment," based upon the idea "that no man can be infallibly certain, whether any one article of his religious creed be agreeable to the word of God," was "calculated to open the door to every species of religious errour, infidelity, and skepticism."[50] Dow's letters, of course, the Panoplist commended.[51]

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[46] Pan., III, New Series (June, 1810), 20-35.

[47] Buckminster, M.A., III (May, 1806), 256-57.

[48] Letter from John Codman to Jedidiah Morse, Edinburgh, January, 1806, Morse Family Papers.

[49] Letter from Thomas Belsham to Joseph Buckminster, October 25, 1808, Buckminster Papers.

[50] Pan., I (October, 1805), 218-22.

[51] Pan., II (June, 1806), 35-38.

In September 1806 the Panoplist reviewed An Historical View of Heresies, and Vindication of the Primitive Faith, by Asa MacFarland. This was a valuable book, said the reviewer, because it exposed not only the heretics of yesterday but also those of today: the Unitarians. But he disagreed with MacFarland that there was any difference between an error in judgment and heresy. Both had their origin in the "evil heart of unbelief."[52] The Anthology did not review this book until 1809, before which time it was busy carrying on another debate with the Panoplist. John Kirkland wrote the review, beginning with a complaint of how much he hated theological arguments. But, feeling the necessity of finally speaking out, he launched into a six-page criticism, thus joining what he called "the noise and trampling of theological combatants." This book, he said, "contains a crimination and proscription of the greatest part of the Christian world, in our view unjust and unnecessary." It was such sectarianism and intolerance as was shown here that incited men to heresy. Perhaps the Anthology would be called bigoted for calling MacFarland's book bigoted--for to the zealots, anti-sectarianism was the worst kind of sect--but still he had to expose its true bigotry.

MacFarland had asserted that anyone who failed "to embrace strict Calvinistick orthodoxy, as explained by the writer, is heretic, his soul in danger." But why, asked Kirkland, should a Christian go to "the compends of Calvinism" instead of the Bible for Divine truth? Orthodox doctrine had been culled from "articles, definitions and propositions, ordained by different councils, synods

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[52]Pan., II (September, 1806), 179-82.

and assemblies, at successive periods, from the time of the Council of Nice, Ad. 325, to the present," and from still more commentaries on these commentaries. Why turn to these "bulky or extravagant systems of artificial theology" when Divine truth could be found through just one book, the Bible? Specifically, Kirkland questioned the evidence MacFarland had used to show the Divinity of Christ and his statement that the Calvinistic doctrines of grace, original sin, and predestination had been in the Christian church from its beginning, having been especially prominent when Pelagius had disputed Augustinianism in the fifth century. Kirkland said that on the contrary Christians up to Augustine had believed that man had freewill, that the utmost effect of Adam's sin was mortality and proneness to evil, and that our salvation was connected with our choice and endeavors; and he explained how Augustine had fallen into his ideas. Finally, Kirkland pleaded for a more ethical kind of Christianity than MacFarland had shown in his book. In scorning as heretics the Unitarians, Arians, Socinians, Pelagians, Arminians, Quakers, Wesleyan Methodists, and Free-willers, he had shown himself to be a "foe to truth, to charity, and edification." Such a work resulted in turning men's attention from the practice to the dispute of Christianity and made "the religion of men a mode of their passions, a struggle for superiority, a contest of pride, ambition and self love."[53] Despite all his arguments against MacFarland's work, however, Kirkland may have seen an inkling of truth in his conclusion. Unitarianism, MacFarland had charged, was adopted by those who

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[53]Kirkland, M.A., VI (April, 1809), 249-55; VI (May, 1809), 330-38; VII (July, 1809), 41-54.

> assume to themselves the exclusive character of rational Christians. . . . Although Unitarians have not an exclusive claim to this character; yet, if they can have it believed that they are the only persons who have a rational system, it will have an effect on the minds of many: for there are not a few who would rather have it supposed that they have no religion, than that they are deficient in human philosophy.[54]

In May 1807 John Reed of Bridgewater delivered a sermon before the convention of the Congregational ministers in Boston which provoked another exchange between the Anthology and the Panoplist. The sermon was an exhortation to all to be tolerant and a commendation of religious inquiry. Reed contended that "each brother has the same equal right to investigate and understand . . . according to the dictates of his own judgment and conscience. But he is not permitted to impose his interpretation or creed upon others." He argued that "an uniformity of opinions" was not to be expected for it was impossible, both because of the limitations of man and because of the problems inherent in the Scriptures:

> some parts are prophetical, others historical, political, biographical, proverbial, doctrinal, controversial; . . . some passages are to be understood in a literal, and others in a conditional, figurative, spiritual, typical, or mystical sense: . . . like other ancient, oriental writings, it abounds with tropes, metonymies, ironies, hyperboles, similes, metaphors, allegories, parables, personifications, dialogues, &c.: . . . the meaning is liable to be obscured or varied, by the transposition or alteration, addition or omission of a single sentence, word, letter, accent, interpunctuation, or parenthesis.

Furthermore, he contended, the commands of Christ and his apostles "are predicated upon the supposition, that there would be a diversity of opinions and practices among Christians." Thus unity "consists principally in the union of affection."[55]

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[54]Asa MacFarland, An Historical View of Heresies, and Vindication of the Primitive Faith (Concord, N. H.: George Hough, 1806), 225-26.

[55]John Reed, A Sermon, Preached Before the Convention of the Congregational Ministers in Boston, May 27, 1807 (Boston: Munroe & Francis, 1807), pp. 4-7.

William Emerson reviewed Reed's sermon for the Anthology in July. He contrasted it to a sermon delivered a few years earlier on the same occasion that "boldly maintained, that some christians know they are right, whilst other christians only think they are so; and that consequently the former have a right to blame those who think differently from them on religious subjects." Reed, on the contrary, attacked "this dogmatizing spirit with a cool and manly courage, and drives it from its strongholds."[56]

The Panoplist published its review in September. The reviewer agreed that men should think for themselves, but objected to the idea that all interpretations of the Scriptures were of equal value. Some were more nearly right than others, and "if the Calvinist be right, he cannot consider the Socinian, as a Christian at all; but must contemplate and represent him, when he has occasion to speak on the subject, as an enemy of the cross of Christ." But Reed himself did not practise what he preached:

> Dr. R. while he pleads for universal mildness and charity, is frequently severe on the rigid and 'excluding' advocates of orthodoxy. But why so? If all, without exception, who profess to believe in the Christian religion, and whose moral character is good, are to be regarded 'with equal satisfaction,' however they may differ from each other in articles of faith, why not extend to the highest toned Calvinist, the same indulgence which is granted to the most lax heretic? It is one of the most curious phenomena of modern liberality, that every thing can be borne but strict unbending orthodoxy. . . .[57]

With the increasing loss of support at Harvard College, the orthodox saw that the only way they could continue to spread their views and expect to be followed by generations to come was to

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[56]Emerson, M.A., IV (July, 1807), 396-97.

[57]Pan., III, (September, 1807), 174-78.

establish a school of their own. "What friend to the Church of mankind," Charles Coffin asked Pearson," does not wish to see the learning of Harvard associated with the piety of Yale?"[58] William Bentley observed in his diary, "It must be mortifying to Morse, Pearson, & men of their stamp, that they can rule at Cambridge no longer. A few years more & the University must have become contemptible."[59] So the orthodox set about to establish a school which would teach and perpetuate their beliefs and in 1807 founded and the following year opened the doors of Andover Theological Seminary. Morse, in a letter to an orthodox friend, described the idea of the school as having "originated in the spring of 1806 at the time Dr. Pearson resigned his professorship at Cambridge."[60] Although Bentley attributed the whole scheme to the "devout resentment in the late Dr. Pearson, because he was not promoted to the Chair of Cambridge,"[61] Morse explained that Pearson had planned to retire to a farm but that his friends persuaded him to help them establish Andover and thus enable them to continue to take advantage of his talents. Morse further said that "the foundation of the Institution" was to be "on so broad a scale, as to embrace, . . . all shades of Calvinists" in hopes of bringing "all together on some middle ground." He told his

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[58]Letter from Charles Coffin to Eliphalet Pearson, Rogersville, February 24, 1805, Edwards Albert Park Collection (January-March, 1805), Yale University Library. (Hereafter cited as Park Coll.)

[59]Bentley, Diary, March 31, 1805, III, 149.

[60]Letter from Jedidiah Morse to Joseph Lathrop, November 18, 1807 (Copy), Morse Family Papers.

[61]Bentley, Diary, September 25, 1808, III, 386.

friend to rest assured that the seminary would not be purely Hopkinsian, despite the election of Woods, "a reputed Hopkinsian," as a professor. In fact, Morse said, Woods was not a Hopkinsian.[62]

The orthodox published The Constitution and Associate Statutes of the Theological Seminary in Andover; with a Sketch of its Rise and Progress in 1808 and in November of that year Samuel Thacher published a review of it in the Anthology. When Thacher read his review to the Society, it passed "a vote of profound secrecy" and accepted the piece "with acclamation."[63] Like the debate over the Hollis Chair of Divinity, this controversy concerned academic freedom as well as nonsectarianism. Thacher began disarmingly, praising the establishment of Andover as the most important event in the ecclesiastical history of America. "Our Divines have been hitherto almost exclusively directed to what may be called the Metaphysicks of theology." In this area they had been unsurpassed in acuteness and penetration. Edwards "first gave a plausible, or even intelligible statement of the distinguishing doctrines of Calvinism," and Hopkins and his followers had shown a "subtlety of disquisition, which would not have disgraced the most eminent of the followers of Aquinas." Secondly, America had been graced with exponents of the "essential and practical tenets of our religion." But in "critical and exegetical" theology, "the investigation of the origin and state of the sacred text," which showed its meaning by casting on it all the lights of Christian,

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[62]Letter from Jedidiah Morse to Joseph Lathrop, November 18, 1807 (Copy), Morse Family Papers.

[63]Howe, 162.

Jewish, and pagan antiquities, America had been, "to speak very moderately, a century behind the theologians of Europe." Thacher said the establishment of Andover should lessen America's ignorance in this area.

The question that Thacher raised was whether the principles on which Andover was established were such as "to impair or destroy the good, which such an institution is calculated to effect." Thacher believed that a Christian should "nourish a perpetual spirit of investigation and activity on the subject of religion." No one should think his beliefs infallible. Thus, if the only tendency of Andover were "to promote learning and investigation, under the influence of piety," the Anthology would help lay the first corner-stone. But, Thacher proceeded, the creed on which Andover was based was purely Hopkinsian. Andover was founded through a "coalition between two distinct bodies of men": the original founders of Phillips Academy and the "new Associates," who later offered a sizeable donation to the Academy. Phillips Academy was founded with the help of Lieutenant Governor Phillips, his son, and Samuel Abbot to assist indigent students of divinity. Its constitution showed that it was the intention of the founders that the principles of the institution should be "strictly Calvinistick, as they are contained in the 'Assembly's Shorter Catechism.'" But the donation of the new associates--William Bartlet, Moses Brown, and John Norris--was to support "purely Hopkinsian" principles. Thacher attempted to prove that almost every peculiar principle of the Hopkinsians could be discerned in the Andover creed. He noted that those parts of the creed that touched on differences between the Calvinists and

Hopkinsians were clothed in "loose and indeterminate expressions," whereas the parts referring to differences between these two sects and other Christian sects were precise and to the point. The two agreed on the Trinity, divine decrees, particular and unconditional election and reprobation, total depravity, special influences of spirit, justification by faith alone, and perseverance of the saints; but they differed on imputation and the consequences they drew from these principles. The Hopkinsians believed that men became sinners by way of Adam, but that they were accountable only for their personal sins. Likewise, believers were justified in Christ's righteousness, but this righteousness was not transferred to them. Thacher pointed out that this one article in which the Calvinists differed from the Hopkinsians was omitted from the Andover Creed. Moreover, every important addition of Hopkinsianism to Calvinism was either expressed or strongly implied in the creed. The only two omissions of Hopkinsianism from the Andover Creed were the Edwardean theory of benevolence and the belief that we ought to be willing to be damned for the glory of God. Thus the Calvinists had surrendered to the Hopkinsians, and future professors of Andover were to be Hopkinsian.

But it was not simply the Hopkinsianism of Andover that Thacher objected to. He objected to the imposition of any creed whatsoever on a professor. His first main objection was that creeds were superfluous to and corruptions of the Bible. They were "founded on the assumption, that the essential doctrines of Christianity are not <u>distinctly</u> and <u>explicitly</u> expressed in the language of the volume which contains them." Creed-makers apparently thought they could make the Bible clearer. Yet they said they based their creeds on clear statements in the Bible; so if "the doctrines

of a creed are clearly stated in scripture, why not use the language of scripture?" If the creeds were written to clarify only the ambiguous passages, one had to realize that even the most honest of men could misinterpret these passages. Creed-makers argued that their works were merely "short and convenient compends" of the doctrines set forth in the Gospel. But if the doctrines were clearly stated in the Bible, then there could be "no comparison between the evil of using a few more words in order to retain the very language of inspiration, and the danger of errour in substituting our own unauthorized diction." Finally, creed-makers declared that they wished to show "in what sense" a Christian society understood the Scriptures. But if the doctrines were clearly revealed in the Scriptures, there was only one true sense, so the creeds were useless. Thacher's position was that "the words of scripture do clearly convey the sense of every essential doctrine of Christianity." Therefore, we did not need creeds. For creed-makers "to maintain that the scriptures are ambiguous on articles essential to salvation" was treachery to "protestantism, nonconformity, and even Christianity." If creed-makers could prove otherwise, we might as well have recourse not to them but to Rome's "infallible judge."

In Thacher's eyes, not only were creeds useless and ill-founded; they had malevolent effects. They operated "as a temptation and premium to dishonesty," opening the way to "a false profession of faith in any human articles of belief." If a man candidly did not accept a creed, the "creeders" would banish him; but if he falsely professed belief, they would give him "privileges, immunities or advantages." Moreover, creeds aimed "at what, from the very nature

of the human mind, is impossible." Verbal conformity was possible, but since no two persons could hold to any one verbal agreement in the same way, partly because of the imperfection of language and partly because men were constructed differently, complete real conformity was impossible. But Thacher felt that even if conformity were possible it would be undesirable. Division of sentiment was designed, was "intended as a part of our moral discipline," and, if this were to be done away with, "a most important part of the evidence of Christianity would be withdrawn." Thacher continued to denounce creeds by showing that they were all "founded on the assumption of a right, which it is the very essence of Protestantism to deny to any human being": the admission that "any human power whatever possesses the right of settling the terms of salvation." If any sect had such a power, none had greater claims to it than the Catholic Church. But we forsook this belief during the Reformation. If we denied anyone to impose a creed on us, but nonetheless reserved the right to adopt one for ourselves, the difference would not be in kind but only in degree of wrong. Any church adopting a creed would be like the Catholic Church, for it would demand conformity. Andover might as well demand that its students, as well as its professors, profess Hopkinsianism. Finally, Thacher suggested that the use of a creed "must be deadly to the best feelings of the minds of the professors."

> They have a code of propositions put into their hands in which all their inquiries must terminate, under the penalty of the loss of their station and its advantages.

Thacher wanted to see the object of the institution "to make learned theologians, whatever might be the opinions of those who founded it."

> Our sole objection to this establishment is, that it is founded on such principles as we think must defeat the ends, which those, who have so liberally endowed it, designed to effect.

Thacher said we could not expect

> that men of learning and talents will be prevailed on to accept professorships, which must fetter forever the freedom of their minds. It is a yoke too galling to be endured by any man, who has felt the difficulty of investigating truth, a yoke, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. In this age of religious light and liberty, to see an institution rising among us, which would have disgraced the bigotry of the dark ages;--but we repress our feelings. We most devoutly pray, that the being, who brings good out of evil, will make this institution an instrument to effect his purposes of benevolence and wisdom, and disappoint the forebodings, which we confess, at present almost overwhelm our hopes.[64]

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[64] Thacher, M.A., V (November, 1808), 602-614.
It should be noted, in regard to both this discussion and that on the Hollis Divinity Chair controversy, that Harvard applied a religious test to all its professors, though of a more liberal kind. John Quincy Adams rejected an appointment to the Boylston professorship of rhetoric and oratory at Harvard in 1805 partly because of this test. He wrote to Samuel Dexter:

> There is another part of the statutes which I feel myself under an obligation to request may be revised. It is that part of the third article which imposes upon the professor a religious test, to be applied publicly on the day of his inauguration. The Constitution of the Commonwealth has made a general declaration of belief in the Christian religion sufficient for admission to the highest offices of the State, and in the opinion of many wise, virtuous and pious citizens even that requisition is too much. With the most perfect deference and respect for the legislature of the college, I must question their authority to require my subscription to a creed not recognized by the Constitution of laws of the State; nor do I perceive in a professorship of rhetoric and oratory anything which peculiarly calls for so minute a scrutiny into the details of the professor's religious opinions as is here proposed. I beg to be understood that this objection has reference more to the interest of the institution itself, than personally to me. It is to the test itself, and not to the doctrines which it prescribes. These I wish to leave undisturbed by any controversy; reserving my confession of faith for my Maker, and desirous of seeing my fellow creatures enjoy the same indulgence.

See Letter from J. Q. Adams to Samuel Dexter, August 6, 1805, quoted in Ford, III, 123.

In December James Savage commented in the Anthology on the historical sketch of Andover by Eliphalet Pearson, who was made the first Professor of Sacred Literature at Andover, and the sermon by Timothy Dwight on Pearson's ordination at Andover. He also mentioned the right hand of fellowship offered by Jedidiah Morse.[65] But further objections would have been superfluous to Thacher's passionate plea.

In January 1809 the Panoplist published the Andover constitution.[66] Then in February it offered a reply to the "Editors of a cotemporary [sic] Journal" who "abjure, and hold in contempt, the doctrines of Calvinism." The reviewer insisted that Hopkinsianism and Calvinism were identical and tried to prove that the Andover Creed was therefore strictly Calvinistic.[67] Privately, too, the supporters of the Panoplist were saying, as Leonard Woods wrote to Morse, "The good folks in Boston have mistaken views" on Andover.[68] They all agreed, nonetheless, that "it is an interesting time,"[69] despite the slanders of the enemy, and that "an important controversy is to be engaged in with the Boston Clergy."[70] "Bostonians," as Timothy Dwight later remarked in a letter to Morse, "are more prone

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[65]Savage, M.A., V (December, 1808), 684-86.

[66]Pan., I, N.S. (January, 1809), 371-74.

[67]Pan., I, N.S. (February, 1809), 413-24.

[68]Letter from Leonard Woods to Jedidiah Morse, Andover, January 24, 1809 (Copy), Morse Family Papers.

[69]Letter from Jedidiah Morse to Timothy Dwight, Charlestown, December 15, 1808, Morse Family Papers.

[70]Letter from Jeremiah Evarts to Jedidiah Morse, New Haven, January 16, 1809, Morse Family Papers.

than the inhabitants of some other cities, to the intercourse of the tongue, about what is passing."[71]

Thacher defended his review in March. According to its minutes, "the Society accepted it with delight."[72] In the Panoplist the Anthology editors had found a "display of disingenuousness so unchristian" and principles so inconsistent with their beliefs as Protestants and nonconformists that they felt it their duty to show their disapproval. First, the Panoplist had noted an incongruity between the Anthology's profession of friendliness to the establishment of Andover by those who differed with it in opinion and its expressions of dislike of the principles on which Andover was founded. Thacher replied that there really was no inconsistency and reiterated his objection to the demand that professors take oaths, quoting Shakespeare: "What need we other than / Honesty to honesty engaged." Secondly, the Panoplist had objected to the Anthology's contending that Edwards was the first theologian to make Calvinism intelligible or plausible. Thacher offered to revise the Anthology's point of view here, for there were still some Calvinistic doctrines, he said, "which might be made both more plausible and more intelligible." Next, the Panoplist had charged that the Anthology was wrong in assuming a difference between Calvinists and Hopkinsians and thereby asserting that the associate founders had changed the Andover creed to suit their Hopkinsianism. The Panoplist had insisted that the Westminster catechism and the Andover Creed, as it now stood, were the same.

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[71]Letter from Timothy Dwight to Jedidiah Morse, New Haven, March 17, 1809, Morse Family Papers.

[72]Howe, 181.

Thacher admitted that if they were the same, the Anthology was wrong. But they were not, he said, and he proceeded to enumerate again the articles of Hopkinsianism added to the Andover constitution. Finally, Thacher asserted that the Panoplist's attack on the Anthology had been poorly reasoned and unfair, some of its remarks not even having related to the main point. He therefore felt the need to condemn the Panoplist's "sacrificing the first principles of protestantism to the gratification of the unholy ambition of aspiring heresiarchs." On one point the Panoplist and the Anthology agreed: they both thought it would be foolish to demand a confession of faith from the students. Thacher hoped the Panoplist would soon see the foolishness of asking the same from professors.[73]

The Panoplist quickly retorted. It charged that the Anthology reviewer said the editors were not biased but then showed they were by condemning the Andover Creed. The Panoplist then defended creeds in general, pointing out that even the Anthology professed a creed. "It is not without some surprise, we find that these Gentlemen, who reject all creeds, bring forward a creed themselves. After all their objections against tests, they have established a test." The creed of the Anthology was "'that God has made a revelation from heaven, and that the scriptures contain it.'" Moreover, the Panoplist reviewer asked his readers to note that the Anthology's creed was drawn up in unscriptural language, when the editors might have retained "'the very language of inspiration'" which they so much valued. Further, their creed was subject to as much dishonesty as

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[73]Thacher, M.A., VI (March, 1809), 194-205.

any other creed. The reviewer proceeded to answer point by point all the objections of the Anthology to creeds.[74] The Anthologists let the matter rest with this reply.[75] Perhaps they had seen some truth in these statements.

In October 1808 Emerson presented the Society with an unpublished letter written in 1753 by "Dr. Franklin to a clergyman in New Jersey." A debate ensued on whether or not to publish the letter. That the Society finally voted not to admit it to the Anthology shows that the Anthology's liberalism did not extend beyond Christianity and that the Anthology did not wish to enter any controversies that might put it in a bad light. "The letter contained nothing remarkable, except some sneers at religion under cover of praise of good works, and seemed fully to shew the writer's hostility to the Christian religion, and even afforded presumption of Atheism against him. To admit it would draw much censure on us and add very little to the

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[74] Pan., I, N.S. (March, 1809), 471-81.

[75] Sprinkled throughout the Anthology after the founding of Andover, however, one finds statements of disapproval of the new institution. One of these is an amusing account of an "English Traveller's" visit to Andover, written by William Tudor: "At a town, called Andover, I was much shocked, on finding that there were two persons insane in the town where I stopped, and I was told, there were as many in several other houses. What a dreadful calamity, that the loss of reason should be so common." The "editor" adds that "The writer was not aware, that persons, in this unfortunate situation, are frequently sent to Andover." (See Tudor, M.A., V (December, 1808), 659-61.) There is also among Buckminster's manuscripts in the Boston Athenaeum an account of Andover containing ideas similar to those expressed by Thacher. The two men were in such close contact, especially where literary and theological matters were concerned, that very likely they influenced each other in some of their writings.

amusement of any reader."[76] Thus did the Anthology pass up a potentially new debate with the Panoplist. Again, when the Panoplist published scathing reviews of, first, Buckminster's Hymns . . . For the use of the church in Brattle Street and, later, Emerson's comparable collection for the First Church--both of which "attempt to lower . . . the character and merits of the Redeemer"--the Anthology made little attempt to strike up a new controversy, though the Panoplist did receive and publish a letter "from Brattle Street" (by Joseph Buckminster) objecting to its review and defending its new hymnal.[77]

Not until the dedication of Park-street Church in Boston in 1810 did the Anthology again take a strong stand against orthodoxy. By the time Park-street Church was formed, Boston churches were almost all of the liberal stamp. Only Old South Church had kept orthodoxy alive, but it too was by then becoming liberal. As one member of the orthodox later recalled, it was at Park-street

> in Boston, that Congregationalists who held the faith and cherished the spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers, could unite their prayers and efforts for mutual edification and for the diffusion of truth, in the confidence of meeting such only as were one with themselves in principle and in feeling.[78]

The Anthology reviewed the sermon preached by the Bartlett Professor of Pulpit Eloquence at Andover, Edward Griffin, at the dedication ceremonies of the new church. Buckminster wrote the review, paying

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[76] Howe, 158.

[77] Pan., I, N.S. (September, 1808), 170-77; (November, 1808), 275-82; (January, 1809), 363-68.

[78] E. C. Tracy, Memoir of the Life of Jeremiah Evarts, Esq. (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1845), p. 60.

special attention to Griffin's statements on Trinitarianism and Calvinism. As usual, his argument was based upon the necessity of a scholarly, individual reading of the Scriptures. According to Buckminster's reading of the sermon, Griffin had come up with not just the usual trinity, but a "quaternity," resulting from

> a strange disposition to convert the divine appearances mentioned in the scriptures, or modes of communication with mankind, into distinct persons or intelligent agents. By the same method of interpretation, not only the word and spirit, but the breath, the mouth, the presence, the glory, the Shechinah, the oracle of God, may all assume a distinct personality, and be regarded as so many divine persons.

Theologians, Buckminster asserted, simply had to begin paying more attention to the problems of language, and "the common people" begin reading their bibles with more understanding.[79]

In May 1810 Eliphalet Porter preached a sermon entitled The Simplicity that is in Christ and the danger of its being corrupted before the annual convention of the Congregational ministers in Massachusetts. The Panoplist took the opportunity of reviewing the sermon to attack with vigor the Christian Monitor, the Anthology, Buckminster's edition of the New Testament, and Emerson's hymns all together. It charged that all of these works were Socinian and that Socinianism led to infidelity. New England was being flooded with Socinian publications, the year of 1810 having "produced more Unitarian publications, in the United States, than the whole antecedent period, from the first settlement of this country." "With few exceptions," the reviewer observed, "they have all proceeded from the heart of New England." The reviewer objected to this mode of proselytizing as being not an open attack upon orthodoxy, but one in

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[79]Buckminster, M.A., VIII (February, 1810), 128-36.

which the "dagger is concealed." Further, he observed that American Unitarianism had by now reduced all doctrines to "mere morality," a path that could lead only to infidelity. The review ran through July and August.[80]

In October the Anthology replied, Samuel Thacher writing the review. He began by asking what was essential to Christian faith and answered by referring to Locke, than whom Thacher thought there could be no better authority because of his intelligence, unbiased opinion, integrity of life, and pureness of heart. In The Reasonableness of Christianity Locke had said that the only belief demanded of Christians was that they believe Jesus is the Messiah, man being justified through this faith. The Reformation, Thacher said, returned to the individual the privilege of basing his faith in Jesus on the Bible, but now the orthodox would have men appeal again to man-made creeds. Thacher praised Porter for preaching that we revert once more to the Bible for our faith, and defended him against the attacks of the August Panoplist that had charged him with trying "to root out the doctrines of the Reformation" and accused him of "looseness of sentiment." Thacher then tried to dispel the Panoplist charges of infidelity by explaining what faith in Jesus as the Messiah meant: "a belief in the divine mission of the Saviour; confidence in him as a heavenly Guide, Prince, and Deliverer, the authoritative Interpreter of the will of God; belief, in fine, that he deserves similar honour from us, in all his relations to us as a Divine teacher, to that which we give to the Father himself, who sent him." No other truths were implied in this fundamental faith,

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[80]Pan., III, N.S. (July, 1810), 76-86; (August, 1810), 123-35.

except the practical ones of repentance and good works, without which this faith would be "only false, hollow and dead profession." Thacher's statement of belief was skilful, for at the same time that he denied infidelity he denied Calvinism and emphasized the unitarian view of Christ as a teacher especially endowed with Divine truth and the unorthodox beliefs in repentance and good works as the means to salvation. He argued that the meaning of the word "Christ" was simply "anointed." Anyone among the Jews who was appointed by God to public office--prophets, kings, priests--was anointed with oil. He tried further to substantiate his unitarian doctrine by arguing against the orthodox conception of the mystery in Christianity. The Panoplist had insisted that Christianity involved "a great mystery": God was made manifest in the flesh through Christ. But Thacher maintained that "mystery" meant only "something concealed from the vulgar" or "something formerly hidden and unknown, but now made manifest." There was no Scriptural evidence that Christ was the manifestation of God.

Thacher proceeded to charge the Panoplist with dogmatism. Once a man had arrived at a faith in Christ as the Messiah, as Thacher had described, he then had to "search for 'the whole counsel of God.'" Rather than blindly accept theological systems, he had to examine doctrines for himself to see that they were Scriptural. Above all, he could not say that a doctrine fundamental to him must be so to another man: it was "'to his own Master,' and not to him, that every man 'standeth or falleth.'" Thacher realized that every doctrine of Christianity could not be understood before one could call himself a Christian, but he also believed that no one man or

sect could be trusted to decide which of the doctrines were to be selected for a Christian theology. Such a judge had to be incapable of error, lest he "mistake a point on which the salvation of the whole human race is suspended." Surely there was no one Protestant sect capable of selecting all the doctrines for a Christian theology. By abandoning the Bible as the authority for Christian doctrine and substituting man-made creeds, Protestants had fallen into so much disagreement that man was forced to find Divine truth in Catholicism or in no sect at all. Thacher wondered how the Panoplist could insist on the truth of Calvinistic doctrine and deny Porter's assertion that "Christians of the first eminence as to talents and character have wholly disagreed" on Christian doctrine. Here Thacher skilfully aligned the liberals with the Puritan fathers, who usually were claimed for support by the orthodox, causing the liberals to appear as the true inheritors of Puritan idealism.

> We do not believe that there were men in America, who would thus explicitly arrogate to their own sect the exclusive possession of truth and integrity, and be willing at one blow to strike off from the list of fellow-Christians, such men as Grotius, and Newton, and Locke, and Clarke, and Hoadley, and Butler, and Hartley, and Lardner. We know not what to think of the state of men's minds, who can make such a desperate assertion. Are they ignorant that every defender of Christianity in modern times, of whatever sect, has placed these names on his list of 'Christians of the first eminence' and esteemed them among the brightest of the train? And do they expect to make the world believe that the heart of Newton
>
> childlike sage,
> Sagacious reader of the works of God
> And in his word sagacious,
>
> was given over to the dominion of Satan: while that of the stern and vindicative Calvin was the chosen residence of the Spirit of God?

Thus did Thacher depict God, the Puritan fathers, Locke, Newton, unitarians, and the Anthology as standing unified against Satan, Calvin, the orthodox, and the Panoplist.

Thacher concluded his review with an explanation of why the Anthology defended Porter and a reply to the Panoplist's charge of infidelity. The Anthology defended Porter "because the Panoplist has made us parties to the case, by joining us in their general accusations against Dr. Porter." Against the Anthology it had charged "'unitarianism,' 'misrepresentation,' 'dishonesty,' resemblance 'to the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees,' enmity 'to every thing which constitutes the peculiar glory of our forefathers,'" and had hinted that the Anthology writers were like "scoffing philosophers of Athens, in the time of Paul." Against Porter it had charged Socinianism. In defense of Porter, Thacher pointed out that he was not of that "class of the German Latitudinarians" and that the orthodox feared Porter simply because they saw that his principles "must destroy to the foundation their whole system of creed-making." In defense of the Anthology, Thacher quoted Bishop Watson: "I have no regard for latitudinarian principles, or any principles, but the principles of truth."[81]

The last major controversy between the Anthology and the Panoplist began in February 1811 with Buckminster's review of his own edition of John Jacob Griesbach's Greek New Testament. As has been stated, it was Buckminster's belief that the right of private judgment could be successfully exercised only if it was based upon a scholarly reading of the Scriptures. No liberal Christian did more than he to try to make the Scriptures available to the public in their original form, purged of interpretations that had been thrust upon them over the ages. Not only did he acquire an

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[81]Thacher, M.A., IX (October, 1810), 266-80.

outstanding knowledge of the ancient languages which he used in critical examinations of the texts, but he diligently tried to make texts on these matters available to the public. At one point, for instance, he drew up a plan for "subscribers sensible of the importance of encourageing the spirit of religious inquiry & scriptural knowledge, & of the importance of diffusing rational & serious views of xtnty" to obtain rare or expensive "works of theological learning."[82] In 1808 Buckminster published a notice of the forthcoming Griesbach edition in the Anthology, observing the importance of the Scriptures' being read in their most nearly correct state.[83] Then in 1811 he published his review.

> It has always struck us with astonishment that many of those who may maintain the most rigid notions of inspiration, and exclaim most vehemently against the glosses, evasions, and forced interpretations of hereticks, should have discovered so little solicitude to ascertain the true text even of the New Testament, and have felt no more dread than they seem to of adding to the word of God.

He examined in particular the controversial passage I Timothy iii:16--"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"--and argued that it carried no more authority for Trinitarianism than the seventh commandment in a certain edition of the King James Bible that read "Thou Shalt commit adultery."[84]

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[82]In Buckminster Papers.

[83]Buckminster, M.A., V (January, 1808), 18-21.

[84]Buckminster, M.A., X (February, 1811), 107-114.

John Bradford saw the Griesbach edition as an out-and-out attack on the authenticity of the Scriptures themselves as revelation. Writing to Morse, he said,

> The Scriptures, as they present them, have no more efficacy than the writing of Seneca over the morals of Epectetus. . . . of all bigots they are the worst who are bigotted to liberality and uncertainty. These people seem to act in religion as Jacobin's do in politics. Set afloat all principles, suplant all bonds, produce universal doubt . . . and religion is well nigh ruined.[85]

The Panoplist published its review of the edition of Griesbach in April, referring to the Anthology review. "We know, indeed, that efforts have been made to hold us up to the public, as the enemies . . . of all improvements in Sacred Literature," it began, but the charge was unfounded. The Panoplist, on the contrary, agreed that "truth can never be obscured by candid examination." However, the Griesbach edition, it charged, was not "without error" and was merely the scapegoat for those who wished to attack the Scriptures.[86]

The Anthology did not reply immediately, being busy defending itself against the Christian's Magazine of September 1810, which condemned the new edition for stripping Christianity of all doctrines except the resurrection, terming the whole work a "Socinian blasphemy." The Anthology offered two letters in defense of the edition. The first said that the Anthology might retort "Calvinistick Persecution" to the charge of "Socinian blasphemy."

> Whether or not Socinus was a blasphemer is merely a matter of opinion; but that Calvin was a persecutor, and pursued with unrelenting cruelty the Antitrinitarian, Michael Servetus, to

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[85] Letter from John Bradford to Jedidiah Morse, Albany, October 8, 1809, Morse Family Papers.

[86] Pan., III, N.S. (April, 1811), 503-515.

> the stake, is a recorded historical fact. That his intolerance has not perished with him, we have a striking proof in the paragraphs under discussion. . . .

The writer regretted that the Christian's Magazine did not show the Christian aspects of goodwill and peace. The second letter suggested that the overbearing, censorious Trinitarians, for all their imperfections, might have some good in them. It was possible that they had just gone astray, for many men lost sight of their own fallibility and the example of Christ when they were engaged in controversy. Reviling was a fashionable vice; and sometimes good men succumbed to bad fashions. Although it was painful to be denounced as enemies of Christ, it was better to suffer this pain than to do wrong; for certainly the liberals should not condemn all Trinitarians for the words and actions of certain individuals among them.[87]

For its May issue the Panoplist gathered the support of several Biblical scholars and charged that the Anthology had displayed extremely poor Biblical criticism, having tried to turn just any Christian doctrine into a unitarian one.[88] Buckminster accepted this challenge to his abilities in the June issue, again defending his edition of Griesbach. Furthermore, he placed the Panoplist in an embarrassing position by showing that its reviewer had rested his statements on the authority of the Christian Observer and had probably not bothered to read the large critical edition of Griesbach for himself. In a detailed comparison between the two journals, Buckminster showed how the Panoplist had used the

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[87] M.A., X (April, 1811), 228-39.

[88] Pan., III, N.S. (May, 1811), 538-49.

Christian Observer to its own advantage. Obviously, the Panoplist was in no position to charge the Anthology with poor scholarship.[89] The Panoplist, determined to have the last word, replied in August. All it could do was reiterate its first charge, that Buckminster had changed plainly Trinitarian passages into ambiguously Unitarian ones.[90]

Buckminster did receive some compliments on his edition, however, both at home and abroad. Thomas Belsham, in a letter to Buckminster, said, "It does infinite credit to the American press," and suggested that "the present attachment of the Americans to their errors & prejudices is a pleasing omen that when their eyes are opened they will be equally firm & liberal & zealous in the cause of Truth."[91] To his diary, Buckminster, commenting upon the abuse that had been heaped upon the edition, confided,

> It is to be lamented that men should be found who are either so grossly deluded, or so willing to delude others as to represent any honest & fair attempt to interpret better & to translate correctly the originals of our sacred books as an attempt upon Christianity itself, & a treacherous hostility to all religion. If the extravagance, & malignity of such alarms did not make them ridiculous, we should be tempted to commiserate the fate of those scholars who after spending their time & labour to illustrate & recommend the sacred writings, & present in a form most worthy . . . of the attention & confidence of xtns, are repaid with such execrations. We never before knew so much jealousy & clamour excited by any private work of this kind. But it is no novelty.[92]

If, as John Bradford accused, the edition had undermined "the authenticity of Revelation," Buckminster had not intended it to do so.

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[89]Buckminster, M.A., X (June, 1811), 403-421.

[90]Pan., IV, N.S. (August, 1811), 118-133.

[91]Letter from Thomas Belsham to Joseph Buckminster, Hackney, May 9, 1810, Buckminster Papers.

[92]Buckminster, diary, n.d., Buckminster Papers.

Through the Anthology-Panoplist exchanges the position of the liberal Christians of early nineteenth-century Boston was made evident. Basic to all of their beliefs was a strong respect for freedom of thought as a means to arrive at truth. This method involved reliance upon reason, rather than upon enthusiasm or established creeds, and reason was to be used in an understanding, in fact a scholarly, reading of the Scriptures. The Anthology made it clear that liberal Christians were completely opposed to Calvinism; rather than any creed at all, they stressed nonsectarianism. As anti-Calvinists, they showed a strong belief in the freedom of the will, in salvation through man's own good works, and in the benevolence of God. In short, they advocated a practical, though a reasonable, kind of Christianity in which morality played a larger role than dogma. These views, as well as those on church polity, are expressed in the Anthology, moreover, in pieces outside the Panoplist exchanges.

For instance, the Anthology in an 1807 review of Letters Concerning the Constitution and order of the Christian Ministry, by Samuel Miller, stated its views on church polity. The reviewer, Buckminster, argued that he saw no reason for reviving the controversy between Episcopalians and Presbyterians over church government because church laws simply did not matter--especially in the America of the nineteenth century.

> No man can be so absurd as to maintain seriously, at the present day, either the jus divinum, or the uninterrupted succession of any hierarchy on earth. It is also very generally agreed, except by a few of the most pertinacious of episcopal and presbyterian ecclesiasticks, that neither our Saviour, nor his apostles, have left on record any draught of church government, to be implicitly adopted in subsequent ages, as an unalterable model. . . . Especially is it absurd to insist upon the peculiar claims

> of any one form of ministerial arrangement in a country like ours, where the indispensable restraints of secular government can hardly be tolerated, and much less the encroachments of any order of clergy, whether they advance under the covering of the tiara, the mitre, or the Scotch bonnet.

Although the America of John Winthrop may have been a theocracy in which church polity was therefore important, the America of 1807 was a democracy in which the church should be separate from the state. In his plea for religious liberty Buckminster denied that a church government of any kind could be found in the Scriptures and argued that the individual Christian should always be willing to submit to any ecclesiastical arrangement that was expedient. He thought that if church and state were separate, the pastors and congregations would choose the least inconvenient form of church polity, no matter what authority--if any--this polity was based on. Buckminster's whole argument was, of course, one against strong sectarianism, for each sect had to have its own polity in order to function.[93]

One of the most recurrent protests in the Anthology was against "speculative religion." In 1805 Buckminster reviewed Thomas Fessenden's A Theoretick Explanation of the Science of Sanctity. He classified the author with the rest of the New England "system-makers," observing that

> it has been the misfortune of theology on this side of the Atlantick to have received little illustration from learning, while it has suffered much embarrassment, and false refinement from the ingenuity and subtilty of its professors.

America had not been fortunate enough to have philologers, critics,

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[93]Buckminster, M.A., IV (November, 1807), 605-609. Massachusetts legally separated church and state in 1833.

or scholars among its divines. Instead, it had "in the villages and hamlets of New England scholastick theologues, hair splitting metaphysicians, long-breathed controversialists, pamphleteers, and publishers of single sermons, 'Thick as autumnal leaves which strew the brooks/In Vallombrossa.'"[94]

Still other pieces show the Anthology's distaste for "enthusiasm." In a review of Abiel Holmes's American Annals, John Eliot voiced regret over the separation of some thirty congregations from the main church between 1740 and 1750. Holmes had attributed this separation to George Whitefield's preaching, before which there had been little innovation in religious thinking, implying that this innovation was a good thing. But Eliot asked "whether the result of this spiritual Quixotism was for the benefit of religion and morality? It completely broke the order and discipline of New-England churches; it shook the walls of our university; and filled the country with enthusiasm and ill humour. Before this time, the people were governed by pious principles; and their religion had less passion in it."[95] Eliot sounded almost like an orthodox Calvinist.

Again and again the Anthology advocated a religion that was more reasonable than enthusiastic and more practical than metaphysical. It was not the separation from the orthodox church or the disturbance in the halls of ivy that the Anthology usually objected to in enthusiasm so much as the defiance of reason. A note in an early issue of the Anthology pointed out that it was the ability

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[94]Buckminster, M.A., II (August, 1805), 418-28.

[95]John Eliot, M.A., IV (February, 1807), 98-102.

to think that distinguished man from the brutes:

> As every other animal is in its natural state, when in the situation, which its instinct requires, so man, when his reason is cultivated, is then, and only then, in the state proper to his nature.[96]

But the Anthology writers also frequently insisted that reason had to be combined with revelation if man was to know Divine truth completely. In a review of Zollikofer's Seven Sermons on the Reformation, Samuel Thacher claimed that the Bible was the most simple of all books and that any man who brought "to the study of the scriptures a mind upright and sincere, unclouded by enthusiasm, unperverted by prepossession, and solicitous only to know the will of God, as therein unfolded, will easily and infallibly arrive at every essential truth." Thacher realistically observed, however, that most men would not rely purely upon Scriptural reading, for there was too strong a tendency in men to proselytize and they were therefore confronted with numerous man-made systems of theology. This was an era of theological warfare in New England, when "fanaticism, ignorance, and credulity are marshalling their crowded ranks at the summons." It was therefore up to those who had the most rational view of Christianity, gathered from a critical reading of the Scriptures, to diffuse their principles. Perhaps Thacher was here justifying the Anthology's offering interpretations of the Scriptures, when it--and Thacher himself--denied that any interpretations at all were necessary.[97] In emphasizing Scriptural revelation as much as reason, the Anthology made clear its stand on

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[96] M.A., I (February, 1804), 160.

[97] Thacher, M.A., VI (March, 1809), 182-85.

Deism. The writer of "A review of the Eighteenth Century" bewailed that "spurious philosophy" that had arisen, "which brutalizes man, degrades him from his rank, makes him a being of the moment, existing without an intelligent cause, or moral end, the sport of accidents, and the everlasting victim of death."[98]

From its beginning in 1803 the Anthology stressed practical over doctrinal religion. A letter in an 1803 issue emphasized devotion to God and our fellow human beings over our tendency towards ambition and individual glory.

> God is love, and in this character alone we reflect the glory of our Creator. Benevolence carries us out of ourselves, and diffuses our existence by giving us an interest in other beings. . . . Nothing is benevolent, which does not proceed from a sincere disposition to do good, from a single view to the production of happiness.

Edwards himself had defined virtue as disinterested benevolence and had depicted God as the epitomy of this virtue. But in suggesting that man had the freewill--let alone the ability--to imitate God's benevolence and that man's happiness rather than Divine justice might be the goal of both God and man, the writer showed his strong liberal tendency.[99] Another writer asserted in an 1804 article that being good was not easy, but that the more one worshiped God the more he would be incensed to love and try to imitate Him.

> I am unwilling to believe, that the felicity of these godlike beings arises from accident merely, or circumstance, or natural bias; I think it the fruit of meritorious exertion.[100]

The idea of "active benevolence" and "universal philanthropy" became even more frequent after 1805. In the "Remarker, No. 25" of an 1807

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[98] M.A., II (May, 1805), 223-28.

[99] M.A., I (November, 1803), 6.

[100] M.A., I (July, 1804), 395-97.

issue, for instance, Arthur Walter distinguished between "speculative and practical good," praising Socrates for insisting on "active, personal beneficence." Arguing that active benevolence had always been superior to intellectual greatness, Walter suggested that we take Milton's advice and leave Godly matters hid: "Heav'n is too high/To know what passes there." Abstract speculation was not bad, but it simply did not have so great a place in civil, moral, and social fields as active beneficence did. It had no utility.[101]

Finally, the Anthology at times simply attacked the five points of Calvinism all together. This is true of Joseph Tuckerman's review of William Cooper's The Doctrine of Predestination unto Life Explained and Vindicated. The first pages of the book having explained predestination and election, Tuckerman contended that "those, who admit the use of reason in their inquiries for religious truth, will be discouraged from entering an edifice, the vestibule of which is enveloped in so thick darkness." If one used his God-given reason, in other words, he could not possibly be a Calvinist. Tuckerman went on to examine the doctrine of unconditional election. If this doctrine was true, he asked, "why did our Saviour and his apostles call on all men to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved? Why do the ministers of this religion, in the name of their Master, require all men to be holy, and assure salvation to all who will comply with the conditions of its attainment . . . why urge the wicked to penitence and reformation, or the good to perseverance?" Paul had said, "'let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!'" If anyone was not certain of his election, Tuckerman

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[101]Walter, M.A., IV (September, 1807), 489-92.

contended, he would be "very unwise to deny himself and to take up the cross. The advocates of this interpretation of the doctrine will deny that these are just conclusions from it; but their simple denial proves no more than their simple affirmation."[102]

By 1811, when the Anthology published its last issue, there remained little question about the position of the liberal Christians. Only their stand on unitarianism needed clarifying. The orthodox had persistently labeled them Unitarians, charging that they had already become, in essence if not secretly in reality, a sect separate from the orthodox Congregational Church. Just as persistently, the liberals had denied such a union, though they simultaneously denounced Trinitarianism. But towards the close of the Anthology era, in 1811, the Anthology made its unitarian sentiments almost brutally clear in a review of a sermon by the Anglican J. S. J. Gardiner defending Trinitarianism. Gardiner had been president of the Anthology Society from its formation until December of that year, just six months before the club dissolved. He preached his Trinitarian sermon on December 25, two weeks after he had resigned from the Society. Although he had not attended the Society's meetings faithfully towards the end, he had over the years been one of its most active members.

Gardiner had once declared that it would be improper for any member of the Society to review another member's work. But by the time he preached his sermon, he had resigned. Soon after, the club elected Kirkland to replace Gardiner as president. Then Kirkland was chosen to review Gardiner's sermon.[103] That Gardiner's successor,

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[102]Tuckerman, M.A., II (March, 1805), 158-59.

[103]Howe, 250.

and presumably his friend,[104] should have given his sermon the lashing that he did is strong evidence that the remaining active members of the Society had been steadily growing towards a realization of the charges of the orthodox: for some of the Anthologists unitarianism by this time seems to have become their unifying belief. Kirkland, however, was very likely the most extreme of the Anthologist unitarians. In 1807 he had revealed a Socinian, rather than the usual Arian, belief in the unity of God in a review he wrote for the Anthology of the memoirs of Joseph Priestley. There he had stated that Priestley was "at the head of the sect denominated Unitarians, or Socinians," completely leaving the Arians out of his definition.[105]

The text of Gardiner's sermon was Revelation xxii:16: "I am the root and offspring of David." According to Gardiner, this text meant that Jesus was the cause and the effect of David. Hence, Jesus was God. Kirkland, however, contended that the text had no reference to the Divinity of Christ. "Root," he said, meant "a branch growing out of a root." So root and offspring meant the same thing: the passage could not mean simply that Christ was God. Kirkland scorned men who subscribed to a belief not because it is founded in the Scriptures or because it is good but because it is orthodox. Moreover, he criticized Gardiner's choice of subject matter. Since the sermon

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[104]Walter had written to Buckminster on Sept. 29, 1806, of the Society's proposal to invite Kirkland to join: "Gardiner is opposed I think to his coming in, though he has expressed no decisive opinion." But Gardiner's opposition may have been only because of the fear of Kirkland's being only "a drone in the hive." Buckminster Papers.

[105]Kirkland, M.A., IV (May, 1807), 260-65; (June, 1807), 330-35; (July, 1807), 389-95; (September, 1807), 506-511.

was delivered at Christmas, it might better have dealt with peace on earth and good will to men. Gardiner might have preached on the benefits of Christianity, expanding the heart in Christian fellowship, instead of the "metaphysicks" of sects. Finally, Kirkland charged Gardiner with "too liberal a use of some approbrious epithets in this sermon. We do not think men ought to be made to contemn and dislike each other on account of differences on this subject." But Kirkland made it known that if Gardiner had parted company with fellow club members because of their differing views on the doctrine of the Trinity, his opponents were not going to restrain their own views for the sake of past friendship. Gardiner did not attempt to reply to Kirkland through the Anthology, but on the next Trinity Sunday he preached a sermon entitled A Preservative Against Unitarians, in which he tried "to show that the greatest writers of the English nation both in prose and poetry, have borne testimony to their faith in this sacred mystery" and that Priestley, Kirkland's hero, had "failed to defend his Socinianism."[106]

After the Anthology ceased publication, Andrews Norton, with the aid of some other past Anthologists, began the General Repository and Review as a kind of continuation of the Anthology. In particular, Norton seemed to be intent on the liberals' retaining a means of making their views public, for the leading article of the first issue was "A Defence of Liberal Christianity," written by Norton. The essay was a summary of the liberal position as it had developed over the years of the Anthology and a defence against the various charges that the orthodox had brought against it. Probably deliberately, Norton

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[106]Gardiner, A Preservative Against Unitarianism (Boston: Munroe & Francis, 1811).

pretty much ignored the whole unitarian problem, concentrating instead on such aspects of liberal Christianity as its emphasis on morality and the necessity of Biblical scholarship.[107] But, if one compares this "Defence" to the Constitution of the First Society of Unitarian Christians, in the City of Philadelphia, which was adopted in 1807 and had been in the hands of at least one Anthology member, one might conclude that, if not in name at least in belief, the liberal Christians by 1812 were Unitarians. When the creed asks are "reason, understanding, and moral discernment . . . , which we are apt to think of such importance on other occasions, of no use in matters of religion?" or when it talks about such things as "the obligation . . . to inquire, to investigate," it seems to one familiar primarily with Anthology writings that it might be quoting them.[108] The same is true of the lecture delivered upon the occasion of the Society's establishment entitled The Right, Duty and Importance, of Free Inquiry in Matters of Religion.[109] Among the Unitarians, even, the doctrine of unitarianism was only one of several beliefs. Since the Unitarian creed fitted so well, it was probably inevitable that the liberal Christians of Boston would eventually accept it.

But Norton's description of liberal Christianity included one point that the orthodox had been using to prove the actual

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[107]Norton, "A Defence of Liberal Christianity," General Repository and Review, I (January, 1812), 1-25.

[108]Constitution of the First Society of Unitarian Christians in the City of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Bartram & Reynolds, 1807).

[109]The Right, Duty and Importance, of Free Inquiry in Matters of Religion (Philadelphia: Bartram & Reynolds, 1807).

sectarianism and illiberality of the liberals and that was to a great extent to determine the later disunity among Unitarians. He began his essay with this definition of liberal Christians:

> Those are to be considered as liberal Christians, who believe that Christianity, in respect to its main design, is a revelation from God; a revelation of religious truths beyond all comparison more important and interesting, than what unenlightened reason can with any approach to certainty discover; a revelation of the being and moral government of God, of the immortality of man, of the purpose of the present life, of the character here to be formed, and of the happiness and misery of a future state as depending on our present conduct.[110]

This is not unlike the Panoplist's observation on the liberals' actually having a creed themselves when they disclaimed and denounced all creeds as antithetic to the spirit of inquiry: the liberals' creed, the Panoplist had said, was "'that God has made a revelation from heaven, & that the scriptures contain it.'"[111] This one basic doctrine, probably more than any other, had kept the liberals within the Congregational fold; it was the one thing, besides the weight of time together, that they had in common. Likewise, however, it was the one aspect of liberal Christianity that sometimes bothered those liberals who must have seen some truth in the orthodox charge of illiberality.

In 1806 John Codman observed in a letter to Jedidiah Morse:

> In every period of the christian church, the first step towards licentiousness & irreligion has been the denial of some one of those peculiar doctrines of revelation, which cannot be discovered by the light of nature. As soon as these great & important barriers to human pride & wickedness are removed, every species

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[110]Norton, "Defence," 1.

[111]See Pan., I, N.S. (March, 1809), 471-81.

> of scepticism is introduced & mankind are left to believe whatever they please & are no longer confined to that faith which our blessed Saviour has made essential to salvation.

First, the divinity of Christ is attacked, Codman went on.

> As soon as the corner stone of our holy religion is removed, the whole beautiful Fabric falls at once. To [sic] intimately are all the doctrines of Christ connected that they must stand or fall together.[112]

Joseph Buckminster, the elder, attributed the Arian, Socinian, and Pelagian heresies to "the pride of human reason."[113] It was true that reason had led the liberal Christians to question doctrines that they could not prove "by the light of nature." Moreover, young Joseph Buckminster, one of the strongest advocates of reason and private judgment admitted in his diary that the doctrine of the Trinity, which relied entirely upon Scriptural evidence, once questioned by a reasonable reading of the Scriptures, could lead to still further doubts about Scriptural revelation.

> The subject is a difficult one, & the diversity of opinion as to the unity of Jesus renders the proof of the xtn revelation from prophecy less forcible & advantageous, & must lead to important conclusions respecting the inspiration of the apost. & evangelists, & even the infallibility of our Saviour himself.[114]

One finds among the writings of the liberals the idea that there are two kinds of revelation, an idea held by the orthodox as well. A sermon by Buckminster observes,

> All that we know of God [and] of his will we discover either from his works or from his word; & these two sources of our religious

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[112]Letter from John Codman to Jedidiah Morse, Edinburgh, March 5, 1806, Morse Family Papers.

[113]Letter from Joseph Buckminster to Samuel Abbott, Portsmouth, September 26, 1807, Park Coll. (April-September, 1807).

[114]Buckminster, diary, February 13, 1805, Buckminster Papers.

> knowledge have given rise to the familiar distinction of natural and revealed religion.

But Buckminster went on to explain that, although the two were not contradictory or even essentially different from each other since they had one author, neither were they quite the same, "for one may make known what could not have been ascertained by the other alone, or may communicate truths w[hi]ch by the other would not have been so soon or so clearly, or so positively discovered." Buckminster denounced those who believed that

> all that it is necessary for men to know believe or practice, is clearly revealed to every man by the dictates of his own breast, & even the most illiterate & uninformed cannot mistake what they choose to call the law of nature. It is astonishing that any man look out upon the world or have lived in it a day & believe such a representation. If this were ture, what need is there of any kind of instruction, or of education; why are not men every where left from their infancy to the simple dictates of nature. To suppose that men have such an inevitable & instinctive knowledge of religion or morals as to need instruction neither from God nor man, is too wild even for refutation.[115]

If one ceased to believe in revelation from the Scriptures, Buckminster believed, one slid into Deism; and from there it was only a short step to Atheism.[116]

In the Anthology this view of the necessity of Scriptural revelation was most carefully put forth by Joseph Tuckerman in his series of essays called "The Theologist." Here he discussed the necessity and advantages of revelation, the probability that God had "actually made some external revelation to mankind," and the coincidences between natural and revealed religion. In the last essay

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[115]Buckminster, "Natural and Revealed Religion," February, 1811, Buckminster Papers.

[116]Buckminster, "Sources of Infidelity," in Sermons by the Late Rev. J. S. Buckminster with a Memoir of His Life and Character (Boston: John Eliot, 1815), p. 147.

Tuckerman defined natural religion as "that knowledge of God, of the duties of man, and of a future state, which reason may attain by its own researches." But reason, he argued, had limitations: "the mind can only discern so much." It was therefore not surprising that the sun, rivers, and so on had been worshiped, the mind not perceiving further than these powers. All these--the stone or wooden idol, the ox, the sacred fire, the statue of Jupiter--were only "the symbol or representation of a being whom [man] fears or loves," "emblems of an incomprehensible intelligence, and only mediums of worship." Through revelation (the Scriptures) man might learn just what these were emblems of. "Reason dictates the duty of homage to some superiour power. By revelation we are instructed that this power is God."[117]

A sermon by Smauel Thacher, written in 1811, likewise treated the topic of revelation, distinguishing between the works and the word of God. But his emphasis was on the works, nature, his text being Genesis viii:22: "While ye earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Thacher began his sermon with "the study of nature is ye study of God," and continued,

> In ye volume of revelation are unfolded those important truths w[hi]ch unassisted reason could only imperfectly discover, ye design & will of God & ye duties & destination of man. But ye bright display of these sublime truths is not intended to supersede all other inquiry, to close our eyes to ye instructions of nature, nor to render us deaf to ye discourse, w[hi]ch is uttered to us by a thousand voices from every part of ye creation on ye wisdom & goodness, ye greatness & power of ye Almighty Author of ye universe.

Thus a truly "devout mind" was "frequently employed in studying God in his works."

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[117]Tuckerman, "The Theologist," M.A., I (October, 1804), 537-39; (December, 1804), 627-31; II (February, 1805), 65-70; (April, 1805), 174-77.

> To a man of this habitual temper nothing in nature is uninteresting, because there is nothing in nature, w[hi]ch does not discourse to him of God. He finds sources of instruction in ye most minute & humble as well as in ye most grand & magnificent of ye works of creations, in ye leaf of ye flower . . . as well as in ye vast expanse of ye heavens or ye mighty movements of ye illuminancies w[hi]ch adorn it . . . every thing around ye man of piety ministers food to his devotion. He finds
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> Tongues in trees; books in ye running brooks
> Sermons in stones & good in every thing.[118]

Thacher said nothing in this sermon that had not been said before by both orthodox and liberal Congregationalists. But, at the same time, one can see here an appreciation of nature--of the most minute aspects of it as well as of the grandest--such as one finds again in the writings of the later Transcendentalists and Romanticists. Thacher saw nature as a book of instruction in itself, apart from Scriptural revelation. His concentration upon God's works is only a matter of emphasis and not a departure from the pervading concept of revelation, but in the development of Transcendentalism and Romanticism emphasis was important.

The same spirit of inquiry that led liberal Christians to their liberal position ultimately led some to question the validity of Scriptural revelation. In emphasizing the necessity of man's exercising his own reason and private judgment in matters of religion, the liberals gave impetus to a movement that was ultimately to emphasize man's individual powers so much as to obviate the necessity of outside aids in discovering God's truth. When certain remaining liberals of the Anthology era united under the Unitarian sect, they rejected, as Ticknor observed, the spirit of inquiry prevalent during the Anthology era. It was the Transcendentalists, not the Unitarians,

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[118] S. C. Thacher, "The Study of Nature is the Study of God," S. C. Thacher Sermons, Box 1 (Massachusetts Historical Society).

that were to carry on this spirit. But at least one Anthology member came to an essentially Transcendentalist position during the Anthology period. In fact, it appears that he had reached this position as early as 1803, the year the Anthology was founded. As in our discussion of the development of Romanticism, we must here again turn to Benjamin Welles's essay on nature.

Welles, according to Walter's diary, was a rather freethinking man in several respects, in morals and politics as well as in religion. His journey to Europe, during which time Walter spent much time with him and wrote his comments upon him, did not lessen his tendency towards liberality. By 1804 Walter was bitterly complaining about Welles's unwillingness to listen to advice on anything and his lack of improvement particularly in his moral and religious beliefs.[119] An 1803 entry in Walter's diary states just what Welles's religious beliefs were:

> I intered into a friendly discussion with him on xianity, which he does not completely believe or . . . not at all. He acknowledged the existence of the prophecies, but thought that they were not intended to apply to a particular person but that Jesus Christ was a man & wishing to do for mankind, what a patriot does for his country, offered himself up & so conducted, as to have the prophece [sic] verified in his person, hoping that mankind would be induced to believe in his doctrines & example, & that thus by being good & religious, they might be saved by God. I did not choos to dispute much with him, but advised him to read books on Xianity. He said he would, but could never be reasoned out of certain principles, one of which that he cannot believe what he does not comprehend. . . . I am very sorry for my Welles.[120]

The orthodox charge that such reliance upon reason and private judgment as the liberals advocated could lead only to infidelity seems to have been substantiated in the case of Welles.

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[119]Walter, "Journal," May 18, 1804.

[120]Walter, "Journal," December 14, 1803.

Welles's essay on nature, as was suggested in the preceding chapter, is in several aspects a Transcendentalist tract. Welles saw the love of nature as a "spiritual" experience, a "rapturous" experience through which man's "genius" becomes "transcendent," thus leading him to "an intimate connexion and grand alliance with nature." This "sympathy" of man for nature "rebounds from the coincidence of natural and ideal beauty." The experience was beyond the reach of mere "reason." In fact, it involved the senses, as well as the intellect. The result of such an experience was not a knowledge of God's truths--Welles did not even mention God, only the "ideal"--but a knowledge of one's self, a self, moreover, that was perfect.

> He, who thus gives himself up to nature, is in the brightness and purity of his existence, his mind philosophizes with itself in the loneliness of meditation, and his passions receive ordinance from the solemn convention of philosophy and religion. . . . His mind may, for a moment, stand and gaze on the very borders of its own perfection. . . .

Like the later Transcendentalists, Welles could only bewail the reluctance of man to partake of such experience.

> We too niggardly encroach on the rights of intellect in the vain enterprize of meliorating that which is already essentially below the standard of human dignity. Few are even aware of the freedom and range of nature, for half mankind come into the world with manacles and fetters.

Too few had ever permitted themselves the experience of having "communed with nature."[121]

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[121]"Remarker No. 10," M.A., III (June, 1806), 285-88. Welles expressed this view of "one's self" in a short paragraph in "Silva," differing somewhat from the essay on nature by its reference to God and its narrowing of the place of solitude to one's "own bosom":

> There is no reflection, which confers such perfect dignity on ourselves, and which draws with it such an association of delightful thoughts and anticipations, as that of our own individuality; the consciousness of a separate being, created, and existing independent of all, and of every other one, but of him, from whom

In Welles one sees not simply the negation of standard orthodox beliefs in the depravity and helplessness of man, in the ability of only a few elect ever to know truth, or in the importance of creeds. One sees not only the rejection of the common belief of both orthodox and liberals in Scriptural revelation as a necessary means to truth. Welles was beyond even consideration of such points. Yet, unless Welles was completely divorced from his own environment, wrought as it was with theological controversy, he must have to some extent considered such problems at some time, using the tools of the liberal Christians with whom he was so closely associated. He must have arrived at his belief in the perfection of man through first an acceptance of the liberals' belief in the possibility of man's doing good as well as evil through his own freewill. He must have arrived at his concentration upon nature through first an acceptance of the liberals' belief in the necessity of questioning, according to one's own judgment, Scriptural interpretations and creeds. He must have, in short, accepted the liberals' belief in the freedom of inquiry and accepted it with no strings attached. For him the theological matter of man's relationship to God had become a philosophical matter of man's relationship to the universe.

> we sprung, and to whom we are to return. It is perhaps the operation of this consciousness, which has made enthusiasts, recluses and hermits; who, without doubt, have received more happiness in solitude, filled with the presence of their own nature, than the world could afford them. But it is not necessary, to the complete enjoyment of this emotion, that one should be distanced from the world in the depth of a forest, or be screened from it by the walls of a cave. A man may withdraw himself into hermitage, by abstracting himself from what is frivolous in life; and retiring to the cell of his own bosom, he may hold pure and holy communion with his own being. There is then an uninterrupted complacency, a silent dignity and a majesty of character, which make him justly proud of himself, and reverenced by the world.

See "Silva," M.A., IV (October, 1807), 543-44.

FREEING THE GENII: A CONCLUDING ESSAY

It has long been recognized that the Golden Age of American letters was primarily a New England event and more particularly an event of eastern Massachusetts. But it has been taken for granted for almost as long that except for the development of Unitarianism there was not much going on in this area during the years preceding the Golden Age, despite the unlikelihood of this assumption. Unitarianism, however, was not so much the predecessor of Transcendentalism as it was the culmination of one line of liberal Christianity. Moreover, there was still enough cultural isolation of individual areas in the first fifty years of the new republic that what has been called the Romantic movement in eastern Massachusetts cannot be explained solely by what went on in other parts of the country, any more than it can be explained solely by what went on in England or Germany. Passing respect has been paid to such periodicals as the North American Review and the Christian Examiner and to such figures as William Tudor and even Joseph Stevens Buckminster. But somewhat less than respect has generally been given the era of Buckminster's and the young Tudor's Boston and the assumption has been that early nineteenty-century Bostonians were at most sycophants of the literature of Pope and conservative precursors of the Unitarianism of Channing.

If the hints of a few earlier scholars like George Ticknor, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Henry Adams had been followed up, it is unlikely that this misconception would be so prevalent today. From

their statements there is ample reason to believe that there was considerable intellectual activity in eastern Massachusetts before the emergence of the Golden Age. In particular, their statements concerning the Monthly Anthology indicate that the first decade of the nineteenth century was far from being an age of passivity. Yet even in such a book as Transitions in American Literary History,[1] which deals with the specific problems of the decline of neoclassicism and Calvinism and the rise of romanticism and transcendentalism, the Anthology is referred to only twice, and then scarcely mentioned. One cannot help coming to the conclusion that historians of early nineteenth-century American literature have sometimes contented themselves with too little "grubbing"; that they have succumbed too easily to generalizations based upon what seemed to them to be the attributes or the flaws of still other people's generalizations. To put it briefly, the first decade of nineteenth-century Boston has been passed over partly because, except for Lewis Simpson and perhaps one or two others, twentieth-century scholars have apparently not bothered to read with any care a periodical that has generally been considered unimportant, much less to search out the papers of its contributors.

This study may have contributed slightly towards remedying some of the misconceptions about early nineteenth-century Boston. Hopefully, it has shown the reader that, first of all, there was considerable intellectual activity going on and that the Anthology is an excellent source for the study of this activity. Moreover, it may have offered enough evidence to suggest that the emergence of the

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[1]See Harry Hayden Clark (ed.), Transitions in American Literary History (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1953).

Golden Age of American letters was to some extent due to the intellectual ferment represented in the Anthology; that in several important respects the genius of that age had begun to emerge during the Anthology era and that the Anthology itself was instrumental in its emergence.

Perhaps the most remarkable characteristic about the Anthology was that it purported to be and was primarily a literary periodical. As the Anthologists themselves were fond of pointing out, Boston had long flourished under the banners of politics and religion, and whatever literary accomplishments she had made had been in their cause. Certainly, among earlier Bostonians there had been enthusiastic students of literature, but for the most part their enthusiasm had been generated by political or religious beliefs or they had regarded literature as a contribution towards these ends. It is unlikely that an earlier group of Bostonians would have banded together to publish a magazine whose primary purpose was the creation of literature for the sake of literature, and it is little less remarkable that the Anthology, as its contemporaries pointed out, was able to succeed as such. So strongly had religion in particular dominated Boston that when the Anthology originated its "Retrospective Notices of American Literature" it announced its refusal to consider theological works, which made up by far the greater part of American publications. That this decision came from a clergyman, Joseph Buckminster, shows the extent of the rebellion of the Anthology towards religious domination over the realm of literature.

But the Anthology did pay a great deal of attention to religion. This was due in part, undoubtedly, to the fact that no matter how much a group may want to divorce itself from the pervasive atmosphere of

the times its success can be only partial. Indeed, the Anthologists themselves were unable to deny that they wished to contribute, in Buckminster's phrase, both "to the mild influence of our common christianity, and to the elegant tranquillity of literary life."[2] But to a greater extent it was due to the simultaneous growth of the view that religion and theology were a part of the whole culture and, so far as the Anthologists were concerned, a part of literature, along with science, education, history, and so on. Again, earlier Bostonians had been interested in no fewer areas than the Anthologists were. But it is doubtful that they would have considered these interests as part of an overall commitment to literature. The Anthologists, devoted as they were to the development of literature, firmly believed that a general awakening of intellectual activity in all areas was a necessary condition for the generation of literary activity.

The extent to which the Anthologists viewed religion and theology as only one part of culture can be seen most clearly in the growing tendency of the clergymen among them to put almost as much emphasis upon their roles as intellectual leaders as on their duties as spiritual leaders. Earlier Congregational clergymen had been aware of this dual function and had tried to fulfill it, but it was common among the orthodox Congregationalist ministers of the early nineteenth century to deny that a clergyman's duty included more than the spiritual or moral care of his flock. Thus they could not help being especially suspicious of clergymen who were members of a Society

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[2]See Buckminster's Phi Beta Kappa oration, M.A., VII (September, 1809), 145-58.

devoted to the creation of literature and who wrote pieces concerned not just with theology but with every aspect of culture for that Society's publication.

"The most remarkable quality of Unitarianism," Henry Adams wrote, "was its high social and intellectual character."[3] Certainly this was a distinguishing feature of the liberal Christian ministers who wrote for the Anthology. In one of his sermons James Freeman, who had been influential among several Anthology clergymen in the development of their liberal views and who himself occasionally contributed to the Anthology, listed among the duties of a congregation to its minister the necessity of its not "attempting to deprive him of his freedom" and emphasized leaving him time to reflect and write.[4] So far as the use of this time for literature was concerned, the Anthology clergymen tended to agree with Samuel Thacher that a "relish for elegant letters" was "a valuable auxiliary to . . . ministerial influence."[5] William Ellery Channing, another friend to the Anthologist clergymen and an infrequent contributor to their publication, felt the need for time to reflect and write so strongly that he turned down a call to the busy Brattle Street Church in favor of Federal Street Church because of it. On this occasion William Shaw wrote to Arthur Walter:

> I have often thought, that a pastor has more stimulating motives to acquire knowledge than any other. He has little commerce with the world except to instruct and edify. His Sabbath labors give him an opportunity to bring all his intellectual acquirements into frequent application and immediate usefulness. Thus he is

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[3]Adams, History, III, 183.

[4]James Freeman, "Duties Resulting. . . . ," Sermons on Particular Occasions (Boston: Sewell Phelps, 1821), p. 13.

[5]See Lee, 300.

> enabled not merely to please his hearers, but to enlighten them in their most important interests; to enforce on their minds and hearts the truths of the sacred oracles, and the necessity of devotedness to the Supreme, as the great end of their being.

But beyond seeing the importance of intellectual acquirements solely as a means to lead the congregation to devotion to God through an effectively composed sermon, Shaw believed that "profound learning adds dignity and lustre to every character and calling with which it is connected."[6] A minister, in short, was obligated to be learned in areas outside religion simply because men of any profession had such an obligation.

In the Anthology this view of the importance of ministers' being educated in areas outside the realm purely of religion is best seen in the essay by Andrews Norton on the clergy's use of printed sermons, an essay that also reveals the extent to which such liberal Christians as Norton emphasized the literary quality of sermons. Norton strongly advocated that the clergy use the best written sermons of the past because they were likely to be far better than any sermons the present-day clergy might write and because the better written a sermon was the more likely it was to accomplish its purpose. It was difficult under any circumstances to write well, but present-day clergymen labored under unusual disadvantages. It was bad enough that they had to make listeners attentive to truths heard time and time again. But, further, they had no leisure

> to wait for those hours of mental illumination, when every thing within is visible and distinct; and for those happier moments, when . . . thoughts come warm from the heart, or glowing from the imagination; but [they are] condemned to write without intermission; it may be, amid perplexity, and vexation, and sickness;

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[6]Letter from William Shaw to Arthur Walter, February 4, 1803, in Felt, 162-63.

> or it may be, when [the] mind, urged to its allotted labour, can do little more than exhaust itself by its exertions.

Norton observed that "of mental exertion none is more severe than the labour of invention." Finally, he pointed out that education was essential to the composition of good sermons and that present-day ministers suffered greatly from defective education. For all of these reasons, it was preferable for ministers to use printed sermons, just as they would use the services of other ministers in other areas. The result, moreover, would be propitious not only in the diffusion of the truths of Christianity but in the time left to ministers to pursue their own education. In America the education of ministers was extremely important, for the education of the community depended to a great extent upon the education of its ministers:

> in a country like ours, where there are so few men of literary leisure, and where there is so little reward for literary exertion, the clergy should be allowed, I speak coldly, they should be encouraged to exert their talents for the purpose of diffusing general instruction, and in the cause of general literature.

Norton did not advocate the support of clergymen solely for the purpose of learning and writing, though other nations did provide such posts,

> but only that we should allow to men of talents a little of their leasure [sic] ; for unless we will endow colleges, or unless we will give encouragement to literature as a profession, there seems to be no other means of forming among us a body of men of learning.[7]

In Norton's words can be seen the duty that all of the Anthology

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[7] M.A., V (January, 1808), 2-5. See also Norton on the same topic in M.A., II (September, 1805), 454-57, and J. S. J. Gardiner, "Remarker, No. 44," M.A., VII (July, 1809), 37-39, and William Bentley, Diary, November 10, 1805, III, 199. Gardiner and Bentley tended to disagree with Norton that printed discourses could ever be so effective as original ones.

clergymen felt towards being men of letters and towards trying to contribute to the development of literature.

It seems fair to say that the orthodox clergymen, despite their accomplishments outside the realm of religion, did not share this view of the minister as an intellectual and particularly as a literary leader of the community. One needs only to compare the reviews of sermons in the Panoplist with those in the Anthology to see the difference between the views of the orthodox and the liberals. Whereas the Anthology paid special attention to the literary merits of sermons, usually noting those delivered by orthodox ministers as being deficient in stylistic attributes, the Panoplist decried sermons, usually found among those of the liberals, which were obvious efforts to be literary works. Reviewing Buckminster's address at the ordination of Charles Lowell, the Panoplist remarked that

> the figure about the 'planatary system' is far from suiting the occasion. It is long, and full of labour, and agrees not with a performance, which should be an easy expression of the heart.[8]

After the Anthology had poked fun at Edward Griffin's sermon preached at the dedication of Park-street Church, concluding that "the whole performance is distinguished by considerable fancy, but deformed by frequent confusion of images, and unpardonable inaccuracy of style,"[9] the Panoplist retorted with a long defence of clergymen whose sermons revealed "the spirit of the apostles":

> if ministers are chosen and approved, whose examples, instead of supporting strict virtue and godliness, encourage the frivolity and dissipation of worldly life; ministers, who neglect the lowly

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[8] Pan., I (September, 1805), 171-73.

[9] M.A., VIII (February, 1810), 128-36.

> virtues and pious labors of the pastoral office, and delight to frequent theatres and assemblies of pleasure, and to mingle with the gay, the thoughtless, and the splendid; whose preaching will please delicate tastes and itching ears, but awaken no sleeping conscience, reprove no fashionable iniquities, and persuade no sinners to repent; it affords unequivocal evidence, that religion is in a decline.[10]

The Panoplist was obviously referring to liberal Christian ministers and in particular to the Anthology clergymen. It had no doubts that between the increase of such ministers and the decline of Calvinism there was a strong connection.

Joseph Buckminster, the elder, struck at this connection in the sermon he delivered at the ordination of his son. Here he warned his son that "he should not direct his principal attention to the science of words and the beauties of style, lest he leave his discourses empty of sentiment, and destitute of solid doctrinal, practical, and experimental instruction" and admonished him not to "devote a large share of his time and attention" to "pursuits foreign to his profession" and still less to "scenes of amusement, the pleasures of the palate, or the parade of life." It had already become apparent to the elder Buckminster that his son was going to lead a life outside the pulpit and these words were little more than the echo of sentiments that had already been rejected. It was clear that the new minister was going to follow the example set forth to him by another participant in his ordination ceremonies, William Emerson, who referred to Buckminster's predecessors at Brattle Street Church as men "whose talents, literature, patriotism, and urbanity, rendered [them] not only the boast of the church, but an ornament to [their] country."[11] Young Buckminster, Emerson, and the other Anthology clergymen had

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[10] Pan., N.S., III (June, 1810), 20-35.

[11] James Freeman, M.A., II (August, 1805), 430-33.

little respect for what Freeman called "the Cynick sect of philosophers" who, as in the time of Christ, despised "not merely luxury, but every thing which adorns human society, such as poetry, eloquence, architecture, & in general all the elegant sciences and ornamental arts."[12] As the liberal Christians devoted more and more of their talents to the adornments of society, it was little wonder that the suspicions of the orthodox regarding their piety to Christian truths grew. By 1809 Leonard Woods was even writing to Jedidiah Morse that the Anthologists "mean to get up by the steps of literary fame & then to use the advantages of their exaltation against the truth."[13] Although the Anthologists most certainly did use the advantages of their literary exaltation against the authoritarianism of Calvinism, Woods completely missed seeing the other side of the coin: that so far as the Anthologists were concerned literary exaltation was their primary concern.

The Anthology, then, was not only a manifestation of rebellion against religious dominance over Bostonian culture, but for the Anthology clergymen it was a means by which they might reject Calvinism and at the same time fulfill their obligation as men of letters. In both ways the Anthology revealed a negation of authoritarianism, a negation that was evident in both the literary and the theological controversies in which it engaged. In literature one sees the growth away from the neoclassical stress upon rules, models, and imitation as a basis for creativity towards a respect for the innate powers of

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[12]James Freeman, "Marriage in Cana," Eighteen Sermons and a Charge (Cambridge: E. W. Metcalf & Co., 1829), p. 100.

[13]Letter from Leonard Woods to Jedidiah Morse, Newbury, January 17, 1809, Morse Family Papers.

the individual poet and his response to his immediate surroundings. In theology one sees with the rejection of Calvinism and Trinitarianism the simultaneous development of the insistence upon the necessity of free inquiry and private judgment of Scriptural revelation.

Thus, in both areas the Anthology anticipated what was perhaps the most pervasive characteristic of the Golden Age of American literature. Not only do Emerson, Thoreau, and other Transcendentalists stress the importance of the individual's right, duty, and ability to seek truth, beauty, or goodness through his immediate experiences, but the poetry of such Romanticists as Bryant shows a similar tendency and even the works of Melville, Hawthorne, and other writers not easily categorized as either Transcendentalists or Romanticists are in themselves products of such a spirit. Moreover, that Benjamin Welles's essay, published in 1806, should have revealed both the Romanticist and the Transcendentalist insistence upon the individual's communion with nature as a means to the revelation of the perfection in one's self is little less than remarkable in the light of what has generally been known of the development of the Golden Age.

When from the perspective of the Anthology one reads over various statements of Emerson's that have been regarded as "radical," they seem instead to be little more than culminations, in some instances even repetitions, of views expressed in the Anthology. This is not to say that Emerson did not make some quite radical statements for his time, but in the long run it is the similarities rather than the differences between his ideas and those of the Anthologists that are striking. When he says that "imitation is

suicide"[14] or that "it is not metres, but a metre-making argument that makes a poem,"[15] he is saying essentially what the Anthologists did when they attacked submission to rules and models as a source for creating poetry; and when he says "it is in me, and shall out"[16] or "America is a poem in our eyes,"[17] he is offering the same solutions as the Anthologists did in insisting upon the necessity of American poets using their own imaginations and their own surroundings as their major source. When he says "it is the office of the true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that He speaketh, not spake,"[18] he is advocating the rejection of traditional creeds in much the same way that the Anthologists did. His concept of revelation, to be sure, goes beyond that of the Anthologists, who in general still did insist upon the necessity of the Scriptures. But when he says that in the midst of nature "I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God,"[19] he differs from one Anthologist, Benjamin Welles, only in that he does mention God.

When one reads Emerson's 1837 Phi Beta Kappa Address on the American scholar, one feels that except for the emphasis upon "instinct"

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[14]Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance," Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frederic I. Carpenter, (ed.) (American Writers Series, New York: American Book Co., 1934), p. 90.

[15]Emerson, "The Poet," in Carpenter, p. 212.

[16]Emerson, "The Poet," in Carpenter, p. 229.

[17]Emerson, "The Poet," in Carpenter, p. 228.

[18]Emerson, "The Divinity School Address," in Carpenter, p. 85.

[19]Emerson, "Nature," in Carpenter, p. 13.

and the study of nature--which granted is a major exception--one is confronted with essentially the same ideas as he finds in Buckminster's 1809 Phi Beta Kappa address on the dangers and duties of men of letters. Although Emerson placed more importance on the innate powers of the individual than Buckminster did and Buckminster tended to emphasize the value of traditional education more than Emerson did, there is a strong similarity between Emerson's concept of the scholar as "Man Thinking" and Buckminster's concept of the man of letters as one engaged in "active learning." Both believed that the scholar was obligated to be more than a learned recluse and, although "action" in Emerson's mind meant something other than merely the production of books, still both men had one aim in mind in their addresses: motivating their listeners to produce an American literature. Just as Buckminster saw signs of the dawn of a new age of intellectual creativity, so did Emerson see "signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state." Just as Buckminster insisted upon the commitment of potential men of letters to the cause of creating an American literature so did Emerson note that "our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close" and insist that "we have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe."[20] Emerson was speaking in his Phi Beta Kappa oration at a time when the Golden Age that Buckminster had foreseen was already underway. That it did arrive was due to some degree to the success with which various earlier Bostonians had accepted such advice as Buckminster had advocated in his Phi Beta Kappa oration.

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[20]See Emerson, "The American Scholar," in Carpenter, pp. 51-70.

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